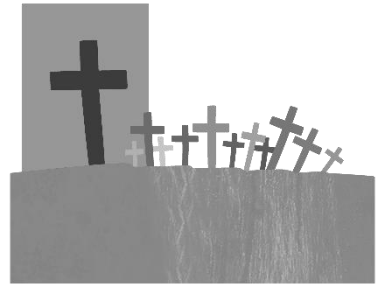


THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST—PROPER 17

Overcome Evil with Good/A Love That Doesn't Retaliate

August 30, 2020



AS WE GATHER

In the quiet refuge of this sanctuary, it may be easy to forget that we live in a world that has been marred by sin, cursed by death, and filled with wickedness. Although we confront it every day, this very present evil will not overcome us. God's desire is for us to be saved and delivered by His Son, Jesus, so that we are enabled to love, to live, and to overcome evil with good. In our worship service today, we receive the same Jesus who once overcame evil by carrying His cross to suffer for our salvation. Trouncing over all the evil we will ever face, our risen Savior lives to love, to bless, and to deliver us as His people. Some voices in our world today claim that good needs evil in order to help what is right truly express itself. The Bible takes a different view, giving us God's perspective on good and evil. That which is truly virtuous doesn't depend on evil. No, quite the opposite, that which is good—God and His love in Jesus Christ—actively dispels evil at the cross. By His resurrection from death's grave, Jesus crushes evil and guarantees that it has no power over those who trust in Him. Remaining in Christ's love, we respond to the evil in our world, even the evil that comes directly at us through the wrongdoings of our enemies, with the goodness of forgiveness. Instead of retaliating against evil ourselves, we allow our good and gracious God to respond to it, and overcome it, in our loving Savior.

✕ PREPARATION ✕

Loving God, you call us to turn away from our own selfish interests, to take up our cross, and to follow you. To find our lives, may we live them in service of your mission. As we come before you this afternoon, give us open hearts and open hands. Make us eager to hear your voice and seek your guidance. Open our minds to your ever-present spirit that is always moving within and around us. Open our spirits to your nudging and open our lives to your love. Forgive us, gracious Savior, when our hearts are led astray. When we serve other gods and worship them. We turn away from our distractions and sin. Strengthen us to set our faces toward Jerusalem, to take up our cross and follow you. We pray this, counting on your grace. Amen.

WELCOME TO GOD'S HOUSE... We come to worship this afternoon from different places. We come to worship this afternoon for different reasons. We experience the presence of the Spirit in different ways. We hear Jesus' words with different ears. "Deny yourselves." "Take up your cross." "Follow me." As we worship, let us pray that He will open our eyes, that we may behold wondrous blessings out of His word. May your burdens be lifted, may you feel comforted and as the Lord reveals His plan and purpose in your lives, may you be inspired and encouraged to become active and involved in one of the many ministries that this body has to offer.

PRAISE WORSHIP - Minister Terry Dale

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✕ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION *1 John 1:8–9*

Pastor: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

People: **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

Pastor: Let us therefore come before His throne of grace with humble and sincere hearts to lay our burdens down.

Silent prayer for personal confession

Pastor: Gracious Lord,

People: **we come before You, laying the burden of our sin at the foot of Your cross. We openly acknowledge our failure to follow Your plans for our lives. We have stumbled and fallen in our service to You. We have placed our agenda ahead of Yours. We have been shallow in our love toward You and toward those You have placed in our path. We cry out for mercy, trusting in Your promise to forgive us through the love of our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Pastor: God has heard your cry for mercy and fulfills His promise to save and deliver you! Lavishing His grace upon you in Jesus, He enables you to love and forgive as He has first loved and forgiven you. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✕ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

✕ WORD ✕

INTROIT *Psalm 37:5–7; antiphon: v. 4*

Pastor: Create in me a clean heart, O God,

People: **and renew a right spirit within me.**

Pastor: Cast me not away from Your presence,

People: **and take not Your Holy Spirit from me.**

Pastor: Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,

People: **and uphold me with a willing spirit.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.

Almighty God, Your Son willingly endured the evil of sin and death at the cross for our redemption. Enable us to stand in the goodness of our Savior so that we are not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Jeremiah 15:15–21* (The Lord gives His precious, saving words.)

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

SELECTION - Minister Terry Dale

GRADUAL *Psalms 34:9, 19 alt.*

Pastor: Fear the LORD, you His saints, for those who fear Him lack nothing!

People: Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all.

EPISTLE *Romans 12:9–21* (With genuine love, overcome evil with good.)

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

VERSE *Matthew 16:25*

Leader: Alleluia. Whoever would save his life will lose it,

People: but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. Alleluia.

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 16:21–28* (Jesus calls His disciples to take up their cross and follow Him.)

Leader: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the sixteenth chapter.

People: Glory to You, O Lord.

(The Gospel is read.)

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

SELECTION - Minister Terry Dale

SERMON

SELECTION - Minister Terry Dale
(We Bring Our Tithes and Offering To The Lord)

CREED Apostle Creed

People: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Leader: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs. For all disciples of Jesus Christ, both here at Bethel *Lutheran congregation* and throughout the world, that we not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Bless us, Jesus, as we follow You.

Leader: For the fulfillment of the Great Commission, that wherever the good news of salvation in Christ is proclaimed, hearts turn to the Lord and live, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Bless us, Jesus, as we tell of You.

Leader: For all servant leaders in the church and in the world, that their work for our blessing show forth the goodness of Christ to the world He died to save, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Bless us, Jesus, as we serve You.

Leader: For the blessing of all who hunger and thirst, for all who are weary and heavy-laden, and for all who are without house or income, that they seek the restoration the Lord's good hand provides, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Bless us, Jesus, as we are cared for by You.

Leader: For all who willingly put themselves in the path of evil for the sake of other people's good, including military members, law enforcement officers, and emergency workers, that they be protected by the Lord's mighty hand, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Bless us, Jesus, as we are protected by You.

Leader: For all who ail in heart, mind, and body, [*especially our sick and shut ins. . .*], that they be touched by the healing hand of our Savior and filled with the presence of His comforting Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Bless us, Jesus, as we are healed by You.

Leader: For these and all other concerns we have, that coming before the throne of grace we find mercy to help us in our time of need, let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Bless us, Jesus, as we trust You to hear and answer our prayers. Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER *Matthew 6:9–13*

BENEDICTION *Romans 12:21*

Pastor: Do not be overcome by evil,

People: **but overcome evil with good.**

Pastor: Go forth with the blessing of your good and gracious God:

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace. *Numbers 6:24–26*

People: **Amen.**

SELECTION - Minister Terry Dale