

Real Life Repentance and God's Amazing Grace

A Lenten Series

“Grace When We Want to Hide”



St. Paul's Lutheran Church
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As We Gather

In today's Old Testament story we find Elijah having just carried out the Lord's victory. The Lord had received Elijah's sacrifice by raining fire from heaven, whereas 850 prophets of Baal could not get Baal to do anything. Elijah should be on a mountaintop of exhilaration, feeling the success. Surely now the people would recognize God as the one true God! Yet instead they continue to rebel, forcing Elijah to flee. The work was becoming too much for Elijah and he just wanted to quit. It is in these moments of wanting to quit that God comes in ushering his Amazing Grace.

Opening Hymn

“Jesus Refuge of the Weary”

LSB 423

Jesus, refuge of the weary, Blest Redeemer, whom we love,
Fountain in life's desert dreary, Savior from the world above:
Often have Your eyes, offended, Gazed upon the sinner's fall;
Yet upon the cross extended, You have borne the pain of all.

Do we pass that cross unheeding, Breathing no repentant vow,
Though we see You wounded, bleeding, See Your thorn encircled brow?
Yet Your sinless death has brought us Life eternal, peace, and rest;
Only what Your grace has taught us Calms the sinner's deep distress.

Jesus, may our hearts be burning With more fervent love for You;
May our eyes be ever turning To behold Your cross anew
Till in glory, parted never From the blessed Savior's side,
Graven in our hearts forever, Dwell the cross, the Crucified.

Invocation and Opening Sentences (Psalm 139:1-10)

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: LORD, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar.

People: **You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways.**

Pastor: Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether.

People: **You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.**

Pastor: Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.

¹
People: **Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?**

Pastor: If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

People: **even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.**

Confession and Absolution

Pastor: Psalm 139 reveals how well God knows us, it shows his omniscience and omnipresence. He sees everything, and is everywhere there is nowhere to hide. Verse 23 says *Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!* How many of us can say these words with confidence? How many of us want God to see what is going on in our hearts all the time? Indeed, our hearts are sinful and unclean and therefore we want them to remain hidden. But God can cleanse the hearts of all who desire to be clean. Let us therefore repent our sins to God.

All: **I confess to God Almighty, before the whole company of heaven and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned in thought, word, and deed by my fault, by my own fault, by my own most grievous fault; wherefore I pray God Almighty to have mercy on me, forgive me all my sins, and bring me to everlasting life. Amen.**

Pastor: God doesn't just search and know, he also makes us clean. He makes us into the people he desires us to be, and pours his forgiveness into us. Therefore, upon this, your confession, by virtue of my office as a called and ordained servant of the Word, and by the command and authority 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.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: As God's forgiven children, set free from sin and death, go forth to live a new life by the power and leading of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

Collect for the Day

Pastor: Let us pray. Almighty God, give us grace that we continue moving forward

in difficult times,

People: **Give us strength and knowledge of your presence; that wherever we may go we may know that you are with us,**

²
Pastor: Through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

1 Kings 19:1-9a

Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. ² Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by this time tomorrow." ³ Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there. ⁴ But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a broom tree.

And he asked that he might die, saying, "It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers." ⁵ And he lay down and slept under a broom tree. And behold, an angel touched him and said to him, "Arise and eat."

⁶ And he looked, and behold, there was at his head a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. And he ate and drank and lay down again. ⁷ And the angel of the LORD

came again a second time and touched him and said, "Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you." ⁸ And he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God. ⁹ There he came to a cave and lodged in it.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

1 Kings 19:9b-18

And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ¹⁰ He said, "I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they

seek my life, to take it away.”¹¹ And he said, “Go out and stand on the mount before the LORD.” And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake.

¹² And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the sound of a low whisper. ¹³ And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” ¹⁴ He said, “I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away.” ¹⁵ And the LORD said to him, “Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus. And when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. ¹⁶ And Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint to be king over Israel, and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint to be prophet in your place. ¹⁷ And the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu put to death, and the one who escapes from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha put to death. ¹⁸ Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.”

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Romans 8:31-39

³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

³² He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? ³³ Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than

conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon Hymn “O Christ You Walked the Road” LSB 424

O Christ, you walked the road Our wand’ring feet must go.
You faced with us temptation’s pow’r And fought our ancient foe.
No bread of earth alone Can fill our hung’ring hearts.
Lord, help us seek Your living Word, The food Your grace imparts.

⁴ continued

No blinding sign we ask, No wonder from above.
Lord, help us place our trust alone In Your unswerving love.
When lures of easy gain With promise brightly shine,
Lord, help us seek Your kingdom first; Our wills with Yours align.
O Christ, you walked the road Our wand’ring feet must go.
Stay with us through temptation’s hour To fight our ancient foe.

Sermon “God’s Grace Finds Us” 1 Kings 19

Offertory (LSB, p. 192-3)

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free spirit.
Amen.

Offerings As your offering is collected, **please sign our fellowship folder** located at the end of the pew. If you are a visitor, please leave your address and phone. After you are finished, please pass the folder along to others in your pew, and return it to the center aisle. You may check the folder to see names of those to greet after the service.

Prayers and The Lord’s Prayer

People: 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

Pastor: The amazing grace of the Almighty God, the redeeming love of Jesus, His Son and our Savior, and the comfort and power of the Holy Spirit be and abide with us all.

People: **Amen.**

Preacher

Pastor Josh Grotelueschen

Lector

Dalen Heinzen

Organist

JoLynn

Bender

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Hymn

“Amazing Grace”

LSB 744

Amazing grace how sweet the sound That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found, Was blind but now I see!

The Lord has promised good to me, His Word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be, As long as life endures.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares I have already come;
His grace has brought me safe thus far, His grace will lead me home.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail And mortal life shall cease,
Amazing grace shall then prevail In heaven’s joy and peace.

When we’ve been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as the sun,
We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise Than when we’d first begun.