

Welcome to Worship at
Trinity Lutheran Church, Osceola, WI
Midweek Lent 5 - March 25, 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 #452 (TLH) - *"The Son of God Goes Forth to War"*

The Son of God goes forth to war
A kingly crown to gain.
His blood-red flag streams wide and far
Who follows in his train?
All those who drink Christ's cup of woe,
Triumphant over pain,
And patient bear their cross below
They follow in his train.

Saint Stephen, looking to the sky,
Saw heav'n beyond the grave
The Son of Man by God on high,
And called on him to save.
Like Christ, the pardon rare displayed,
While on the cross in pain,
This saint for his assailants prayed
Who follows in his train?

A glorious band - the chosen few,
On whom the Spirit came
Because sure hope in Christ they knew
In peace met cross and flame.
They suffered ridicule and scorn,
With hatred they were slain.
Now crowns their faithful heads adorn

Who follows in their train?

A noble army, robed in white,
From ev'ry tribe and race,
Around the Savior's throne delight
To see his glorious face.
They held the narrow path to heav'n
Through peril, toil, and pain.
O God, to us may grace be giv'n
To follow in their train!

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.**

The Passion History - Part 5

Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, and said to them, "You brought this man to me as one who is misleading the people. Look, I have examined him before you. I have found no basis for a charge against this man regarding the things of which you accuse him. Herod did not either, because he sent him back to us. See, he has done nothing worthy of death. So I will punish him and then release him." At the time of the feast the governor had a custom: to release one prisoner to the crowd, whomever they wanted. At that time they were holding a notorious prisoner named Barabbas, who had been thrown in prison for a

rebellion in the city and for murder. The crowd came up and began to ask him to do what he usually did for them. So when they were assembled, Pilate said to them, "Do you want me to release the King of the Jews to you? Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas - or Jesus, who is called Christ?" Pilate in fact knew that they had handed Jesus over to him because of envy. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, Pilate's wife sent him a message. She said, "Have nothing to do with that righteous man, since I have suffered many things today in a dream because of him." But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus put to death. The governor asked them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" They all shouted together with one voice: "Take him away! Release Barabbas to us!" Pilate said to them, "Then what do you want me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews? What should I do with Jesus, who is called Christ?" They all said to him, "Crucify him!" But the governor said, "Why? What has he done wrong?" But they kept shouting even louder: "Crucify him!" Pilate addressed them again, because he wanted to release Jesus, but they kept shouting, "Crucify! Crucify him!" He said to them the third time, "Why? What evil has he done? I have found no grounds for sentencing him to death. So I will whip him and release him." But they kept pressuring him with loud shouts, demanding that he be crucified. And their voices were overwhelming. When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, and that instead it was turning into a riot, he decided that what they demanded would be done. He took water, washed his hands in front of the crowd, and said, "I am innocent of this righteous man's blood. It is your responsibility." Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. The governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole cohort of soldiers around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him. They twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand, knelt in front of him, and mocked him by saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spit on him, took the staff, and hit him repeatedly on his head. They kept hitting him in the face. Pilate went outside again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him." Then Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!" When the chief priests and temple police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!" Pilate told them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no basis for a charge against him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God." When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. He went back inside the palace again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. So Pilate asked him, "Are you not talking to me? Don't you know that I have the authority to release you or to crucify you?" Jesus

answered, “You would have no authority over me at all, if it had not been given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you has the greater sin.” From then on Pilate tried to release Jesus. But the Jews shouted, “If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar! Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar!” When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside. He sat down on the judge’s seat at a place called the Stone Pavement, or Gabbatha in Aramaic. It was about the sixth hour on the day of preparation for the Passover. Pilate said to the Jews, “Here is your king!” They shouted, “Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your king?” “We have no king but Caesar!” the chief priests answered. So then Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be crucified. After they had mocked him, the soldiers took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him with Jesus carrying his own cross. As they were going out of the city, a certain man, Simon of Cyrene (the father of Alexander and Rufus), was passing by on his way in from the country. They placed the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. A large crowd of the people was following him, including women who were mourning and wailing for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. Yes, be sure of this: the days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the childless women, the wombs that never gave birth, and the breasts that never nursed.’ Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us!’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’ For if they do these things to the green wood, what will happen to the dry?” (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 #472 - “*Rise, My Soul, to Watch and Pray*”

**Rise, my soul, to watch and pray;
From your sleep awaken!
Be not by the evil day
Unawares o'ertaken.
For the foe, well we know,
Is a harvest reaping
While the saints are sleeping.**

**Watch! Let not the wicked world
With its lies defeat you
Lest with bold deceptions hurled
It betray and cheat you.
Watch and see lest there be
Faithless friends to charm you
Who but seek to harm you.**

**Watch against yourself, my soul,
Lest with grace you trifle;
Let not self your thoughts control
Nor God's mercy stifle.
Pride and sin lurk within,
All your hopes to shatter;
Heed not when they flatter.**

**But while watching also pray
To the Lord unceasing.
God protects you day by day,
Strength and faith increasing,
So that still mind and will
Shall unite to serve him
And forever love him.**

**The Sermon: John 18:38
 "The Warrior Faces Satan's Ally, The World"
 Pastor Tim Blauert**

"What is truth?" Pilate said to him. After he said this, he went out again to the Jews and told them, "I find no basis for a charge against him." (John 18:38, EHV)

Dear friends in Jesus Christ, the one crucified to redeem us from all sin:

Most wars are fought not one-on-one, but with allies. World War II featured the Allied forces of the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union, along with other countries, versus the Axis powers of Nazi Germany, Japan and Italy. In the first Gulf War in 1991, the United States had dozens of allies to fight against Iraq. In the second Gulf War in 2003, the United States had just a few allies, and while Saddam Hussein was dethroned, the objective of a peaceful Iraq eluded us.

When the Son of God went forth to war for us, he had to fight the devil single-handedly to win our salvation. However, Satan had allies who also warred against our Savior Jesus. Tonight we look at how **The Warrior Faces Satan's Ally, the World.**

It was early Friday morning when the Sanhedrin, the council of the Jews, brought Jesus to the Roman governor Pontius Pilate, charging Jesus with crimes, including "He claims to be Christ, a king." Pilate interrogated the defendant privately, "Are you the king of the Jews?" In the inquiry Jesus witnessed to Pilate, pointing out how he certainly wasn't a king in an earthly sense—where was his army to defend him?—but his kingdom was from another place, from heaven. Jesus gave his testimony, "I am, as you say, a king. For this reason I was born, and for this reason I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."

What a great opening Jesus gave to Pilate! It was an invitation for him to listen to what the truth was, and how he could be saved from sin. But Pilate was a sophisticated man of the world, a cynical politician. He was a skeptic of anything that claimed to be truth. And so he spurned Jesus. With a sneer, a dismissive tone, Pilate replied to Jesus, "What is truth?"

"What is truth?" That's the attitude of the world today. You may have heard of the word "postmodernism." Postmodernism is the philosophy that there's no such thing as absolute truth, that what might be real or true for one person might not be for another. They'll say, "If Christ works for you, fine; but don't claim he's the only truth—other religions have their own truth, if you really want to call it that." Tolerance, not truth, is what they look for.

“What is truth?” The world attacks the truth of the Bible. They deny the words of the Bible that God created the world in six days and they put their trust in evolutionary theory instead. You find that everywhere in the world: in a public high school or secular college classroom, in a library and a museum--evolution permeates worldly thought. The changeless laws of God are under attack, too. Modern morality tries to redefine marriage, label things like fornication and homosexuality as harmless lifestyles. They call abortion a “choice” instead of sin, and they oppose God’s will directly.

We feel those attacks of the world too. Satan’s ally, the world, has an ally within all of us. It’s called our sinful nature, the Old Adam. We too face a daily struggle with our own sinful inclinations. There’s a part of us that also doesn’t want Jesus, that wants to replace God’s truth with our own so-called “truth.” You hear it inside of us, “Yeah, the Bible says not to lie, but I’ve got to do what’s right for me,” placing our will ahead of God’s will. Our own sinful nature joins Pilate in sneering, “What is truth?”

But Jesus, God’s own Son, came to be our warrior to single-handedly fight against Satan’s ally, the world, and to rescue us from our own sinfulness. “What is truth?” Pilate was looking right at him. Jesus is the truth!

Even Pilate recognized truth in what Jesus said. After interrogating the defendant, the governor returned to the leaders of the Jews to tell them, “I find no basis for a charge against him.” But Jesus’ truth went further than that. The evening before this, Jesus told his disciples, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through me” [Jn. 14:6]. Do you want the truth? Do you want to make sense of life? Look to Jesus. He has the answers to our questions, “Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going?” Jesus knows the truth. Jesus is the truth.

Jesus revealed the truth of how we sinners can get back to God. John records, “To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, ‘If you remain in my Word, you are really my disciples. You will also know the truth, and the truth will set you free’” [Jn. 8:31,32]. Jesus’ word reveals the truth. His Word on the cross, “It is finished” as he was dying, sets us free from our sins. The Bible’s true Word at the empty grave, “He is risen!” sets us free from death and hell. His Word, his

truth, sets us free from Satan's snares, and it also defends us from the world's attacks and opposition of Jesus. Jesus is the truth, the truth that sets us free.

The evening before he was placed on trial, Jesus warned his disciples, "Because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of it, for that very reason the world hates you"[Jn. 15:18,19]. If they hated Jesus and demanded his crucifixion—which Pilate sanctioned, since he cared nothing about the truth—we can expect the world to hate us believers also. We'll face persecution, rejection from those who sneer at us for holding to what the Bible says, when we say that Jesus is the only way to heaven. Jesus tells us what he told the disciples, "In this world you are going to have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." Jesus, the Truth, faced Satan and his ally, the world, fought, and won the war!

While Jesus single-handedly fought and won the war against Satan and the world for us, we are not passive participants of this war. We also are active at war, as Paul told the Corinthians, "Even though we walk in the flesh, we do not wage war in the way the sinful flesh does. Certainly, the weapons of our warfare are not those of the flesh, but weapons made powerful by God for tearing down strongholds" [2 Co. 10:3,4]. The weapon at our disposal is God's true Word. That Word that we live by, is the Word we can use to proclaim the truth, to proclaim Jesus in this world that needs the truth. Remember, God so loved the *world* that he gave his one and only Son. Proclaim the word, and let the Holy Spirit work in that Word to win over those God has chosen.

Yes, there will still be those like Pilate who will scoff and shrug, "What is truth?", refusing to believe. But take heart! They will not overcome. Jesus overcame the world with his truth and grace. And Jesus is still praying for us while we're in this world, "My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth" [Jn. 17:15-17]. Amen.

The peace of God which surpasses all understanding will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Prayers:

O precious Savior and Redeemer, during these special days of Lent, let our hearts and faith review everything You did for us so that we might have life with You. When we sin, lead us to remember how You lived a perfect life to make up

for our sins. When our sins trouble us, lead us to recall how You suffered the punishment we deserved. Use our worship and our study during this season so that our faith might be strengthened and our fruits of faith increased. 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 # 477 - "What is the World to Me?"

**What is the world to me
With all its vaunted pleasure
When you, and you alone,
Lord Jesus, are my treasure!
You only, dearest Lord,
My soul's delight shall be;
You are my peace, my rest.
What is the world to me!**

**The world seeks to be praised
And honored by the mighty,
Yet never once reflects
That they are frail and flighty.
But what I truly prize
Above all things is he,
My Jesus, he alone.
What is the world to me!**

**The world seeks after wealth
And all that money offers,
Yet never is content**

**Though gold should fill its coffers.
I have a higher good;
Content with it I'll be;
My Jesus is my wealth -
What is the world to me!**

**What is the world to me!
My Jesus is my treasure,
My life, my health, my wealth,
My friend, my love, my pleasure,
My joy, my crown, my all,
My bliss eternally.
Once more then I declare:
What is the world to me!**

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 #355 - "Take the World, But Give Me Jesus!"

**Take the world, but give me Jesus!
All its joys are but a name.
But his love abides forever,
Through eternal years the same.**

Refrain:

**Oh, the height and depth of mercy;
Oh, the length and breadth of love!
Oh, the fullness of redemption,
Pledge of endless life above!**

**Take the world, but give me Jesus,
Sweetest comfort of my soul.
With the Savior watching o'er me,
I can sing, though thunders roll.**

Refrain:

**Oh, the height and depth of mercy;
Oh, the length and breadth of love!
Oh, the fullness of redemption,
Pledge of endless life above!**

**Take the world, but give me Jesus!
In his cross my trust shall be
Till with clearer, brighter vision
Face to face my Lord I see.**

Refrain:

**Oh, the height and depth of mercy;
Oh, the length and breadth of love!
Oh, the fullness of redemption,
Pledge of endless life above!**