



“... you
will
deny
me
three
times.”

Mark 14:30
(NRSV)



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As We Gather

Failure is painful, especially when it comes from our own weakness and fear. Peter knew this all too well. On the night of Jesus' betrayal, he denied his Lord three times—just as Jesus had foretold. But Peter's story did not end in failure, and neither does ours. Today, we hear God's call to repentance from the prophet Jeremiah: "Return to Me, for I am merciful." We are reminded in Hebrews that we can "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" because of Christ's redeeming sacrifice. Though we have denied our Lord in many ways, He does not deny us. Instead, He looks upon us in mercy, calls us to repentance, and restores us by His grace. In Jesus, failure is never the final word.

✠ Preparation for Worship ✠

Hymn

516 – In the Hour of Trial

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Confession and Absolution

P Beloved in the Lord, we come before our holy and merciful God, confessing that we, like Peter, have denied our Lord in thought, word, and deed. We have failed to stand firm in the faith, remained silent when we should have spoken, and sought the approval of the world rather than the approval of God. Yet our Lord, in His grace, calls us to return to Him, for He is merciful and abounding in steadfast love. Let us, therefore, confess our sins before God our Father.

C **Almighty and merciful Father, We confess that we have sinned against You. We have failed You in times of trial, choosing fear over faith, silence over truth, and comfort over obedience. Like Peter, we have denied You in our thoughts, in our words, and in our actions. We have not loved You with our whole heart, nor have we loved our neighbors as ourselves. We come before You in repentance, weeping over our sins, pleading for Your mercy, trusting in the blood of Jesus, who was denied, forsaken, and crucified in our place. Forgive us, O Lord. Restore us, and strengthen us, that we may hold fast the confession of our hope, without wavering, for You who promised are faithful. Amen.**

P "Return, O backsliding children," declares the Lord, "and I will heal your faithlessness." Upon this, your confession, I announce to you the grace of God. Jesus Christ, who was denied before men, did not deny you. He went to the cross for you. He was pierced for your transgressions, and His blood has cleansed you from all sin. Therefore, in the stead 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.

✠ The Service of the Word ✠

Salutation

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray...

... who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Old Testament Reading

Jeremiah 3:12-22

¹² Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say: 'Return, backsliding Israel,' says the LORD; 'I will not cause My anger to fall on you. For I am merciful,' says the LORD; 'I will not remain angry forever.

¹³ Only acknowledge your iniquity, That you have transgressed against the LORD your God, And have scattered your charms To alien deities under every green tree, And you have not obeyed My voice,' says the LORD.

¹⁴ "Return, O backsliding children," says the LORD; "for I am married to you. I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion. ¹⁵ And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding. ¹⁶ "Then it shall come to pass, when you are multiplied and increased in the land in those days," says the LORD,

"that they will say no more, 'The ark of the covenant of the LORD.' It shall not come to mind, nor shall they remember it, nor shall they visit it, nor shall it be made anymore. ¹⁷ "At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem. No more shall they follow the dictates of their evil hearts. ¹⁸ "In those days the house of Judah shall walk

with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given as an inheritance to your fathers. ¹⁹ “But I said: ‘How can I put you among the children And give you a pleasant land, A beautiful heritage of the hosts of nations?’ “And I said: ‘You shall call Me, “My Father,” And not turn away from Me.’ ²⁰ Surely, as a wife treacherously departs from her husband, So have you dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel,” says the LORD. ²¹ A voice was heard on the desolate heights, Weeping and supplications of the children of Israel. For they have perverted their way; They have forgotten the LORD their God. ²² “Return, you backsliding children, And I will heal your backslidings.” “Indeed we do come to You, For You are the LORD our God.

Epistle Reading

Hebrews 10:19-25

¹⁹ Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, ²¹ and having a High Priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Passion History Reading

III. Jesus Before Pilate

Immediately in the morning, the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, came together. They took counsel against Jesus to put Him to death. They led Jesus into their council, saying, “If You are the Christ, tell us.” But He said to them, “If I tell you, you will by no means believe; and if I also ask you, you will by no means answer Me or let Me go. Hereafter the Son of Man will sit on the right hand of the power of God.” Then they all said, “Are You then the Son of God?” And He said to them, “You rightly say that I am.” And they said, “What further testimony do we need? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth.”

Then the whole multitude of them arose, bound Jesus, and led Him away from Caiaphas to the Praetorium and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor; and it was early morning.

Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that Jesus had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” And they said, “What is that to us? You see to it!” Then he threw down the pieces of

silver in the temple and departed; and went and hanged himself. And falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out.

But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because they are the price of blood." And they took counsel and bought with them the Potter's Field to bury strangers in. Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who was priced, whom they of the children of Israel priced; and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me."

Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the Praetorium, and it was early morning. And the Jews themselves did not enter into the Praetorium lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover. Pilate then went out to them, and said, "What accusation do you bring against this Man?" They answered and said to him, "If He were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him up to you." Then Pilate said to them, "You take Him, and judge Him according to your law." Therefore the Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death," that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which He spoke, signifying by what death He would die. And they began to accuse Him, saying, "We found this Fellow perverting the nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King."

Then Pilate entered the Praetorium again, and called Jesus. Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked Him, saying, "Are You the king of the Jews?" Jesus answered him, "Are you speaking for yourself on this, or did others tell you this about Me?" Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You to me. What have You done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here." Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered and said to him, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?"

And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to the chief priests and the crowd, "I find no fault in this Man." And the chief priests accused Him of many things, but while He was being accused, He answered nothing. Then Pilate asked Him again, saying, "Do You answer nothing? Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?" But He answered him not one word, so that Pilate, the governor, marveled greatly.

Confession of Faith

Luther's Explanation of the Second Article

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord.

He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sin, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and His innocent suffering and death.

He did this that I should be His very own, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in eternal righteousness, innocence, and joy; just as He is risen from death, lives and reigns in eternity.

This is most certainly true.

Hymn

320 – Lord Jesus, Think on Me

Sermon Text

Luke 22:61-62

⁶¹ And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, “Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.” ⁶² So Peter went out and wept bitterly.



Sermon

Remember Jesus' Words

Offertory

TLH 179 – On My Heart Imprint Thine Image

On my heart im - print Thine im - age, Bless-ed Je - sus,
King of Grace, That life's rich - es, cares, and plea-sures
Have no pow'r Thee to ef - face. This the su - per -

scrip-tion be: Je-sus, cru-ci - fied for me, Is my Life, my
 hope's Foun-da - tion, And my Glo-ry and Sal-va - tion.

General Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

C 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

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
 The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.
 The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

C Amen.

Hymn

159 – Go to Dark Gethsemane

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