

Midweek Lent



LORD, HAVE MERCY

FOR ABUSING YOUR COMMANDMENTS

St. Paul Lutheran Church

March 12, 2025

EXPLANATION OF THE THEME OF THE DAY

How does one abuse God's Commandments? That seems like an easy question. You abuse God's Commandments by breaking them. However, there is another way to abuse God's Commandments—by striving to *not* break them in an effort to win God's favor and earn our place in heaven. The second abuse is infinitely worse than the first, as it sets aside God's perfect plan of salvation for a completely different plan that will never work.

Satan often works by turning a blessing into a curse. God intended for his law to serve as a mirror, enabling us to see our sin and thus our need for a Savior. Satan would have us believe the law is more like a ladder, and that with focused effort we can climb our way up to God. This misguided belief leaves us in one of two undesirable places. Either we are overwhelmed with guilt when we realize we cannot climb that ladder, or we are swelling with damnable pride because we think we are near the top rung. We conclude our Lenten series by calling out: "Lord, have mercy, for abusing your commandments!" We rest secure in the gospel truth that since Christ was lifted high on a cross, we don't need to try and lift ourselves up to God. God's favor, salvation, an eternity in heaven—these things are *already* ours! Our attempts to obey the Commandments can therefore flow from gratitude, not desperation.

Serving Today

We thank our visiting pastor for this evening, Pastor Feldhus who serves full-time at the Lutheran Home and part-time at Grace in Le Seuer. We also thank our accompanist Noah Helke.

As I Prepare for Worship

"I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.'" Give me joy, dear Jesus, as I prepare to worship you today. Make me understand what my life would be like without you so that I long to hear about your grace and compassion. Help me participate in a way that honors you and builds up all who worship with me, and let their worship strengthen and encourage my faith. Amen.

Stand

Opening Sentences

Our help is in the name of the Lord.

Who made heaven and earth.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, during the days of Lent, we fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of God.

The time of Lent reminds us that to know Christ and the power of his resurrection, we must also know the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.

As disciples of the Lord Jesus, we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to confess your sins, ask our Father for forgiveness, and commit yourselves to this struggle.

652 Lord, Have Mercy

CW 652 sts. 1, Refrain I

1 For what we have done and left un - done we fall on your
count - less mer - cies. For sins that are known and
those un - known we call on your name so ho - ly.

The image shows three staves of musical notation in G major (one flat) and 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a common time signature. It features a repeat sign followed by a melody of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are written below the staff. The second and third staves continue the melody and lyrics. The lyrics are: "1 For what we have done and left un - done we fall on your count - less mer - cies. For sins that are known and those un - known we call on your name so ho - ly."

For en - vy and pride, for clos - ing our eyes; for
 scorn - ing our ver - y neigh - bor. In
 thought, word, and deed we've failed you, our King; how
 deep - ly we need a Sav - ior. *Refrain I*
Refrain I
 Lord, have mer - cy, Christ, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy
 on us. Lord, have mer - cy, Christ, have mer - cy,
 Lord, have mer - cy on us. 2 For

Absolution

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, does not desire the death of sinners but rather that they turn from their wickedness and live. Therefore, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit.

During these days of Lent, let us implore God to give us renewal and his Holy Spirit. May we continue to abide in the true faith and at the last be received by him through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

652 Lord, Have Mercy

Sung by Soloist

(2 For) what you have done, your life of love you per - fect - ly
lived, we praise you. Though tempt - ed and tried, you
fixed your eyes; you fin - ished the work God gave you.
And there on the tree, a King a - mong thieves, you
bled for a world's be - tray - al. You
loved to the end, our mer - ci - ful friend; how
pure and for - ev - er faith - ful. *Refrain II*

The musical score is written on seven staves of music in a single system. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 4/4. The melody is written on a treble clef. The lyrics are placed below the notes. The first staff begins with a repeat sign and a fermata over the first measure. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a fermata over the final measure.

Refrain II

Lord, have mer - cy, Christ, have mer - cy, Lord, have mer - cy
 on us. Lord, have mer - cy, Christ, have mer - cy,
 Lord, have mer - cy on us. on us. 3 For

Text: Matt Papa, b. 1983; Aaron Keyes, b. 1978; James Tealy, b. 1971; Matt Boswell, b. 1979
 Tune: Matt Papa, b. 1983; Aaron Keyes, b. 1978; James Tealy, b. 1971; Matt Boswell, b. 1979
 Text and tune: © Common Hymnal Publishing/10000 Fathers, admin. IntegratedRights.com. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 727266

Prayer

Merciful God, with souls parched by sin and spirits withered by enemies within and without, we lift our hands to you. Lead us by your Spirit on the path of truth, and guard us from all harm, trusting in Jesus Christ, our refuge and our righteousness.

Amen.

Be Seated

The History of Our Lord's Suffering And Death

Luke 22:1-38

¹The Festival of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was approaching. ²The chief priests and the experts in the law were trying to find some way to put Jesus to death, because they were afraid of the people. ³Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, who was one of the Twelve. ⁴He went away and spoke with the chief priests and officers of the temple guard about how he could betray Jesus to them. ⁵They were glad and agreed to give him money.

⁶He promised to do it and was looking for an opportunity to betray Jesus to them away from the crowd.

⁷The day of Unleavened Bread arrived, when it was necessary to sacrifice the Passover lamb. ⁸Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, “Go prepare the Passover for us, so that we may eat it.”

⁹They said to him, “Where do you want us to prepare it?”

¹⁰He told them, “Just as you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters. ¹¹Tell the owner of the house, “The Teacher says to you, “Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?”” ¹²He will show you a large, furnished upper room. Make preparations there.” ¹³They went and found things just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

¹⁴When the hour had come, Jesus reclined at the table with the twelve apostles. ¹⁵He said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, ¹⁶for I tell you, I will not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

¹⁷He took a cup, gave thanks, and said, “Take this and divide it among yourselves, ¹⁸for I tell you, from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”

¹⁹He took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁰In the same way, he took the cup after the supper, saying, “This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is being poured out for you.

²¹“But look, the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table. ²²The Son of Man is going to go as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!”

²³They began to discuss with one another which of them it was who was going to do this.

²⁴A dispute arose among the disciples about which of them was considered to be greatest. ²⁵But he told them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who have authority over them are called Benefactors. ²⁶But it is not to be that way with you. Instead, let the greatest among you become like the youngest, and the one who leads like the one who serves. ²⁷For who is greater, one who reclines at the table or one who serves? Isn't it the one who reclines at the table? But I am among you as one who serves. ²⁸You are those who have remained with me in my trials. ²⁹I am going to grant a kingdom to you, just as

my Father granted to me, ³⁰so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom. And you will sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

³¹The Lord said, “Simon, Simon, pay attention: Satan has asked to have you all, so that he may sift you as wheat. ³²But I prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have returned to me, strengthen your brothers.”

³³He said to him, “Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death!”

³⁴But Jesus replied, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow today until you deny three times that you know me.”

³⁵He said to them, “When I sent you out without money bag, traveler's bag, and sandals, did you lack anything?”

“Nothing,” they said.

³⁶Then he told them, “But now, let the one who has a money bag take it, and likewise a traveler's bag. And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one. ³⁷For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: ‘He was counted with transgressors.’ Indeed, what is written about me is going to have its fulfillment.”

³⁸They said, “Lord, look, here are two swords.”

He said to them, “That is enough.”

Passion History Response

Isaiah 53:65

We all have gone astray like sheep. Each of us has turned to his own way
But the Lord has charged all our guilt to him.

143B I Lift My Soul to You

Psalm 143B

Refrain

I lift my soul to you; hear my prayer, hear my prayer.

I lift my soul to you; hear my prayer.

Tone

LORD, hear my prayer, listen to my cry for / mercy;
in your faithfulness and righteousness come to / my relief.
Do not bring your servant into / judgment,
for no one living is righteous be- / fore you.
My spirit grows faint with- / in me;
my heart within me / is dismayed. *Refrain*

Answer me quickly, LORD; my / spirit fails.
Do not hide your / face from me.
Let the morning bring me word of your un- / failing love,
for I have put my / trust in you.
Teach me to do your will, for you / are my God;
may your good Spirit lead me on / level ground.
Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,
as it was in the be- / ginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. *Refrain*

Text: S. Mead's A General Selection, 1811
Tune: Southern Harmony, 1835, ed. William Walker
Text and tune: Public domain (refrain)
Setting: © 2011 Faith Alive Christian Resources. Used by permission: License no. 130003959

Reading

Isaiah 64:5-9

⁵You meet anyone who joyfully practices righteousness,
who remembers you by walking in your ways!
But you were angry because we sinned.
We have remained in our sins for a long time.

Can we still be saved?

⁶All of us have become like something unclean,
and all our righteous acts are like a filthy cloth.
All of us have withered like a leaf,
and our guilt carries us away like the wind.

⁷There is no one who calls on your name,
who rouses himself to take hold of you.
So you hid your face from us.
You made us melt by the power of our guilt.

⁸But now, LORD, you are our father.
We are the clay, and you are our potter.
All of us are the work of your hand.

⁹Do not be angry, LORD, without limit.
Do not remember our guilt forever.
Please look closely.
All of us are your people.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

434 Upon the Cross Extended

CW 434

Sermon

Lord, Have Mercy For Abusing Your Commandments

Stand

Confession Of Faith

from the Small Catechism

What does God say about all these commandments?

He says, "I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments."

What does this mean?

God threatens to punish all who transgress these commandments. Therefore we should fear his anger and not disobey what he commands.

But he promises grace and every blessing to all who keep these commandments. Therefore we should love and trust in him and gladly obey what he commands.

Lord, Have Mercy

CW 221

In peace let us pray to the Lord:
Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord:
Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord:
Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord:
Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Silence for individual prayer may follow.

Rejoicing in the fellowship of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ our Lord:
to you, O Lord.

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.**

Blessing

The almighty and merciful Lord—the Father, the † Son, and the Holy Spirit—
bless us and keep us.
Amen.

783 Abide with Me

CW 783 sts. 1, 5, 7