

Welcome to Worship at
Trinity Lutheran Church, Osceola, WI
Pentecost 15 - September 5, 2021

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 #393 - *"If Your Beloved Son, O God"*

**If your beloved Son, O God,
Had not to earth descended
And in our mortal flesh and blood
Had not sin's power ended,
Then this poor, wretched soul of mine
In hell eternally would pine
Because of my transgression.**

**But now I find sweet peace and rest;
Despair no more reigns o'er me.
No more am I by sin oppressed,
For Christ has borne sin for me.
Upon the cross for me he died
That, reconciled, I might abide
With you, my God, forever.**

**I trust in him with all my heart;
Now all my sorrow ceases.
His words abiding peace impart;
His blood from guilt releases.
Free grace through him I now obtain;
He washes me from ev'ry stain,
And pure I stand before him.**

**All righteousness by works is vain;
The law brings condemnation.
True righteousness by faith I gain;
Christ's work is my salvation.
His death, that perfect sacrifice,**

**Has paid the all-sufficient price;
In him my hope is anchored.**

**My guilt, O Father, you have laid
On Christ, your Son, my Savior.
Lord Jesus, you my debt have paid
And gained for me God's favor.
O Holy Spirit, Fount of grace,
The good in me to you I trace;
In faith and hope preserve me.**

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: Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8

So now, Israel, listen to the statutes and the ordinances that I am teaching you, and carry them out so that you may live and so that you may enter the land that the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving to you and take possession of it. Do not add to the word that I am commanding you, and do not subtract from it, so that you keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you. Keep them and put them into practice, because in this way your wisdom and your understanding will be recognized by all the people who hear about all these statutes; and they will say, "This great nation is certainly a wise and understanding people," because what other great nation is there that has a god as close to it as the Lord our God is to us whenever we call on him? What other great nation is there

that has statutes and ordinances as righteous as this entire law that I am presenting to you today? (EHV)

Psalm 119c

Refrain: Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

**Oh, how I 'love your law!
I meditate on it 'all day long.**

**I have more insight than all my 'teachers,
For I meditate on your 'statutes.**

**I have more understanding than the 'elders,
For I obey your 'precepts.**

Refrain: Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

**I have kept my feet from every 'evil path
So that I might 'obey your Word.**

**I have not departed 'from your laws,
For you yourself have 'taught me.**

**How sweet are your words 'to my taste,
Sweeter than honey 'to my mouth!**

**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: Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

Second Lesson: Ephesians 6:10-20

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can stand against the schemes of the Devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. For this reason, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to

take a stand on the evil day and, after you have done everything, to stand. Stand, then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness fastened in place, and with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace tied to your feet like sandals. At all times hold up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the Evil One. Also take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. At every opportunity, pray in the Spirit with every kind of prayer and petition. Stay alert for the same reason, always persevering in your intercession for all the saints. Pray for me also, that when I open my mouth a message will be given to me that boldly reveals the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may speak about it boldly, as it is necessary for me to speak. (EHV)

Verse of the Day: Alleluia. Your words became a joy to me, and the delight of my heart. Alleluia.

Gospel: Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

The Pharisees and some of the experts in the law came from Jerusalem and gathered around Jesus. They saw some of his disciples eating bread with unclean (that is, unwashed) hands. In fact, the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they scrub their hands with a fist, holding to the tradition of the elders. When they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other traditions they adhere to, such as the washing of cups, pitchers, kettles, and dining couches. The Pharisees and the experts in the law asked Jesus, “Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders? Instead they eat bread with unclean hands.” He answered them, “Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites. As it is written: These people honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. They worship me in vain, teaching human rules as if they were doctrines. “You abandon God’s commandment but hold to human tradition like the washing of pitchers and cups, and you do many other such things.” He called the crowd to him again and said, “Everyone, listen to me and understand. There is nothing outside of a man that can make him unclean by going into him. But the things that come out of a man are what make a man unclean. In fact, from within, out of people’s hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual sins, theft, murder, adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, unrestrained immorality, envy, slander, arrogance, and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within and make a person unclean.” (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 #459 - *“O God, My Faithful God”*

**O God, my faithful God,
O Fountain ever flowing,
Who good and perfect gifts
In mercy are bestowing,
Give me a healthy frame,
And may I have within
A conscience free from blame,
A soul unhurt by sin.**

**Grant me the strength to do
With ready heart and willing
Whatever you command,
My calling here fulfilling,
That I do what I should
While trusting you to bless
The outcome for my good,
For you must give success.**

**Keep me from saying things
That later need recalling;
Grant that no idle words
May from my lips be falling,
But then, when in my place
I must and ought to speak,
My words grant pow’r and grace
Lest I offend the weak.**

**Lord, let me win my foes
With kindly words and actions,
And let me find good friends
For counsel and correction.
Help me, as you have taught,
To love both great and small
And by your Spirit's might
To live in peace with all.**

**The Sermon: Ephesians 6:10-20
“Don’t Just Stand There, Do Something”**

I’d like to begin today by talking about **standing**. Standing is **easy**, but it is also very **complex**. Standing involves the control of many different **muscles**, combined with the use of **balance**. Standing is an ability which we don’t **have at birth** - it’s something which must be **learned**. When I think about **standing** as opposed to walking, running, hopping, skipping, or jumping; standing seems to be pretty **boring**. After all, standing involves very little **action** - and yet, it’s still very **important**. Children need to learn how to **stand** before they can move on to learning more **interesting** actions. Those of you who have **toddlers** around the house realize that when children have learned how to **stand**, it opens the door to many **other** avenues for them. And that’s **good**. After all, there’s very little to be gained by **standing**, if that’s **all** we’re going to do. So, in our text today, the Apostle Paul exhorts us to **move ahead** - to make **full use** of our gifts and abilities and privileges. He says, **Don’t Just Stand There - Do Something!**

In order to have a clear picture of where you want to **go** and what you want to **do**, it’s helpful to know where you **are** when you **begin**. In other words, where do you **stand**? That’s probably the first question people ask of **politicians** when they present themselves for public office. “Where do you **stand**? Where do you stand on the **gun control** issue? Where do you stand on **property taxes**? Where do you stand on **social security**? Where do you stand on the role of the **military**? Where do you stand on teaching **critical race theory** in our schools? Where do you **stand**?” These are **important** questions, because people want to know what your **perspective** is. They want to know where you are **coming** from. How politicians **answer** the question, “Where do you **stand**,” can mean the difference between **election** and **rejection**.

The question is also important for us as **Christians**. Where do you **stand**? Listen again to the Apostle Paul, as he tells us where we **should** stand. “*Finally, be*

*strong in the **Lord** and in his mighty **power**. Put on the **full armor** of God, so that you can stand against the schemes of the **Devil**. For our struggle is **not** against flesh and blood, but against the **rulers**, against the **authorities**, against the world rulers of this **darkness**, against the **spiritual forces** of evil in the heavenly places.” We are to take our stand **in the Lord**, and **against** all the spiritual forces of **evil** - including the **Devil** himself. Starting out in the **Lord** is vitally important, because if we’re not standing in the **Lord**, we have no **strength** - and we **need** strength and lots of it, because we are involved in a **difficult** struggle.*

The word here which is translated **struggle** originally meant a **wrestling** match. But in **this** context it takes on an even **deeper** significance. In our text, Paul doesn’t describe a mere **wrestling** match, he describes a **war** - an all-out, winner-take-all, life-and-death battle against **fierce** enemies wielding **deadly** weapons! God wants to be sure that we don’t become **complacent** - either by **overestimating** ourselves, or by **underestimating** our enemies. Remember that the Devil is a **liar** and the **father** of lies, and that he will use his bag of tricks and deceptions to lead us astray in many different ways. He may try to undermine our **doctrinal** position, or relax our **moral** standards. He may try to overthrow our faith with a **bold** and **outright** lie, as he did in the Garden of Eden when he told Eve that she would not die from eating the fruit which God had forbidden. Or he may choose instead to **gradually** erode away our faith, a little **here**, and a little **there**. Satan has even succeeded in convincing some people that he, the Devil, doesn’t really **exist**. That may sound **foolish** to you, but people who don’t believe that the Devil **exists** also don’t **guard** themselves **against** that **roaring lion** who seeks to devour them. Yes, the Devil is **tricky** - he is a **master** deceiver - and he is also a fallen **angel**. If he and his cronies were **flesh** and **blood** as we are, then we might stand a 50-50 **chance** against them in battle. But **angelic** strength is **superior** to **human** strength. So, don’t think that you’re **beyond** temptation - that you’re **too smart** to be taken in - that you won’t go **too far** - that you won’t **let** it happen again. That’s exactly what Satan **wants** you to think.

Instead, **stand against** the devil by taking the **help** which is offered to you. That help is described in our text as the **full armor** of God. Paul wrote, “*For this reason, take up the **full armor** of God, so that you will be able to take a **stand** on the **evil** day and, after you have done everything, to **stand**. **Stand**, then, with the **belt of truth** buckled around your waist, with the **breastplate of righteousness** fastened in place, and with the **readiness** that comes from the **gospel** of peace tied to your **feet** like sandals. At all times hold up the **shield of faith**, with which you will be able to extinguish all the **flaming** arrows of the Evil One. Also take the **helmet of salvation** and the **sword of the Spirit**, which is the word of **God**.” There*

you have it - the **full armor** of God - 6 pieces of equipment (5 defensive, 1 offensive) - equipment which is to be **put on** and **used** in the day of **evil**. Please note here that God isn't implying that there is only **one** day of evil. But rather, **any** day can be an evil day - a day of severe or special **temptation** for **yourself** or your **family**, for fellow members of your **church**, or even for people whom you have **never met**. It could come at any **time**, in any **place**, from **anywhere**. So, the only way to be **protected**, is to put on the **full armor** of God - armor which is provided to us at **no charge**, by Jesus our Savior. Allow me to **describe** that armor for you more fully.

The first piece of armor is the **belt of truth**. The belt, or **girdle**, is to be strapped around our waist to protect our **mid-section**. That's very **important**, because the belly is a **soft spot**. It has no **bones** to serve as a natural protection. Therefore, without the truth of God's **Word**, we would be extremely **vulnerable** - an open target for the deceptive lies of Satan. Be sure to **buckle up** with the belt of truth.

The next piece of armor is the **breastplate of righteousness**, and it provides added protection for our heart, lungs, and other **vital** organs. Today we might call it our bulletproof Kevlar vest. It consists of the **righteousness** which Christ has earned for us - and we will need it **often**. We will need it every time Satan reminds us of our **imperfections** - of our countless **sins** against God - of our deepest, darkest **secrets**. Satan doesn't waste any time beating around the bush, he goes straight for the **heart**, seeking to lead us to **despair**. But there's no **need** to despair, because **Jesus** has paid for all our sins in full. The righteousness of Jesus is there to **protect** us, and it's far more valuable and useful than an American Express card - so don't leave home **without** it.

Next come our **shoes**. Now I realize that shoes don't really sound very much like **armor**. Nevertheless, over the years, I remember many people telling me how **important** it is that you have the **right** shoes, that is, shoes which **fit** properly. A **soldier** spends many hours on his feet, and he needs to be sure that his boots won't let him **down**. It is the **Gospel** which provides us with a **solid foundation**, and with **sure-footed** comfort. The shoe of the Gospel fits everyone **perfectly** - so wear it with **pride**.

God has also provided us with the **shield of faith**. The shield of a Roman soldier was **big** - 4 1/2 to 5 feet long - and consequently, it protected the whole **body**. It was also **padded** with leather to extinguish **flaming** arrows. It is interesting that the threat to an individual is no greater with a **flaming** arrow than it

is with a **non**-flaming one. Such arrows only become more dangerous when they strike something **flammable** - because then the fire will **spread** - and so will the **panic**. Satan likes to instill **panic** in our lives. He fires those little arrows at us all the time - convincing us to tell a **little** white lie, to harbor a **little** discontent, or to have a **little** too much self-pride. It doesn't seem like much of a **problem** to the individual, but then again, it only takes one little **match** to completely destroy an entire **forest**! Don't let **any** of Satan's arrows reach you. Use the shield of your **faith** for **protection**. Be **firm** in your faith, and **resist** the Devil.

Finally, our armor wouldn't be complete without a **helmet** for our **head**, and a **sword** for our **hand**. The helmet which protects our entire **communication** and **control** system - our **brain** - is the eternal **salvation** earned by Jesus. It's only fitting that Jesus would place **Himself** in charge of defending the **head**, for in reality as Christians, Jesus **is** our Head. And **last** of all, our **sword** is the Word of **God**. It is the only **offensive** weapon we have been given - but, that's because it's the only one we **need**. James said, "***Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you.***" Use God's **Word** against him, as **Jesus** did, and Satan will head for the **hills**. He has **no desire** to taste the cold, sharp **steel** of the double-edged **Word** of God.

So, here we **are** - **standing** on the battlefield, dressed for total **protection**, and **armed** to the teeth with God's **Word**. Our enemies have all **fled**, or have **fallen** in battle. So, what's **next**? That's where the **theme** for today's sermon comes in - **Don't Just Stand There, Do Something!** And what is it that God wants us to **do**? Well for **one** thing, in the final three verses of our text, God tells us to **pray**. Pray on **all** occasions - use all **kinds** of prayers - pray for the **saints** - pray for the spreading of the **Gospel**. That's what **Paul** did, and it's also what he asked the **Ephesians** to do. When Paul wrote this letter to the Ephesians, he was in **prison** - and Paul knew that in just a short time, he would be pleading his case before the Roman **Emperor**. But I find it interesting that instead of asking the Ephesians to pray for his **release** from prison, Paul asked them to pray that he would have the **courage** to boldly **proclaim** the **Gospel** - to the **guards**, to his fellow **prisoners**, and even to the **Emperor** himself.

That's what I would ask of you today - to **pray**. Pray for our **congregation**, and pray for **me**. Pray that we may have healthy **marriages** and **families**. Pray for all our Sunday School **teachers** and **students**. Pray for the members of our Church **Council**, and our church **committees**. Pray for the Lutheran Elementary School and High School **teachers** throughout our **Synod**. Pray for the instructors at our **Colleges** and **Seminary**. Pray for our Home and World **Missionaries**. Pray that **all** of us may boldly proclaim the precious **Gospel** of Jesus Christ. And thank God that

through His **Word** and **Sacraments**, He will bring about a rich **harvest** of souls on Judgment Day - people who will **share** with us the eternal joys of heaven. Amen.
Amen.

Prayers:

O kind and loving Father, we thank You for Your gracious **will**, that no one should **perish**, but that all should come to **repentance**. We thank You that Your will has been **done** in us, for You have **called** us to salvation through **faith** in Your Son. Lead us to **continue** to do the things which You would have us do, that through our words and actions, **others** may be called to faith by the Spirit.

You have also commanded us to let the little **children** come to You, and to bring up **our** children in Your nurture and admonition. Therefore, we ask You to give us Christian **parents** who will faithfully worship **together** with their children - parents who will not only **bring** those children to our Sunday School, but who will also study Your Word **themselves** in our Adult Bible Class. We further ask You to give wisdom, discretion, kindness, and perseverance to all of our **teachers** of God's Word. Teach **them**, that they may teach **others**. And finally, we ask You to give our children humble, teachable, and ready minds - minds which will eagerly **absorb** all the instruction given to them in Your Word. As we ourselves gain more knowledge about You, may You **use** us to spread Your Word to **others**, that all, from the least to the greatest, may praise You both now and forever. 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 #465 - "Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken"

**Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow you.**

**Destitute, despised, forsaken,
You on earth once suffered, too.
Perish ev'ry fond ambition,
All I've ever hoped or known;
Yet how rich is my condition!
God and heav'n are still my own.**

**Let the world despise and leave me;
They have left my Savior, too.
Human hearts and looks deceive me;
You are not, like them, untrue.
And since you have smiled upon me,
God of wisdom, love, and might,
Foes may hate and friends may shun me -
Show your face, and all is bright.**

**Go, then, earthly fame and treasure!
Come, disaster, scorn, and pain!
In your service pain is pleasure;
With your favor loss is gain.
I have called you Abba, Father!
You my all in all shall be.
Storms may howl, and clouds may gather;
All must work for good to me.**

**Haste, my soul, from grace to glory,
Armed by faith and winged by prayer.
All but heav'n is transitory;
God's own hand shall guide you there.
Soon shall end this earthly story;
Swift shall pass the pilgrim days,
Hope soon change to heav'nly glory,
Faith to sight and prayer to praise.**

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 #474 - “Stand Up, Stand Up, for Jesus”

**Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
Ye soldiers of the cross!
Lift high his royal banner;
It must not suffer loss.
From vict’ry unto vict’ry
His army shall he lead
Till ev’ry foe is vanquished
And Christ is Lord indeed.**

**Stand up, stand up for Jesus!
The trumpet call obey;
Forth to the mighty conflict
In this his glorious day!
Ye that are brave, now serve him
Against unnumbered foes;
Let courage rise with danger
And strength to strength oppose.**

**Stand up, stand up for Jesus!
Stand in his strength alone.
The arm of flesh will fail you;
Ye dare not trust your own.
Put on the gospel armor;
Each piece put on with prayer;
Where duty calls or danger,
Be never wanting there.**

**Stand up, stand up for Jesus!
The strife will not be long;
This day the noise of battle,
The next, the victor’s song.
To him that overcometh**

**A crown of life shall be;
He with the King of glory
Shall reign eternally.**