

MIDWEEK OF LENT 3

MARCH 10, 2021

RETURN FROM FALSE WITNESS

One of the most straightforward sayings in the Book of Proverbs states, “A faithful witness does not lie, but a false witness breathes out lies” (Proverbs 14:5). A word of false witness can direct a series of actions in a deviant and destructive path. We find that negative action happening in the Passion account of our Lord, where we see Jesus standing before Caiaphas with a series of false witnesses seeking to defame the holy, innocent Lamb of God with untruths and lies. False witness can be a deadly weapon. Whenever we ask, as did the psalmist, “O Lord, open my lips” (Psalm 51:15), may what we then express always be true witness set in speech that declares the praises of God.

Stand

INVOCATION

- P** In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES *Joel 2:13; Colossians 4:2; Philippians 4:5-6*

- P** Return to the Lord, your God, for He is gracious and merciful,
- C** **slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and repents of evil.**

- P** Continue steadfastly in prayer,
- C** **being watchful in it with thanksgiving.**

- P** The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything,
- C** **but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P Let us make our confession to our God, seeking His grace and forgiveness. Together we sing the hymn “Jesus Sinners Doth Receive”

HYMN: 609 JESUS SINNERS DOTH RECEIVE



1 Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive; Oh, may all this
2 We de - serve but grief and shame, Yet His words, rich
3 Sheep that from the fold did stray No true shep - herd
4 I, a sin - ner, come to Thee With a pen - i -



say - ing pon - der Who in sin's de - lu - sions live
grace re - veal - ing, Par - don, peace, and life pro - claim;
e'er for - sak - eth; Wea - ry souls that lost their way
tent con - fes - sion. Sav - ior, mer - cy show to me;



And from God and heav - en wan - der! Here is hope for
Here our ills have per - fect heal - ing. Firm - ly in these
Christ, the Shep - herd, gent - ly tak - eth In His arms that
Grant for all my sins re - mis - sion. Let these words my



all who grieve: Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive.
words be - lieve: Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive.
they may live: Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive.
soul re - lieve: Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive.

Text and tune: Public domain

P The almighty and merciful Lord grant you pardon, forgiveness, and remission of all your sins.

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

O God our Father, who in mercy hears all who call on You, graciously open Your ears to our petitions, and lead us by Your Spirit, that without doubting we may persevere in prayer and believingly await Your promised aid; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C **Amen.**

+ Psalmody +

PSALM

Psalm 27:11-14

¹¹ Teach me Your way, | O LORD,*
and lead me on a level path
because of my | enemies.

¹² **Give me not up to the will of my adver- | saries;*
for false witnesses have risen against me,
and they breathe out | violence.**

¹³ I believe that I shall look upon the goodness | of the
LORD*
in the land of the | living!

¹⁴ **Wait | for the LORD;*
be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait | for the LORD!**

**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.**

HYMN: 819 SING PRAISE TO GOD, THE HIGHEST GOOD



1 Sing praise to God, the high - est good, The au - thor of cre -
 2 What God's al - might - y pow'r has made, In mer - cy He is
 3 We sought the Lord in our dis - tress; O God, in mer - cy
 4 He nev - er shall for - sake His flock, His cho - sen gen - er -
 5 All who con - fess Christ's ho - ly name, Give God the praise and



a - tion, The God of love who un - der - stood
 keep - ing. By morn - ing glow or eve - ning shade
 hear us. Our Sav - ior saw our help - less - ness
 a - tion; He is their ref - uge and their rock,
 glo - ry. Let all who know His pow'r pro - claim



Our need for His sal - va - tion. With heal - ing balm our
 His eye is nev - er sleep - ing. With - in the king - dom
 And came with peace to cheer us. For this we thank and
 Their peace and their sal - va - tion. As with a moth - er's
 A - loud the won - drous sto - ry. Cast ev - 'ry i - dol



souls He fills And ev - 'ry faith - less mur - mur stills:
 of His might All things are just and good and right:
 praise the Lord, Who is by one and all a - dored:
 ten - der hand, He leads His own, His cho - sen band:
 from its throne, For God is God, and He a - lone:



To God all praise and glo - ry!
 To God all praise and glo - ry!
 To God all praise and glo - ry!
 To God all praise and glo - ry!
 To God all praise and glo - ry!

Text and tune: Public domain

+ READINGS +

FIRST READING

Leviticus 24:13-16

P A reading from Leviticus, the twenty-fourth chapter.

¹³ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁴ “Bring out of the camp the one who cursed, and let all who heard him lay their hands on his head, and let all the congregation stone him. ¹⁵ And speak to the people of Israel, saying, Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin. ¹⁶ Whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall stone him. The sojourner as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.”

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING

Acts 22:12-16

P A reading from Acts, the twenty-second chapter.

¹² And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there, ¹³ came to me, and standing by me said to me, “Brother Saul, receive your sight.” And at that very hour I received my sight and saw him. ¹⁴ And he said, “The God of our fathers appointed you to know His will, to see the Righteous One and to hear a voice from His mouth; ¹⁵ for you will be a witness for Him to everyone of what you have seen and heard. ¹⁶ And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on His name.”

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

P A reading from St. Matthew, the twenty-sixth chapter.

⁵⁷ Then those who had seized Jesus led Him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered. ⁵⁸ And Peter was following Him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and going inside he sat with the guards to see the end. ⁵⁹ Now the chief priests and the whole Council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put Him to death, ⁶⁰ but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward ⁶¹ and said, “This man said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.’” ⁶² And the high priest stood up and said, “Have You no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against You?” ⁶³ But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to Him, “I adjure You by the living God, tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God.” ⁶⁴ Jesus said to him, “You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.” ⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his robes and said, “He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard His blasphemy. ⁶⁶ What is your judgment?” They answered, “He deserves death.” ⁶⁷ Then they spit in His face and struck Him. And some slapped Him, ⁶⁸ saying, “Prophecy to us, You Christ! Who is it that struck You?”

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C Thanks be to God.

- P** Deliver me, O Lord, my God, for You are the God of my salvation.
- C** **Rescue me from my enemies, protect me from those who rise against me.**
- P** In You, O Lord, do I put my trust, leave me not, O Lord, my God.
- C** **Rescue me from my enemies, protect me from those who rise against me.**
- P** Deliver me, O Lord, my God, for You are the God of my salvation.
- C** **Rescue me from my enemies, protect me from those who rise against me.**

SERMON HYMN: 439 O DEAREST JESUS, WHAT LAW HAST THOU BROKEN



1 O dear - est Je - sus, what law hast Thou bro - ken
 2 They crown Thy head with thorns, they smite, they scourge Thee;
 3 Whence come these sor - rows, whence this mor - tal an - guish?
 4 What pun - ish - ment so strange is suf - fered yon - der!



That such sharp sen - tence should on Thee be spo - ken?
 With cru - el mock - ings to the cross they urge Thee;
 It is my sins for which Thou, Lord, must lan - guish;
 The Shep - herd dies for sheep that loved to wan - der;



Of what great crime hast Thou to make con -
 They give Thee gall to drink, they still de -
 Yea, all the wrath, the woe, Thou dost in -
 The Mas - ter pays the debt His ser - vants



fes - sion, What dark trans - gres - sion?
 cry Thee; They cru - ci - fy Thee.
 her - it, This I do mer - it.
 owe Him, Who would not know Him.

SERMON

OFFERING

+ PRAYER +

Kneel/Stand

KYRIE

LSB, p. 233

C Lord, have mercy;
Christ, have mercy;
Lord, have mercy.

LORD'S PRAYER

LSB, p. 233

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.

P O Lord, hear my prayer.

C And let my cry come to You.

PRAYERS

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P Lord God, in You we find the truth about our world and our lives. Spare us from the ravages of false witness. And when we fall, lift us up again and lead us to Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

COLLECT FOR LENT

P Faithful God, through the ancient prophets You call us to return to You with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Let these Lenten days be a time when, remembering how You relentlessly return to us in mercy, we return also to You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

COLLECT AT EVENING

P Loving God, the light of Your love for us never dims. As yet another day comes to a close and darkness falls, help us by Your Holy Spirit to rest in the light of Your constant presence; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

BENEDICAMUS

LSB, p. 234

P Let us bless the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

BENEDICTION

LSB, p. 234

P The grace of our Lord ✠ Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C **Amen.**

HYMN: 878 ABIDE WITH ME



1 A - bide with me, fast falls the e - ven - tide.
2 I need Thy pres - ence ev - 'ry pass - ing hour;
3 Come not in ter - rors, as the King of kings,
4 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day;



The dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bide.
What but Thy grace can foil the tempt - er's pow'r?
But kind and good, with heal - ing in Thy wings;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glo - ries pass a - way;



When oth - er help - ers fail and com - forts flee,
Who like Thy - self my guide and stay can be?
Tears for all woes, a heart for ev - 'ry plea.
Change and de - cay in all a - round I see;



Help of the help - less, O a - bide with me.
Through cloud and sun - shine, O a - bide with me.
Come, Friend of sin - ners, thus a - bide with me.
O Thou who chang - est not, a - bide with me.

Acknowledgments

Vespers from *Lutheran Service Book*

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