

Welcome to Worship at  
Trinity Lutheran Church, Osceola, WI  
Pentecost 10 - August 9, 2020

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer. Amen.

**Hymn #418 - "My God Will Never Leave Me"**

**My God will never leave me,  
And I will not leave him;  
A light my God will give me  
In pathways dark and grim.  
He reaches out his hand,  
His mighty power sharing,  
My burdens ever bearing  
Wherever I may stand.**

**When human thought and action  
Shall unavailing prove,  
God grants me his protection  
And shows his pow'r and love.  
He helps in ev'ry need,  
From sin and shame redeems me,  
From chains and bonds reclaims me;  
From death I, too, am freed.**

**God shall be my reliance  
In sorrow's darkest night;  
Its dread I bid defiance  
When he is at my right.  
I unto him commend  
My body, soul, and spirit -  
They are his own by merit -  
All's well, then, at the end.**

**Oh, praise him for he never  
Forgets our daily need;**

**Oh, blest the hour whenever  
To him our thoughts can speed,  
For all the time we spend  
Without him is but wasted,  
Till we his joy have tasted,  
The joy that has no end.**

**And when the world will perish  
With all its pride and pow'r,  
All that the world may cherish  
Will vanish in that hour.  
But though in death they make  
The deepest grave our cover,  
When there our sleep is over,  
Our God will us awake.**

**Confession of Sins:**

**P:** Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

**C:** **Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and actions. Therefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace and forgiveness for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. O Lord, have mercy on us!**

**P:** Upon this your confession, I as a called servant of Christ and His Word announce to you the grace of God, and in the place of and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C:** **Amen.**

**First Lesson: 1 Kings 3:5-12**

The Lord appeared to Solomon in Gibeon in a dream at night. God said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you." Solomon said, "You have shown great mercy and faithfulness to your servant, my father David, just as he walked before you in truth, righteousness, and uprightness of heart toward you. You have shown this great mercy and faithfulness to him and have given him a son who is seated on his throne to this very day. O Lord my God, now you have made your servant king in

the place of my father David, but I am a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. And I, your servant, am among your people whom you have chosen, a great people, who cannot be counted or numbered because they are so many. Now give to your servant a perceptive heart to judge your people, to distinguish between good and evil, for who is able to judge this great people of yours?" In the eyes of the Lord, Solomon's request was good. So God said to him, "Because you have asked for this, and you have not asked for a long life, nor have you asked for riches, nor have you asked for the lives of your enemies, but you have asked for discernment to reach just verdicts, therefore I will act according to your words. Yes, I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you before you, nor will anyone like you rise up after you." (EHV)

**Psalm 119b:**

**Refrain: Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.**

**Teach me, O LORD, to follow 'your decrees;  
Then I will keep them 'to the end.**

**Give me understanding, and I will 'keep your law  
And obey it with 'all my heart.**

**Direct me in the path of 'your commands,  
For there I 'find delight.**

**Refrain: Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.**

**Turn my eyes away from 'worthless things;  
Preserve my life according 'to your Word.**

**Fulfill your promise to your 'servant,  
So that you 'may be feared.**

**How I long for your 'precepts!  
Preserve my life in your 'righteousness.**

**Glory be to the Father and 'to the Son  
And to the Holy 'Spirit,  
As it was in the be'ginning,  
Is now, and will be forever. 'Amen.**

**Refrain: Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.**

**Second Lesson: Romans 8:28-30**

We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God, for those who are called according to his purpose, because those God foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he would be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called. Those he called, he also justified. And those he justified, he also glorified. (EHV)

**Verse of the Day:** Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

**Gospel: Matthew 13:44-52**

“The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid again. In his joy, he goes away and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls. When he found one very valuable pearl, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered fish of every kind. When the net was filled, they pulled it onto the shore. They sat down and gathered the good fish into containers, but threw the bad ones away. That is how it will be at the end of the world. The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous who are among them. And they will throw the wicked into the fiery furnace where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Jesus said to them, “Did you understand all these things?” They answered him, “Yes.” He said to them, “Therefore every expert in the law who has been trained as a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his treasure both new things and old things.” (EHV)

**The Apostles' Creed:**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there 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.**

**Hymn #461 - *“From Eternity, O God”***

**From eternity, O God,  
In your Son you did elect me.  
Therefore, Father, on life’s road  
Graciously to heav’n direct me;  
Send to me your Holy Spirit  
That his gifts I may inherit.**

**Born alive but dead in sin,  
Lost to all good things by nature,  
I was found and changed within  
And became a new-born creature.  
Sinful flesh works ruination,  
But the Spirit works salvation.**

**Drive away the gloomy night  
Of my darkened mind’s reflection.  
Quench all thoughts that are not right;  
Hold my reason in subjection.  
For your truth may I be yearning,  
Heav’nly wisdom ever learning.**

**As a branch upon a vine,  
In my blessed Lord implant me;  
Ever of my head divine  
To remain a member grant me.  
Oh, let him, my Lord and Savior,  
Be my life and love forever!**

**Faith and hope and charity  
Graciously, O Father, give me;  
Be my guardian constantly  
That the devil may not grieve me.  
Grant me humbleness and gladness,  
Peace and patience in my sadness.**

**Help me speak what's right and good  
And keep silence on occasion.  
Help me pray, Lord, as I should;  
Help me bear my tribulation.  
Help me die and let my spirit  
Everlasting life inherit.**

**The Sermon:       Romans 8:28-30  
                          “A Walk Through The Christian’s Life”**

Today we're going to take a look at the Doctrine of **Election**. Do you know what it is? Would you be able to **explain** it to someone else - perhaps to someone who is **new** to Christianity? Even if you **do** know what it is and **are** able to explain it, a new-comer to the faith probably wouldn't **understand** what you are talking about, because the Doctrine of Election isn't very **logical**. Adding to the confusion, this doctrine has been **perverted** and **distorted** by many church bodies throughout the ages. Some have proposed that election is a **license to sin**, reasoning that since they have already been **elected** for salvation, then they are **free** to do anything they **want** with **no consequences**. Others have concluded that if God elected some for **salvation**, then He must have also elected some for **damnation**. Both of these ideas are **preposterous**, but they do show us that election is a **difficult** subject. However, that's no reason for us to shy away from it. Paul explained it to the Romans in the three verses of our text, and they were the **richer** for it. We too, if we are not going to remain as **babies** in the faith, must also delve into the more **complex** portions of Scripture, and grow **stronger** from the meat which is offered there.

Our text is one of those **meaty** portions of Scripture, so it's going to take a lot of **concentration** on our part. I hope you had a good breakfast this morning, because today we're going to be following the Apostle Paul on **A Walk Through The Christian's Life**. As we take this walk, it will be most beneficial to concentrate on two things - the **comfort** of our election, and the **certainty** of our glory. This particular walk extends from before the world **began**, all the way to living in God's eternal kingdom in **heaven**. That's a pretty **long** walk, so let's lace up our hiking boots and get started!

We read, *“Those God **foreknew**, he also **predestined** to be conformed to the image of His Son, so that he would be the firstborn among many brothers.”* Way back before God created the world, He **chose** us according to His foreknowledge. God **foreknew** us. That doesn't mean that God chose us because He, in His

omniscience, foresaw that we would do **good works**, or even that we would have **faith** in His Son. If **that** were the case, then God's election would have been an election by **works**, based on what **we** have **done**. However, the **fact** of the matter is that our election is an election of **grace**, based on what **Christ** has done **for** us. Paul wrote later in this same letter, "*At the present time there is a remnant chosen by **grace**. Now if it is by **grace**, then it is **not** the result of **works** - otherwise grace would no longer **be** grace.*" Grace is God's **love** for us - a love which we have not **earned**, and a love which we don't **deserve**. God didn't choose us because of our **works**, but rather when God foreknew us, He **set His heart** on us - and He did it purely out of **grace**, just because it was what **He wanted** to do. God wanted His Son to have many **brothers**, so He chose **us**, as Paul wrote in the first chapter of his letter to the Ephesians, "*God predestined us to be **adopted** as His sons through Jesus Christ. He did this in accordance with the good purpose of **his will**.*" We have been **adopted** as God's children. And as God's children, we are Christ's **brothers**, because He is the only begotten Son of God. We have been chosen **in Christ**, and now we are **His**. Jesus said in His high priestly prayer, "*Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am so that they may see my glory - the glory you gave me because you loved me **before the world's foundation**.*" This is a position of honor for Christ because He is the **firstborn** among His many brothers. He is not only the **author** of our salvation, but also without Jesus there would **be** no salvation at all. What an honor it is for **us** to be called His **brothers**, and to be chosen to spend all eternity with Him in God's **family**.

But this eternal decree of God, established before creation, only marks the first portion of our **Walk Through The Christian's Life**. As we step around the bend we notice that God also carries out that decree in our lives here in **time**, through a number of divine actions. Again we read, "*Those he **predestined**, he also **called**. Those he **called**, he also **justified**. And those he **justified**, he also **glorified**.*" God **called** us here in time. This **calling** is not because of our works either. Paul told Timothy, "*God saved us and called us with a holy calling - **not** because of **our** works, but because of **his own purpose and grace**.*" How much clearer can you get? God **calls**, and we are to **hear** Him.

But our calling is not only heard with our **ears** - it's also heard with our **heart**. And by God's grace alone, that calling is not **rejected** by us, but rather it is **received**. God changed our hearts and **turned us around**. Peter put it this way, "*You were like sheep **going astray**, but you are now **returned** to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.*" This **conversion** didn't come about as the result of some special, emotional, inner call as some believe. Rather, God changed our hearts and lives by means of the **Gospel** in His **Word** and **Sacraments**. That's where the

power lies to change men's hearts - **not** in our **emotions**.

But there is still **more** to our journey. God has not only **put** us on the road to heaven, He also **keeps** us on that road. God daily sends us His Holy Spirit to **strengthen** and **preserve** us in the true faith by means of His Word and Sacrament, that we might receive life everlasting. And there is still **more** which God has done for us. He has declared us **righteous** - certainly not because we **deserve** to be called righteous through our own merit, because we have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God - but rather, He **gives** us **Christ** as our righteousness. Jesus made full satisfaction for our sins through His **sinless life**, and through His **innocent sufferings and death**. God made Him who knew no sin to **be sin for** us, **absolving** us from our sin and guilt, and accepting us as **righteous** through Jesus.

During this **Walk Through The Christian's Life**, we've seen how gracious and merciful our Heavenly Father is to us. We've seen how God **chose** us before the world began, and how He **called** us and declared us **righteous** here in time. But there is still one **more** part of the Christian's life that we should take a look at this morning - the **home stretch** - because our text tells us that God also **glorifies** us. In reality, this glory still lies in the **future**, yet Paul speaks of it as though it has already **taken place**. And in a way, it **has**, because God is the one who has determined all these things. God said, "*I will choose, call, justify, and glorify these people,*" and when **God** determines to do something, it is as good as **done**.

The one big question which still remains is perhaps a question which you have asked **yourself** at one time or another. "Am **I** one of God's **elect**?" Martin Luther asked himself that question **many** times, and as a result, he **hated** the Doctrine of Election - at least for a **time**. It filled him with **terror** because he thought, "If I'm **not** one of the elect, then I can't be **saved**." And there were many times when Luther **felt** as though he was **not** saved. Sometimes **we** feel that way **too**. We ask ourselves questions like, "How can I be **sure** I'm one of God's **elect**?" or, "What if I **fall away** from the faith **later on** in life?" But questions like these will only fill us with **fear**. Paul encourages us to **stop asking** such questions, and to simply leave the matter in **God's** hands. He wrote, "*We know that **all things** work together for the **good** of those who **love God**, for those who are **called according to his purpose**.*" There is **certainty** in those words. We **know** it, because we know our firm and immovable **God**. And when Paul says that **all** things work together for our **good**, he means **everything** - hardships, trials, even governmental **restrictions** and potentially deadly **viruses**. God uses trials for our spiritual **good** to break us off from **sin**, to bring us nearer to **Himself**, to wean us away from the **sinful world**, and to prepare us for **heaven**. It's true that at times

trials are also used to **chasten** us, but even then, God is treating us as **sons** whom He **loves**. The writer to the Hebrews says, “No **discipline** seems **pleasant** when it is happening, but **painful**, yet later it yields a peaceful harvest of **righteousness** for those who have been trained by it.” God’s chastening always has a **purpose**, and whatever that purpose might be, it will always be for our **good**.

So, having that blessed certainty, what should we do when it appears that God has **forsaken** us, or that He is **angry** with us? Should we **wonder** whether we are members of God’s **elect**? No, it would be much better to ask ourselves **this** question, “Do you **believe in the Gospel**?” Some people think that they will be saved whether they believe in the Gospel or **not**. They think, “If I’m one of the **elect**, I’ll be saved **regardless** of what I **do** or **believe**.” But that’s **not** the case. The Bible says that the elect are chosen, “*Through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.*” Therefore, if you **believe in the Gospel**, you **are** one of the **elect**, and all the **promises** which God has made concerning His elect apply to **you**. Then you have been **chosen, called, justified, and glorified** - and all things work together for your **good**. When the Doctrine of Election is looked at from **that** point of view, it becomes a great **comfort**, and takes **away** our fears. And that is exactly what God **meant** it to do. Remember, He is our loving Father, stretching out His everlasting arms to catch us when we are about to fall. His comfort is **sure**. Let no one **rob** you of that comfort as you **Walk Through Your Christian Life** here on **earth**, striving to reach your **heavenly** goal. Amen.

### **Prayers:**

O God of grace, our loving and compassionate God, who gave Your own Son to **die** for every sinner, Your promise is that whoever believes in Him will **not** perish, but will have eternal **life**. Yet, being by nature **dead** in trespasses and sins, we had no **power** to **choose** Christ as our Savior, or to **come** to Him in faith. Dear God, what **we** could **not** do, **You** have done **for** us. Even **before** You created the world You **knew** us and **chose** us to be Your own, through **Christ**. And in due time, You sent the **Holy Spirit** into our hearts to **convert** us. We confess that there is nothing good or pleasing in **us** to make us **worthy** of Your choice, **worthy** to be brought to faith, or **worthy** of eternal life. From first to last, **You** deserve **all** the credit for our conversion and our salvation.

We confess that we daily **sin** and fall **short** of Your glory. Nevertheless, we are **comforted** in knowing that no one can bring any **charge** against us, Your **elect**. Nor can anyone **condemn** us, because Christ Jesus who died and was raised to life, now **intercedes** for us at Your right hand. From our hearts we **thank** You that You have **chosen, converted, justified, and saved** us.

Now we ask You to sanctify us **continually** through Your Holy Spirit, so that we may **put away** sin, and abound in **good** works. Help us **demonstrate** our election and calling by living **holy** lives from day to day, **nourished** in our faith and love by a vigorous study of Your saving **Word**. Use us to gather **others** of Your elect into the kingdom of heaven by making us able **witnesses** of Christ. Move hearts **everywhere** to call on His name for salvation.

O Lord, we are confident that **You** will take care of us, **providing** us with everything necessary for our physical and spiritual well-being. Take **full charge** of our lives. **Guide, protect, and defend** us, and help us **prosper** in our individual callings. May we always take **delight** in **servicing** You. Amen.

#### **The Lord's Prayer:**

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be Thy name;  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses  
    as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
But deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.  
Amen.**

#### **Hymn #392 - "Not Unto Us"**

**Not unto us, not unto us be glory, Lord;  
Not unto us but to your name be praise;  
Not unto us but to your name all honor be giv'n  
For matchless mercy, forgiveness, and grace.**

**Amazing grace - that chose us e'er the worlds were made;  
Amazing grace - that sent your Son to save;  
Amazing grace - that robed us in your righteousness  
And taught our lips to sing glory and praise.**

**O faithful love - that shepherded through faithless years;  
Forgiving love - that led us to your truth;**

**Unyielding love - that would not let us turn from you  
But sent us forth to speak pardon and peace.**

**Not unto us but to your name be glory, Lord,  
For grace so rich, so wide, so high, so free.  
Abide with us till trav'ling days are over and done,  
And pilgrim feet lead us home, Lord, to you.**

P: Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your Word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Your people Israel. 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.

**The Blessing:**

P: The Lord bless you and keep you,  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C: Amen.

**Hymn #470 - *"Praise to You and Adoration"***

**Praise to you and adoration,  
Blessed Jesus, Son of God,  
Who, to serve your own creation,  
Came to share our flesh and blood.  
Guide me that I never may  
From your fold or pastures stray,  
But with zeal and joy exceeding  
Follow where your steps are leading.**

**Hold me ever in your keeping;  
Comfort me in pain and strife.  
In my laughter and my weeping  
Be with me throughout my life.  
Give me greater love for you,  
And my faith and hope renew  
In your birth, your life, and passion,  
In your death and resurrection.**