

THE PARABLES OF OUR LORD.

The Parable of the Two Sons or St. Matthew



For description text see preceding page

New Covenant Presbyterian Church
October 1, 2023 10:00am Service



1125 Jamison Corner Road Middletown, DE
(302) 378-4446 www.newcov-church.org

The Worship of God

October 1, 2023 Eighteenth Sunday After Pentecost
World Communion Sunday

Welcome and Announcements

Lay Leader: Pam Leeson

Sharing Our Vision

Preparing Ourselves for Worship During the Musical Prelude ...



The Gospel Message for today calls us to the “way of righteousness.” The danger is that, as we try to answer this call faithfully, we will make it all about us, rather than it being about God – that we will use our efforts to lord it over others who are not like us – those we deem to be outsiders. But “the way of righteousness” is NOT about us, and it is all about God. It is a way of life lived in faithfulness to God. We incarnate the gospel by seeking to live in the way of wisdom, by orienting ourselves toward the truth.

Consider that incarnating the gospel looks a lot like other practices in which some of us partake regularly – such as yoga. We place ourselves under the instruction of a teacher, some days more easily than others. We arrive in disarray – which can be emotional, physical, or intellectual. Sometimes the suggested yoga postures come easily, and other days the entire session comes with resistance, while we regularly check the clock. Other days, we don’t even notice the time as we try postures we never thought we’d be able to do, and unexpectedly, one day we are able to do them, and our new-found ability enhances our lives.

Consider how our attitudes affect what we are able to achieve. So, when our goal is to walk in “the way of righteousness,” our focus surely needs to be on listening to the voice of God, rather than all the other voices swirling around us, grasping for our attention. Just consider....

Preparing to Meet God

Call to Worship

L: As people of Christ,

P: ***We seek to be of the same mind as him.***

L: As people of Christ,

P: ***We seek to LOVE in the way he did.***

L: As people of Christ,

P: ***We seek to do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit.***

L: As people of Christ,

P: **We seek to look to the interests of others.**

L: As people of Christ,

P: **We come together this morning to proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord!**

A: **Come, let us worship the Lord our God JOYFULLY this day!**

Hymn # 464

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

1-Joyful, joyful, we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flowers before thee, opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; drive the gloom of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day.



2-All thy works with joy surround thee, earth and heaven reflect thy rays,
Stars and angels sing around thee, center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain, flowery meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird and flowing fountain, call us to rejoice in thee.

3-Mortals, join the happy chorus which the morning stars began;
Love divine is reigning o'er us, joining all in heaven's plan.
Ever singing, march we onward, victors in the midst of strife,
Joyful music leads us sunward in the triumph song of life.

Prayer of Confession

Holy and merciful God, we confess that we come before you full of ourselves and ask that you empty us and fill us with your Spirit. We have failed to love you above all others and our neighbors as ourselves. We have neglected the less fortunate and have not spoken out for justice for all. We have not fully used the gifts with which you have blessed us to further your kingdom. Forgive us and help us to be your faithful disciples, for we ask all these things in your holy name. And now, holy God, we turn to you in a time of silent prayer that we might confess our sins.....Amen.



Assurance of Pardon

L: Hear these words from the Gospel of John: God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

P: **Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.**

L: Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel-

P: **In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!**

Meeting God in the Word

Children's Message

First Lesson

Imitating Christ's Humility

Philippians 2: 1-13

Lay Leader

**FOR IT IS GOD WHO
WORKS IN YOU TO
WILL AND TO ACT IN
ORDER TO FULFILL
HIS GOOD PURPOSE.**

PHILIPPIANS 2:13

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in

you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

L: This is the Word of the Lord. **P:** *Thanks be to God.*

Second Lesson

Matthew 21: 23-32

Parable of the Two Sons

Carol



When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?' Jesus said to them, 'I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?' And they argued with one

another, 'If we say, "From heaven", he will say to us, "Why then did you not believe him?" But if we say, "Of human origin", we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.' So they answered Jesus, 'We do not know.' And he said to them, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

‘What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, “Son, go and work in the vineyard today.” He answered, “I will not”; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, “I go, sir”; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?’ They said, ‘The first.’ Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I tell you, the tax-collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax-collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

L: This is the Word of the Lord. **P: Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Should I Stay or Should I Go?

Responding to the Word

Hymn # 391

Take My Life

*1-Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee.
Take my moments and my days; let them flow in ceaseless praise,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.*

*2-Take my hands, and let them at the impulse of thy love.
Take my feet, and let them be swift and beautiful for thee,
Swift and beautiful for thee.*

*3-Take my voice, and let me sing, always, only, for my King.
Take my lips, and let them be filled with messages from thee,
Filled with messages from thee.*

*4-Take my silver and my gold, not a mite would I withhold;
Take my intellect, and use every power as thou shalt choose,
Every power as thou shalt choose.*



Litany of Faith

L: Dedication means commitment. It means deciding to follow a particular course of action or thought. For Christians, dedication means commitment to follow in the way of Christ.

P: *But Christ’s way is often hard and demanding. It ends in the cross.*

L: Dedication, means commitment to follow Christ’s way no matter what. Do you have the courage to make such a decision?

P: *We do, with God as our helper, even though our path may be difficult.*

A: *Christ’s way of love is the only way to abundant life and joy, and we commit to follow where he leads.*

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

The Celebration of Our Gifts

God of all times and places, you have entered into our times in Jesus Christ and you are with us now and always in the Spirit. Receive these tokens of our worldly income. Use our money and resources so that, when they are things of the past, we may be received into your priceless home. We pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

The Invitation

The Prayer of Consecration

The Words of Institution

The Sharing of the Elements

The Prayer of Thanksgiving



Going Out to Serve

Hymn # 522*Lord, When I Came into This Life*

1-Lord, when I came into this life you called me by my name;
Today I come, commit myself, responding to your claim.

2-Within the circle of the faith as member of your cast,
I take my place with all the saints of future, present, past.

3-In all the tensions of my life, between my faith and doubt,
Let your great Spirit give me hope, sustain me, lead me out.

4-So, help me in my unbelief and let my life be true:
Feet firmly planted on the earth, my sights set high on you.

**Blessing**

L: You will now leave this place, but God does not leave you.

P: God remains with us, working in us and working through you.

L: Bend your will until it rests safely and firmly in God's hand.

P: We offer our hands to the Lord's work, until the world gives birth to God's perfect peace.

L: And may the blessings

**Response**

*He is Lord – He is Lord. He has risen from the dead, and he is Lord.
Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.*