

Sermon for October 19th, 2025
EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

READINGS

Deuteronomy 10:12-21

12 “And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, **13** and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good? **14** Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it. **15** Yet the LORD set his heart in love on your fathers and chose their offspring after them, you above all peoples, as you are this day. **16** Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn. **17** For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. **18** He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. **19** Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. **20** You shall fear the LORD your God. You shall serve him and hold fast to him, and by his name you shall swear. **21** He is your praise. He is your God, who has done for you these great and terrifying things that your eyes have seen. **22** Your fathers went down to Egypt seventy persons, and now the LORD your God has made you as numerous as the stars of heaven.

Psalms 34:8-22

8 Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good!
Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!
9 Oh, fear the LORD, you his saints,
for those who fear him have no lack!
10 The young lions suffer want and hunger;
but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.
11 Come, O children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the LORD.
12 What man is there who desires life
and loves many days, that he may see good?
13 Keep your tongue from evil
and your lips from speaking deceit.
14 Turn away from evil and do good;
seek peace and pursue it.
15 The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous
and his ears toward their cry.
16 The face of the LORD is against those who do evil,
to cut off the memory of them from the earth.
17 When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears
and delivers them out of all their troubles.
18 The LORD is near to the brokenhearted
and saves the crushed in spirit.
19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous,
but the LORD delivers him out of them all.

20 He keeps all his bones;
not one of them is broken.

21 Affliction will slay the wicked,
and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.

22 The LORD redeems the life of his servants;
none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

1 Corinthians 1:4-9

4 I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, 5 that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge— 6 even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you— 7 so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 8 who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Matthew 22:41-46

41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, 42 saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.” 43 He said to them, “How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying,

44 “‘The Lord said to my Lord,
“Sit at my right hand,
until I put your enemies under your feet’”?

45 If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son?” 46 And no one was able to answer him a word, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

Our text for meditation this Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity is on our Gospel reading.

Grace, mercy and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Introduction

There is a question out there that everyone must answer. It is the single most important question there is, and it is on the most important *topic* there is. It is also a question that few people can answer adequately, even among the most learned scholars. Almost everyone will answer this question incorrectly, and the result of this will be the vast majority of humanity being burned forever in the furnace of hell. And it is not because people don't *know* the answer to this question, but rather because they do not *like* the answer.

That question is, “Who is Jesus?”

Bad Answers from Nonbelievers

Nonbelievers do not want to answer this question correctly, so they will say all sorts of insane things. Some, typically secularists, will claim that Jesus is nothing more than some moral teacher, ignoring what He said about Himself. Some moral teacher, some *philosopher* does not predicate all of their teachings on who they are, but Jesus does. He does not say “follow my teachings because they are the correct things to do,” but instead He says “follow my teachings because I am the Son of God.” His

exhortations are not mere advice or counsel, but *Divine Commandments*.

Other nonbelievers, like buddhists or hindus, will claim that Jesus is one god among many. Muslims try to demote Jesus to the status of prophet. But these positions betray His own words, for He Himself says that there is *only one God*,¹ and He is that very God. He says to us all, “I and the Father are one,” and “unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.”² Jesus is the second Person of the Trinity, so anyone trying to answer that He is anything *less* than God is in a position of deadly error.

Worse yet are the nonbelievers who respond with hostility or antipathy. The modern take coming from non-Christians on the “dissident right” is that Jesus is just some jewish rabbi peddling jewish religion to Gentiles in order make them more jewish. Meanwhile, jewish documents like the “Toledot Yeshu” or the talmud claim that Jesus was just some evil sorcerer. There are also angry “new atheists” that have written books attacking the morality of Christ's teachings, with their arguments predictably boiling down to complaining that Jesus is not tolerant enough for their liking. Of course, there are also plenty of nonbelievers who simply claim that He never existed.

Finally, there are the cultists who want you to think they are Christians, but ultimately have answers similar to the other nonbelievers out there. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Jesus is just some powerful angel. Mormons believe Jesus is a powerful polygamous space alien and brother to satan. The Christian Science cult claims that Jesus was a man who “best embodied” the “Christ principle” that seeps out of their omnipresent gas-like deity. Unlike the people who hate Jesus openly, these groups seek to use Him as a mascot for whatever subversive, ugly teachings they have. And like the secularist, like the buddhist, like the hindu, like the muslim, like the atheist, and like the jew, they are all hellbound so long as they answer this question incorrectly.

Bad Answers from Believers

Let us not think though that only non-Christians are answering the question “who is Jesus” poorly. You hear quite a few believers saying things *about* Jesus that are true, things that we must confess if we are to be Christians in the first place, but not much in the way of Who He is. Yes, it is true that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God just as St. Peter confesses,³ but there are plenty of satanists, people who *hate* Jesus, that would agree with you, but they are not saved. Perhaps you emphasize that Jesus is Divine – good! But so do many of the judaizers and other heretics, people that Scripture calls *cursed* on account of having a different Gospel than what the Scripture gives us.⁴

This is one of the points that Christ is making in our reading for today. Jesus asks the Pharisees about the Christ and whose Son He is. The Pharisees are *correct* when they say that the Messiah would hail from the line of David, making Him the “Son of David” as a result – a royal title for the coming King of all Israel.⁵ This is certainly true. But they missed what David himself said about the coming Messiah: if they read the very Psalm Jesus quotes from, they would recognize that the Messiah would also be David's Lord, that He would be immortal, that He was pre-existent and that He belongs to the endless order of Melchizedek.⁶ Because of these things, King David bowed down and worshiped Christ, *calling Him Lord*. In other words, by asking these questions He confronts the pharisees with their staunch refusal to believe *in* the very Christ who stood before them.

1 Mark 12:29

2 John 10:30, 8:24

3 Matthew 16:16

4 Galatians 1:8

5 Isaiah 11 demonstrates that the Christ would come from the “stump of Jesse.”

6 Psalm 110

The Answer God is Looking For

And that is the answer God is looking for. It is not an answer made with our intellect so much as it is an answer with the heart, with our *faith*. If you are asked the question, “who is Jesus?” the answer should *always* be, from the heart, “He is my Lord and my Savior.” From the bottom of your heart you must understand that He did not *just* die for sins and rise again from the dead; Jesus died for *your* sins, He rose from the dead *for you*. He is fully Divine and fully human, absolutely, but Jesus sees you, cares about you, and earnestly desires for you to trust in and worship Him. To not merely say “Jesus is King,” but “Jesus is *my* King.”

The reason so many people get this answer *wrong* is not because they have the wrong information. Someone can know and affirm everything there is to know *about* Jesus Christ but still get that question wrong, because they refuse to say “Jesus is *my* Christ, *my* Lord, *my* Savior.” Our Lord confronts the pharisees about their refusal to understand that David *called Him Lord* – not just in recognition of His Divinity, but in actually adoring and worshiping Him. The vast majority of humanity, no matter what they say they believe about Jesus, simply does not want this to be the case. But let us, like David the man after God's heart, recognize from our innermost parts that who Jesus is matters to us, applies to us, and brings us all salvation and the glory of the world to come. For that, at the end of the day, is the thing that matters the most.

Now the Peace of our Lord, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.