Church of the Lutheran Confession's

Ministry By Mail

"Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Romans 10:17

24th Sunday after Trinity

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Scripture Readings

Exodus 3:1-15; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-8, 13-17

Hymns from The Lutheran Hymnal (1941)

#10 V:1-3| #743 | #200 V: 1, 2, 7, 8 | #46

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Prayer of the Day

Living God, Your almighty power is made known chiefly in showing mercy and pity. Grant us the fullness of Your grace to lay hold of Your promises and live forever in Your presence through Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God,now and forever. Amen.

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Sermon Text

(Luke 20:27-40 NKJ) Then some of the Sadducees, who deny that there is a resurrection, came to Him and asked Him, 28 saying: "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, having a wife, and he dies without children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. 29 "Now there were seven brothers. And the first took a wife, and died without children. 30 "And the second took her as wife, and he died childless. 31 "Then the third took her, and in like manner the seven also; and they left no children, and died. 32 "Last of all the woman died also. 33 "Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife does she become? For all seven had her as wife." 34 And Jesus answered and said to them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. 35 "But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the

resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; 36 "nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. 37 "But even Moses showed in the burning bush passage that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord`the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' 38 "For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him." 39 Then some of the scribes answered and said, "Teacher, You have spoken well." 40 But after that they dared not question Him anymore.

Theme

The Power of His Word and Resurrection

John chapter nine recounts the story of a man who was born blind and healed by Jesus. Later in the chapter, the Pharisees confront this man and argue intensely about why Jesus cannot be the Christ, the Messiah. The man responds to their accusations with a simple statement: "One thing I know: I was blind, but now I see."

With what power shall we confront skeptics, philosophers, and the self-proclaimed wise men of our age? Is it with great deeds or complicated logical arguments? Rhetoric or clever wordplay? What miracles or wonders will prove that we are right and they are wrong? Our text this morning reminds us that we need none of these things. We do not rely on witty retorts. Instead, it is the simple and straightforward Word of God that destroys the convoluted edifices of human imaginations and Satan's temptations.

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 says: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."

We don't need to call down fire from heaven. All we need is the simple Word of God. Like the man born blind, there is one thing we know: Jesus was dead, but now He lives—and so shall we.

In our text, it is not cleverness that wins the day, but the clear Word of God. That Word makes it evident that, whether we understand it fully or not, the resurrection is real. We know what awaits us on the other side of death. God's power can raise us from the dead, and His Word can work through that power to expose human pride and soften our own hardened hearts. Even if others refuse to listen, we know the power of God which is present now in His Word and will be revealed in the resurrection.

The Sadducees

The Sadducees were a sect that was both political and religious. Their main concern was the temple and its religious rites. Despite their strict adherence to these laws, they did not believe in angels or in the resurrection of the dead. They only accepted the first five books of Moses as authoritative Scripture. That is why Jesus chooses a passage

from Exodus. They believed this was their chance to demonstrate their cleverness and to dismiss the idea of the resurrection as foolish.

Jesus silences them—not with a single verse, but with one powerful verb: "I am the God of Abraham..."

Regarding the resurrection, God's Word is clear: John 5:28-29 states: “The hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth— those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of condemnation.”

All the dead will be raised—whether they are cremated, mummified, or buried. It makes no difference to the Lord. We may not grasp how this will occur, but we shouldn’t expect to understand it fully. It’s not something we’ve experienced yet, but we know it will happen.

1 John 3:2 assures us: “It has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

Facing Attacks on God's Word

We are often subjected to similar “clever attacks” against God's Word. When faced with such arguments, we don’t need to respond with our own cleverness. Debates based on human wit rarely prove who is right; at best, they only showcase who is more cunning. Instead, we point others to God's Word. It is God’s Word which is able to break open the heart. They may not care what God's Word says, but as Abraham told the rich man, “They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.” (Luke 16:29) If they refuse to listen to God's Word, no miracle or argument will change their minds, even if someone rises from the dead.

God’s Word can soften hardened hearts; our cleverness cannot. Jesus wins His argument here in the text through the clarity of God’s Word. It is through His Word that He still wins today. That same power will call us out of our graves at the end of the age.

The Levirate Law

The Sadducees refer to the levirate law, which comes from the Hebrew word Levir, meaning “your husband's brother.” This regulation is found in Deuteronomy 25:5 and following. The law states that if a man dies without leaving a son, his brother is to marry the widow and raise up an heir for his brother. The purpose of this law was to preserve the family name and inheritance.

The Sadducees tried to use this law against Jesus, imagining a scenario in the resurrection to challenge the idea of life after death. They considered it absurd, imagining that such a law would be meaningless in the resurrection.

But Jesus once again silences them, not with a lengthy argument, but with Scripture. This reveals a common tactic of those who deny God’s Word. They attempt

to twist God's Word against Itself, turn one passage against another. Yet, Jesus pointed out that their mistake was rooted in not truly understanding either the Scriptures or the power of God.

When God's Word seems to say different or even contradictory things at first glance, approaching it with prayer and humility allows God's Spirit to help us interpret and understand. We will see that these passages illuminate each other rather than contradict.

Jesus' Temptation in the Wilderness

Recall how Jesus responded to Satan's temptations in the wilderness. He relied on simple, clear passages from Scripture:

• To resist Satan's suggestion to turn stones into bread, Jesus quoted: "Man shall not live by bread alone."

• To counter the temptation to jump from the temple, He said: "You shall not tempt the Lord your God."

• To refuse Satan's offer of worldly power, Jesus declared: "You shall worship the Lord your God."

It's the straightforward, clear Word of God that can stop Satan and human cleverness in their tracks.

The Power of God's Word

It is God's Word that will call people out of the grave on the last day. In Ezekiel, it was the Word of God that caused bones to come together and come to life. That same power is present with us today—in His Word. The Word that says that your sins have been forgiven. The Word that proclaims your sin is forgiven for Jesus died for it and rose again.

We can trust that just as God's Word raised the dead in Ezekiel's vision, His Word will also raise the dead at the end of time. This is a fact rooted in His power, not in our understanding. Our faith rests in what He has revealed, not in what we can fully comprehend. Amen.

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