

## The Fourth Sunday after Trinity

Hymns: 238, 442, 242, 244

The INTROIT

(Ps.27:1-3)

*P: The Lord is my Light and my Salvation;*

**C: whom shall I fear?**

*P: The Lord is the Strength of my life;*

**C: of whom shall I be afraid?**

*P: When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me;*

**C: they stumbled and fell.**

*P: Though an host should encamp against me;*

**C: my heart shall not fear.**

The COLLECT

Grant, O Lord, we beseech Thee, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by Thy governance that Thy church may joyfully serve Thee in all godly quietness; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.

The FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 58:6-12 (NKJV)

“Is this not the fast that I have chosen: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and that you break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; when you see the naked, that you cover him, and not hide yourself from your own flesh? Then your light shall break forth like the morning, your healing shall spring forth speedily, and your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry, and He will say, ‘Here I am.’ “If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, If you extend your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, then your light shall dawn in the darkness, and your darkness shall be as the noonday. The LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought, and strengthen your bones; you shall be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. Those from among you shall build the old waste places; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, the Restorer of Streets to Dwell In.

The GRADUAL

(Ps.79:9,10; 9:4,9)

**P:/C: Forgive our sins, O Lord: lest the heathen say, Where is their God? Help us, O God of our salvation: and for the glory of Thy name deliver us. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!**

**P:/C: O God, Thou sittest in the throne, judging right: be a Refuge for the oppressed in times of trouble. Hallelujah!**

The EPISTLE

Romans 8:18-23 (NKJV)

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but

because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.

The SENTENCE for the Season

(Ps. 119:124)

**P:/C:** Hallelujah! O Lord, deal with Thy servant according unto Thy mercy and teach me Thy statutes. I am Thy servant, give me understanding: **that I may know Thy testimonies. Hallelujah!**

**The HOLY GOSPEL**

**St. Luke 6:36-42 (NKJV)**

Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.

And He spoke a parable to them: "Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch? A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother's eye."

Luke 6:36-42 — "Each Shall Be Just as the Teacher of Him"

INTRODUCTION

- I. BE YE THEREFORE MERCIFUL, JUST AS EVEN THE FATHER OF YOU-ALL MERCIFUL IS
- II. AND NOT JUDGE, EVEN AS NOT EVER YOU-ALL SHOULD BE JUDGED
- III. HAVING BEEN PERFECTED, MOREOVER, EACH SHALL BE JUST AS THE TEACHER OF HIM

CONCLUSION

## The Fourth Sunday after Trinity

Hymns: 238, 442, 242, 244

Luke 6:36-42 — “Each Shall Be Just as the Teacher of Him”

Grace, mercy, and peace to you all from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

The sermon text is the appointed Gospel reading for the Fourth Sunday after Trinity, Luke 6:36-42:

**Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.**

**Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.**

**And He spoke a parable to them: “Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch? A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher. And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye,’ when you yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother’s eye.”**

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### INTRODUCTION

With these words the Lord Jesus declares to us what it means to be true Christians. He declares to us the life that God establishes for His children. He has ordained this life for us and He commands that this life be ours. He calls us into communion with Him so that we live in His Communion with one another. As He is one, so also He causes us to be one in communion with Him. He has ordained it so to be. He has commanded it for our sake. Having been generated by the Holy Spirit through the means of the perfect Gospel, we are perfected to live as those who have been generated by God as His sons of His inheritance. God has called us by means of the Gospel to be like Him.

I. BE YE THEREFORE MERCIFUL, JUST AS EVEN THE FATHER OF YOU-ALL MERCIFUL IS

**“Be ye therefore merciful!”** Therefore? Be ye therefore? This command flows from the explanation given in the preceding verses. What did the Lord Jesus say that would lead His disciples to understand that the result would be a life of mercy?

In verse 35 Jesus says, **“Moreover, you-all love the enemies of you-all and do good and lend, nothing expecting, and shall be the reward of you-all great, and shall be you-all sons of the Most High, because He gracious is to the thankless and evil.”**

And shall be the reward of you-all great! What is this great reward of which the Lord Jesus speaks? The reward is that we shall be acting in accord with the new nature that has been generated within us. The reward is that we shall be known by all who encounter us as the sons of the Most High God. Why? Because when we are merciful and when we do good to others regardless of however they may treat us in return and when we give and lend to others without any expectation of similar action from them, we are acting just like our Father who is in heaven. This is how He acts. When we act like Him, when we act in accord with the new life that He has called us into, then the world counts us to be like Him.

**“Be ye therefore merciful, just as even the Father of you-all merciful is.”**

God is merciful. This is His way. He created the world for us and created us to live in it because of His love for us. He loved us before we existed. He loved us knowing that He would have to redeem us. He loved us knowing how we would rebel against His goodness and seek to find our own version of goodness, a goodness that would destroy His perfect world and our place in His Holy Communion. He loved us so that He established our salvation even before the foundations of the world, sacrificing Jesus even from eternity. He merciful is. He does not choose to be merciful. He is merciful.

We, on the other hand, know nothing of mercy. Self! That is what we care about. Selfish to the core. Hurtful, vengeful, resentful, easily angered, impatient, envious, lustful: these are the adjectives that describe us.

But the LORD our God has shown mercy to us. He has redeemed us with His own life and blood. He has been compassionate toward us and continues to have compassion toward us. He maintains the world for us. He provides for our well being. He comes to us with His words of forgiveness and calls us back into His Holy Communion. He washes us in Holy Water and He feeds us the bread of life and gives us to drink of the wine of life. Through these means He restores us and regenerates us so that we are made to be full of mercy, even as He is. Thus the Lord Jesus commands, be generated therefore merciful, just as even the Father of you-all merciful is.

The Holy Spirit calls us by the Gospel to be regenerated into God’s holiness. Therefore, He commands that this should be and it comes to be in us. Then, we live as those who are as God is.

## II. AND NOT JUDGE, EVEN AS NOT EVER YOU-ALL SHOULD BE JUDGED

**“Judge not, lest ye be judged.”** How sad it is to hear this misquoted and used to the opposite purpose from which the Lord Jesus gave it! How many times has this been used as an excuse not to live according to the mercy of the Most High God, Our Father which art in heaven?

Luke records for us, **“And not judge, even as not ever you-all should be judged.”**

This follows upon and flows from the command that we be regenerated merciful to be like our Father in heaven who merciful is. We are to be like God. We are to understand that this is who we are. God is merciful and we have been regenerated to be like Him. God has decreed that for the sake of the suffering and death of Jesus, we should never be judged. Knowing this, how then can we set ourselves over others as their judges? If God has decreed that no one is to be judged, how can we possibly act as judges over others?

Far from desiring to judge others, our continual desire for all the world shall always be a desire that they should become communicants of God's mercy even as we have been made to be communicants of His mercy. Our continual desire as God's sons is the same desire that was manifested by our Teacher, who came from heaven not to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many. Jesus came not to judge, but to be judged in the place of all as the world's Sinner. His singular desire was and remains the salvation of those who reject and despise Him. Merciful He is toward all.

Having received this merciful judgment for ourselves, we desire what He desires. We want all the world to receive this merciful judgment as well. The judgment of the world was laid upon Jesus so that we all might receive the judgment of righteousness. And this can only come through the revelation of the judgment that Jesus carried for us. If we do not acknowledge our sinfulness and our damned condition, how can we become dependent upon Him as our Savior from our sinfulness and our damned condition?

We are commanded to have the same mercy as our Heavenly Father. He speaks the judgement against sin not to condemn us, but to call us to His means of grace where He abundantly supplies the new life that is in Christ Jesus in the Holy Communion of God. The fact is that we already stand judged by our own actions. The fact is that all the world stands judged on account of the self-reliance and stubborn refusal to trust in God above all things. WE, the entire human race, have judged ourselves!

God thunders with His holy Law so that we may recognize our judgment and be called into His presence to receive His judgment of mercy. Yes! Mercy is a judgment! It is God's judgment proclaimed for us in the proclamation of the Lord's death till He comes!

But if we, His sons, refuse to proclaim this purely and without compromise, willingly suffering with our Lord Jesus the rejection that accompanies such purity, how can we truly present God's mercy to anyone? Surely the world will mock what it counts as such naivety. Surely the world will judge us as thinking ourselves better than others. But is this such a high price to pay for the sake of God's mercy? Is this such a high price considering that perhaps a few souls will hear the truth and be converted by the Holy Spirit through our witness to God's merciful judgment of love? Is it really a hard thing at all to be judged by the world as being like our Father in heaven? Is this not rather the highest earthly reward that we can receive?

III. HAVING BEEN PERFECTED, MOREOVER, EACH SHALL BE JUST AS THE TEACHER OF HIM

**And He spoke a parable to them: "Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch? A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.**

Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch?

When the world cries out that we should not judge them, they are speaking as blind men who have not beheld the glory of the Most High God. They do not know the life that God has commanded that they should receive from Him. But if we, who have seen, act as though we have not seen, will we not fall into the ditch with them? If we presume to be above our teacher, who plainly spoke the clear judgment of God against sin and against false doctrine and against compromise of practice in the Church, how can we expect to lead anyone anywhere except back into the abyss?

Rather, our Lord Jesus instructs us, **“Having been perfected, moreover, each shall be just as the Teacher of him.”**

The Lord Jesus came to the world as a baby, in the exact same way as we do, except that His only Father is God. Jesus has no earthly father. Thus, in Him, the lineage of death is broken. Since He lived perfectly, since He lived completely in the will of His Father, the perfect life has been restored for us. Since He exchanged His perfect life for our life of sin, taking our sin and carrying it to the grave, our sin no longer has the power to steal the life of perfection from us. In Christ we are made to be like God again. In Christ we are perfected or sanctified. In Christ we are perfectly human again. Regenerated into Christ Jesus we are again created in the image of God.

How sad it is that we, who have been regenerated into the image of Christ, who have received the merciful judgment of absolution, so often place ourselves above our Teacher. Jesus taught us and all the world by His perfect life what is lacking in the fallen nature of the sinful human race. Jesus taught us the meaning of purity. Jesus taught us the life that God created for us. Jesus taught us the meaning of true mercy. Jesus came not to judge, and yet by His perfect life judgment was taught.

Having been perfected or sanctified through the means of God’s grace, shall we not practice what we have learned? Is it possible that we could be more merciful than our Lord Jesus? Is it possible that we can improve on His mercy by not living the life of perfection that He has won for us? Can we join ourselves to imperfection and still be able to proclaim the perfect life of Jesus?

Surely we must show God’s judgment against sin as we gather to confess our own sinfulness and receive God’s mercy anew, remembering the Sabbath Day and keeping it as holy as we come to the One who is holy and who mercifully bestows His holiness upon us through the pure means of grace. Yes, this most assuredly separates us from those who say that the perfect Church cannot exist. Yes, this surely separates us from those who say the pure doctrine cannot be known with certainty. Yes, this surely separates us from those who say that the leaven can exist in God’s Church. Yes, this surely separates us from those who remain in mixed communions. But to what does it separate us? It separates us to God, to live in and by His merciful judgment. It separates us from all that would delude us and deceive us into any kind of self-reliance. It separates us from reliance upon anything other than the mercy of God. Moreover, it separates us from the false witness of the devil, who would have us wonder, **“Did God really say?”** Yes, it separates us from setting ourselves above our Teacher, so that we rely only upon the life that He bestows in His abundant mercy.

#### CONCLUSION

**“Each shall be just as the Teacher of him!”** This is God’s promise to us as we continue in His Holy Communion into which He has joined us through Baptism. This is His promise to us as we, the Baptized, continue in His Holy Communion, confessing the pure Gospel of His mercy, partaking of the pure means of grace by which His mercy is renewed in us again and again. What greater joy can we imagine than to be known as those who are sanctified and perfected to be like Jesus? Surely there is no more wonderful judgment that can be made concerning us! In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus forever. Amen.