



JUNE 28, 2020

# LOVE FIRST, FIRST LOVE

WEEK DEVOTIONAL BASED ON SUNDAY'S WORSHIP SERVICE

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP SUNDAYS 9:00AM AT  
WWW.FIRSTLUTHERAN-BARRON.ORG OR ON THE RADIO 97.7FM

## Romans 6:12-23

That means you must not give sin a vote in the way you conduct your lives. Don't give it the time of day. Don't even run little errands that are connected with that old way of life. Throw yourselves wholeheartedly and full-time—remember, you've been raised from the dead!—into God's way of doing things. Sin can't tell you how to live. After all, you're not living under that old tyranny any longer. You're living in the freedom of God. So, since we're out from under the old tyranny, does that mean we can live any old way we want? Since we're free in the freedom of God, can we do anything that comes to mind? Hardly. You know well enough from your own experience that there are some acts of so-called freedom that destroy freedom. Offer yourselves to sin, for instance, and it's your last free act. But offer yourselves to the ways of God and the freedom never quits. All your lives you've let sin tell you what to do. But thank God you've started listening to a new master, one whose commands set you free to live openly in his freedom. I'm using this freedom language because it's easy to picture. You can readily recall, can't you, how at one time the more you did just what you felt like doing—not caring about others, not caring about God—the worse your life became and the less freedom you had? And how much different is it now as you live in God's freedom, your lives healed and expansive in holiness? As long as you did what you felt like doing, ignoring God, you didn't have to bother with right thinking or right living, or right anything for that matter. But do you call that a free life? What did you get out of it? Nothing you're proud of now. Where did it get you? A dead end. But now that you've found you don't have to listen to sin tell you what to do, and have discovered the delight of listening to God telling you, what a surprise! A whole, healed, put-together life right now, with more and more of life on the way! Work hard for sin your whole life and your pension is death. But God's gift is real life, eternal life, delivered by Jesus, our Master.

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## HOLDING IN PRAYER

For health and healing we pray for: Gladys Hanen, Valri Scheps, DeAnn Anderson, Eugene Olson, Ron Kahl, Kathy Weghorn, Betty Missling and Gail Larson

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, you direct our lives  
by your grace, and your words of justice and  
mercy reshape the world. Mold us  
into a people who welcome your word and serve  
one another, through Jesus  
Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

## LORD'S PRAYER

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.

# REFLECTION

BY PASTOR RON MATHEWS

In our reading this week, Paul is teaching that when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. The things you did then are things you are now ashamed of. And what is the end of those things? Death. But we have good news in our shame. We have been freed from the enslavement of our sin, from the enslavement of death.

You see, shame is not guilt. Guilt is the feeling that **WHAT YOU DID** was wrong. Whereas shame says **WHO YOU ARE** as a person is wrong. We have been freed from this bondage of sin through Christ on the cross. Because of Christ's death and resurrection into which we have been baptized we have been made righteous.

We are made a saint.

"simul iustus et peccator" (at the same time righteous and a sinner). In this classic Latin phrase, Martin Luther use its "grammar" to describe our paradoxical status. We are **ACTIVELY** sinners and **PASSIVELY** righteous.

To put this into a theological position: the righteous person is not "just" on their own because no person can be, but rather that person is "justified" by God's act, not by his/her own.

Or to put it simply, Christ died **FOR** me, I did not die for Christ. I am called to live for Christ because Christ died for me. Therefore my life ought to reflect this! I should live like a person who has been brought from death to life. The problem is that in my sinfulness I still cling on to the things that pull me away from my faith, away from righteousness, away from God.

So thanks be to God that in my brokenness, I am made righteous. In my failures I am made just. Our saintliness is God's actions to us. That is what makes it passive, God is the one who does the action, we only receive it. This means that there is nothing we can do to influence our sainthood, our perfection. There is nothing we can do about it, that is what makes this passive...it just happens. But it doesn't happen haphazardly. It happens on the cross in Christ's death and resurrection. It happens in our baptism. It happens in God's judgement of the living and the death.

While we daily struggle with our sin, we are reminded that a saint is nothing more than a forgiven sinner. A saint is not what a person does, but who a person is. A beloved child of God.

By the waters of baptism you have been reconciled to God; Justified by God not by what you did, but by what Christ did for you.  
Christ takes on your sin  
You take on God's righteousness

We seek our Lord's forgiveness for the sins we have done and those we have not done. For the actions we did and the actions we failed to do. And then we give thanks to God that we are: Forgiven. Loved. Beautiful.

**SHAME COMES FROM YOUR SIN THAT MAKES YOU BELIEVE THAT WHO YOU ARE AS A PERSON IS WRONG.**

**RIGHTEOUSNESS COMES FROM CHRIST THAT CLAIMS WHO YOU ARE AS A CHILD OF GOD IS LOVED**

