



March 16, 2022 - Third Midweek Lenten Service

In View of God's Mercy: A Series of Services for the Season of Lent

As We Gather: In our "In View of God's Mercy" series, we are looking at our lives through the lens of God's love toward us in the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus. In this service, we ponder the truth that though we may turn away from our God again and again in betrayal, in mercy our Lord continues to call us back into his loving arms for Jesus' sake.

Welcome

Invocation and Call to Worship

Pastor: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.

People: **We are blessed to be a blessing.**

Pastor: The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous and his ears toward their cry.

People: **We are blessed to be a blessing.**

Pastor: When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles.

People: **We are blessed to be a blessing.**

Pastor: The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

People: **We are blessed to be a blessing.**

Pastor: Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit.

People: **We are blessed to be a blessing.**

Pastor: Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

People: **We are blessed to be a blessing.**

Pastor: The Lord redeems the life of his servants.

People: **We are blessed to be a blessing.**

Pastor: None of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

People: **Amen.**

Hymn: LSB 423 "Jesus, Refuge of the Weary"

Confession and Forgiveness

Pastor: "Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit; let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it" (1 Peter 3:10-11). We confess to God that we have often spoken evil and lived deceitfully. We have turned from good to do evil and have pursued betrayal rather than peace.

All: Holy God, we acknowledge that we have betrayed you. We have sinned against you in thought, word and deed. We have not kept our tongues from evil, especially when slandering others. We have not sought peace with others, but have pursued sinful revenge. Forgive our transgressions. Bring reconciliation and restoration to our relationship with you and our relationships with others.

Pastor: We cry to you for mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

(Please silently reflect on the fact that though our sin is great, God's mercy is greater.)

Pastor: Hear the good news! God's Word declares that "the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer" (1 Peter 3:12). In the mercy of Almighty God, his Son Jesus was given to die for you to remove the guilt of your sin. For Christ's sake God forgives you all your sin and gives you his righteousness, making you righteous in his sight. His mercy endures forever because his love for you is steadfast.

People: Amen.

Old Testament Reading ... Jonah 3:1-10

Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you." So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days' journey in breadth. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey. And he called out, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish." When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

Epistle Reading ... 1 Peter 3:9-12

Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing. For "Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit; let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.

Gospel Reading ... Matthew 26:47-56

⁴⁷While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people. ⁴⁸Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the man; arrest him." ⁴⁹Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. ⁵⁰Jesus replied, "Do what you came for, friend." Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus and arrested him. ⁵¹With that, one of Jesus' companions reached for his sword, drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear. ⁵²"Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him, "for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. ⁵³Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?" ⁵⁵In that hour Jesus said to the crowd, "Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I sat in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me. ⁵⁶But this has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

Hymn: LSB 453 "Upon the Cross Extended" vs. 1, 3, 4, 5, & 7

Sermon: Matthew 26:47-56 "Mercy in Betrayal"

Hymn: "The Old Rugged Cross"

1. On a hill far away stood and old rugged cross, The emblem of suffering and shame; And I love that old cross where the dearest and best For a world of lost sinners was slain.

(Chorus) So I'll cherish the old rugged cross Till my trophies at last I lay down; I will cling to the old rugged cross And exchange it some day for a crown.

2. O that old rugged cross, so despised by the world, Has wondrous attraction for me; For the dear lamb of God left His glory above To bear it to dark Calvary. (Chorus)

3. In the old rugged cross, stained with blood so divine, A wondrous beauty I see; For 'twas on that old cross Jesus suffered and died To pardon and sanctify me. (Chorus)

4. To the old rugged cross, I will ever be true, Its shame and reproach gladly bear; Then He'll call me someday to my home far away, Where His glory forever I'll share. (Chorus)

Prayers

Pastor: Almighty and merciful God, we approach your throne of grace today as those who betray you by our disobedience to your will.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: When we are tempted to betray you at the price of greed, point us to the cross where we see the price of grace.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: When we are tempted to betray you at the price of ambition, point us to the cross where we see the price of absolution.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: When we are tempted to betray you at the price of acceptance by the world, point us to the cross where we see our adoption through the Word.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: When we are tempted to betray you at the price of retaliation, point us to the cross where we see the price of redemption.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: We praise you that your faithfulness to us is great and your mercies are new to us every morning.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: In view of your mercy, lead us by your Spirit so that we will say no to traitorous sin and yes to faith-filled righteousness.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: Lead us away from temptation and deliver us from evil.

People: Lord, grant me your grace both to will and to do what pleases you.

Pastor: All these things we pray in the name of Jesus, who suffered in our stead the penalty for betrayal.

People: Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

All: 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.

Benediction

Pastor: May the merciful God, who is faithful to forgive the treachery of traitors, empower you to live according to his good and gracious will, through Jesus Christ to whom be the glory forever!

People: Amen.

Hymn: LSB 887 "Now the Light Has Gone Away"

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