



Free Evangelical Lutheran
Synod in South Africa

Sermon for the Third Sunday of Pentecost 2017

*Consequences of the true confession in the
world!*



St. John's Lutheran Parish
Shelly Beach

• [The Word of God for this Sermon is written in Mt 10,5a + 21-33:](#)

• ^{ESV} ⁵ These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, ...

• ²⁴ "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master.

• ²⁵ It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household.

• ²⁶ "So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known.

• ²⁷ What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops.

• ²⁸ And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

• ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father.

• ³⁰ But even the hairs of your head are all numbered.

• ³¹ Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

• ³² So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven,

• ³³ but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

• *Let us pray: Come Holy Spirit, open our ears and our hearts so that the Life of Christ may revive us in our bearing and that we would confess Christ in our communities. Amen.*

• **Dear Beloved of God!**

• Last Sunday we heard about the special ministry when Jesus had called the twelve Apostles to go only to the lost sheep of Israel. This Sunday we focus a little bit more on what Jesus tells all disciples in general, who should confess Him, Christ Jesus, before other people. In this passage three times Jesus encourages His disciples to "fear not"! Fear not those who kill the body, fear not those who will resist you, fear not those to whom you confess Christ Jesus!

• In other words, confessing Jesus before men, before mankind, before our communities, can be dangerous! Church history confirms what Jesus had warned about. In every generation there were martyrs confessing Christ! Whilst the

situation might not always mount to losing one's life, being sidelined or ridiculed in families or communities is a common cross confessing Christians have to bear.

- The issue is with confessing Christians, those who openly and publicly declare or state that Jesus is the Christ, the only Messiah, the only Saviour sent into this world. Whoever denies Him, will be denied access into eternal Life with the heavenly Father.
- The stumbling stone is Jesus Himself. In verse 34 He makes this unmistakably clear: *"Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."*
- Jesus does not excuse Himself for bringing division. He did not come to comfort our old Adam. He came to bring the sword over our old Adam, to on the one hand reveal the wrath of God over our old Self. No peace with the desires and wants and needs of the old Self, but war, death, crucifixion and burial of the old Adam.
- And exactly this side of Christ's ministry evokes and draws out resistance coming from the world's way of trying to make peace. A peace which fights for equality of all gods and saviours. To single out one from all the other is destroying the upper most principle of equality of all religions and god's! That will just bring division.
- Jesus explicitly rejects this way of making peace, because there is no true Life in this way. It is based on deception and lies leading to death!
- The Apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, echoes exactly this, when he writes that *"the wages of sin is death!"* Whoever is a slave to sin will receive the fruit of it, namely death. Whoever sins is a slave to sin. Therefore, whoever dies, whoever is mortal must be a sinner! In Romans chapter 3,19 Paul had already concluded the following: *"Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God."*

- The whole world is accountable to God. And it shows in the fact that all people are mortal, from conception to the highest age. By the way, this shows very clearly that the Bible does not teach anything about an “age of accountability”, as if only from a certain age, when children know what they are doing, they are held accountable before God. That might be Greek Philosophy, but it has nothing to do with God’s Word! Children, infants, even those in the mother’s womb, from the earliest time of conception, unfortunately, are mortal and many sadly die. The reason given by God’s Word is: wages of sin is death. Ephesians 2, 3 says it in so many words, that we were by nature children of God’s wrath. Its not just in what we do wrong that we sin, we are sinners by nature. Our innermost being is sinful from conception!
- Nobody can argue against this, because the fact is, we are all mortal. Death is a dreadful and a terrible reality in this world.
- Exactly this side of Jesus’ message is not according to the political and psychological correctness governing the world. The world fights for the confession that there is “something good in all people”. A “Jesus” who latches onto and even builds up this “something good” in all people is welcome in the world. Such a “Jesus” falls in nicely alongside other Guru’s and motivational speakers who have the task of being life coaches. Jesus as life coach is fine, but the Jesus who preaches the sermon on the mount, where our hearts are exposed as being chambers of evil, ‘no thank you’- not welcome in our way of peace.
- In light of this it is crystal clear that those who will confess the only true Jesus, the one who unreservedly and without any doubt exposes who we are in the light of God’s Law and that the whole world is accountable to God and judged according to God’s Will as being evil by nature, these confessors will not be popular in the world! The world will try its best to silence them, just like it tried to silence their Master. They will be called unloving, intolerant maybe even get accused of proclaiming hate-speech etc.
- So, we see Jesus’ words of warning are true for our times too. And when this happens to His disciples they may be comforted by the fact that they are like their teacher. And therefore, have no fear for the world, for people who persecute you or deny you when you confess the true Jesus! They cannot kill your soul! Your Life is in Jesus’ hands.
- Jesus radically exposed the evil of the world, but thats not where He stopped,

that was not mission accomplished. He was baptised to absorb all of that filthy evilness onto Himself and be lifted up on the Cross to endure the Wrath of God against all evilness in our stead, on our behalf, for us! Our evilness went on His account.

• So that the Apostle Paul could complete the sentence in the following way [Rom 6,23]: *“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* It is only against the backdrop of the real condemnation against all evilness to death, that the “but” of God’s free gift “in Christ Jesus our Lord” shines forth like the brightest light, like the most beautiful truth in heaven and on earth!

• The one side of the Truth is complete darkness and death for us as sinners, but, there is this BUT, but the other side is the complete opposite, is forgiveness of all sins, and in the hand of Jesus turned into eternal Life and Salvation for ever and ever. In Christ Jesus, baptised into Christ Jesus we have this free gift, which frees us from our old evil Adam, our evil Self. And this gift simply is LIFE. LIFE to the full, no termination, no need to count your age in the new LIFE! In Christ Jesus, united with Him in Baptism, we participate in the Day which will never end. Our old Adam died in Baptism and dies everyday as it hears the Word of God. Our old flesh will also perish away and stay behind in the grave, but in Christ Jesus we are alive- you are alive, that is your new being, your new nature, in Christ Jesus, the true Jesus.

• And now we see why its all the way worth it to take up our cross if we are crucified because we confess this true Christ Jesus! This cross is nothing compared to the LIFE we have in Him. The sting of death is removed for us. Death has become a rest, a sleep, until the Day of resurrection.

• And this gives us inner peace. This makes us merciful with others, even with those who hate us and attack us because we confess the true Jesus. Who can take something of worth away from us, whilst we are in Christ Jesus and participate in His Life? Absolutely nobody! All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Him. He reigns already! Alleluia. **Amen.**

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **Amen.*** (^{ESV}2 Cor 13:14.)