

Jesus is Better

“A Tale of Two Mountains”

July 2, 2023

As We Gather

We continue our series “Jesus is Better,” a study of the letter to the Hebrews. This letter is actually a written sermon to believers who were struggling with their faith. They were being tempted to go back to a life without Jesus, a life rooted in the unfulfilled promises and pictures of the Old Testament. The writer of this letter seeks to show them in many ways that Jesus is better, not only better than what they had before, but better than everything.

The writer contrasts two mountains: Sinai and Zion. In a way these two mountains depict the difference between Law and Gospel, which we will explore this week.

Welcome

+ Gathering +

“Before You Lord, We Bow” LSB 966

1 Before You, Lord, we bow,
Our God who reigns above
And rules the world below,
Boundless in pow'r and love.
Our thanks we bring
In joy and praise,
Our hearts we raise
To You, our King!

2 The nation You have blest
May well Your love declare,
From foes and fears at rest,
Protected by Your care.
For this bright day,
For this fair land--
Gifts of Your hand--
Our thanks we pay.

3 May ev'ry mountain height,
Each vale and forest green,
Shine in Your Word's pure light,
And its rich fruits be seen!

May ev'ry tongue
Be tuned to praise
And join to raise
A grateful song.

4 Earth, hear your Maker's voice;
Your great Redeemer own;
Believe, obey, rejoice,
And worship Him alone.
Cast down your pride,
Your sin deplore,
And bow before
The Crucified.

5 And when in pow'r He comes,
Oh, may our native land
From all its rending tombs
Send forth a glorious band,
A countless throng,
With joy to sing
To heav'n's high King
Salvation's song!

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Confession and Absolution

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C **who made heaven and earth.**

P If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

C **But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.**

P Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

C **Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

"Lord Have Mercy"

Leader: In peace we pray to You Lord

People: **Lord have mercy**

Leader: For Your peace and presence, love and mercy for all, we pray to You Lord

People: **Lord have mercy**

Leader: For Your reign in the whole world, for Your life in our lives, and Your presence with us now, we pray to You Lord

People: **Lord have mercy**

Leader: For all of Your people who gather to lift You praise, we pray to You Lord

People: **Lord have mercy**

Leader: Help us and heal us, save us and bless us now

People: **Amen**

“Glory to God”

Glory to God in the highest
And peace to His people on earth
Glory to God in the highest
And peace to His people on earth

Saving Lord Lamb of God
You take away all the sins of the world
Have mercy on us
You reign at the right hand of the Father on high
Receive our prayer

Lord God You are our King
Almighty God and Father
We worship Your name we give You our
thanks
We praise You for Your great glory

Lord Jesus Christ only Son of the Father

For You alone are the Holy One
You alone are the Lord
You alone are the Savior our Lord Jesus Christ
And we worship and lift You praise
With the Father above and Your Spirit of
love

Prayer

+ Service of the Word +

First Reading: Exodus 19:1-8, 16-25

On the first day of the third month after the Israelites left Egypt—on that very day—they came to the Desert of Sinai. ² After they set out from Rephidim, they entered the Desert of Sinai, and Israel camped there in the desert in front of the mountain.

³ Then Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain and said, “This is what you are to say to the descendants of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: ⁴ ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. ⁵ Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, ⁶ you^[a] will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.”

⁷ So Moses went back and summoned the elders of the people and set before them all the words the LORD had commanded him to speak. ⁸ The people all responded together, “We will do everything the LORD has said.” So Moses brought their answer back to the LORD.

On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled. ¹⁷ Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. ¹⁸ Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the LORD descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace, and the whole mountain trembled violently. ¹⁹ As the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and the voice of God answered him.

²⁰ The LORD descended to the top of Mount Sinai and called Moses to the top of the mountain. So Moses went up ²¹ and the LORD said to him, “Go down and warn the people so they do not force their way through to see the LORD and many of them perish. ²² Even the priests, who approach the LORD, must consecrate themselves, or the LORD will break out against them.”

²³ Moses said to the LORD, “The people cannot come up Mount Sinai, because you yourself warned us, ‘Put limits around the mountain and set it apart as holy.’”

²⁴ The LORD replied, “Go down and bring Aaron up with you. But the priests and the people must not force their way through to come up to the LORD, or he will break out against them.”

²⁵ So Moses went down to the people and told them.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Second Reading: Hebrews 12:18-29

You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm; ¹⁹ to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words that those who heard it begged that no further word be spoken to them, ²⁰ because they could not bear what was commanded: “If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned to death.” ²¹ The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, “I am trembling with fear.”

²² But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, ²³ to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, ²⁴ to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

²⁵ See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven? ²⁶ At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.” ²⁷ The words “once more” indicate the removing of what can be shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain.

²⁸ Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, ²⁹ for our “God is a consuming fire.”

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Holy Gospel Matthew 11:25-30

At that time Jesus said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. ²⁶ Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.

²⁷ “All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸ “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You O Christ!

Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, Who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Sermon

“A Tale of Two Mountains”

Offering

Prayers

Please add your prayer requests to the chat.

Thanksgivings

Pastor: O Lord, we praise You.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Petitions

Pastor: Lord, in Your mercy,

People: **Hear our prayer.**

St. John’s People and Families

Richard & Karol Bruechert
Joyce Dowiat
Ron & Judith Irwin
Julie, Jordan, Jaeden, & Jacob Petersen
Andy, Paula, Jerry, & Megan Schweiger
Melissa and Amelia Burmester
Joseph, Nell, & Jacqueline Greenberg
Kenton, Marea, & Decker Johansson
Brad, Nichole, & Lyle Peterson
Andrew, Kimberly, & Bryson Tarap

+ The Service of Holy Communion +

Preface

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Holy, Holy, Holy (Sanctus)

Holy, Holy, Holy

Lord, Lord God of power and might

Heaven and earth are full of Your glory

Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord

Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest

Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest

Pastor: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

In these last days, You have poured out Your Holy Spirit on Your Church that Your sons and daughters might proclaim the wonders of Your salvation in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Pour out Your Holy Spirit upon Your gathered people that, faithfully eating and drinking the body and blood of Your Son, we may go forth to proclaim His salvation to the ends of the earth.

The Lord's Prayer

Pastor: Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

**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.**

Words of Institution

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: Amen.

Lamb of God (Agnus Dei)

Lamb of God
You take away the sin of the world
Have mercy on us

Lamb of God
You take away the sin of the world
Have mercy on us

Lamb of God
You take away the sin of the world
Grant us peace

Communion

Pastor: Take, eat; this is the true body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, given into death for your sins.

People: Amen. *(Take and eat)*

Pastor: Take, drink; this is the true blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, shed for the forgiveness of your sins.

People: Amen. *(Take and drink)*

“God Loved the World So That He Gave” LSB 571

God loved the world so that He gave
His only Son the lost to save,
That all who would in Him believe
Should everlasting life receive.

Be of good cheer, for God's own Son
Forgives all sins which you have done;
And, justified by Jesus' blood,
Your Baptism grants the highest good.

Christ Jesus is the ground of faith,
Who was made flesh and suffered death;
All then who trust in Him alone
Are built on this chief cornerstone.

If you are sick, if death is near,
This truth Your troubled heart can cheer:
Christ Jesus saves Your soul from death;
That is the firmest ground of faith.

God would not have the sinner die,
His Son with saving grace is nigh;
His Spirit in the Word declares
How we in Christ are heaven's heirs.

Glory to God the Father, Son,
And Holy Spirit, Three in One!
To Thee, O blessed Trinity,
Be praise now and eternally!

“Build My Life”

Worthy of ev'ry song we could ever sing
Worthy of all the praise we could ever bring
Worthy of ev'ry breath we could ever
breathe
We live for You

Holy there is no one like You
There is none beside You
Open up my eyes in wonder and show me who
You are
And fill me with Your heart
And lead me in Your love to those around me

Jesus the name above ev'ry other name
Jesus the only one who could ever save
Worthy of ev'ry breath we could ever
breathe
We live for You
We live for You

I will build my life upon Your love
It is a firm foundation
I will put my trust in You alone
And I will not be shaken

Communion Blessing

Pastor: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. His peace be with you.

People: Amen.

Prayer

Benediction

“This is Amazing Grace”

Who breaks the power of sin and darkness
Whose love is mighty and so much stronger
The King of Glory, the King above all kings

Who shakes the whole earth with holy thunder
And leaves us breathless in awe and wonder
The King of Glory, the King above all kings

Chorus

This is amazing grace
This is unfailing love
That You would take my place
That You would bear my cross
You would lay down Your life
That I would be set free
Jesus, I sing for
All that You've done for me

Who brings our chaos back into order
Who makes the orphan a son and daughter
The King of Glory, the King above all kings

Who rules the nations with truth and justice
Shines like the sun in all of its brilliance
The King of Glory, the King above all kings

Chorus

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
And worthy is the King who conquers the grave
And worthy is the Lamb who was slain
Worthy is the King who conquers the grave
And worthy is the Lamb who was slain
And worthy is the King who conquers the grave
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
Worthy, worthy, worthy **Chorus twice**

This is amazing grace
This is unfailing love
That You would take my place

Offering

<http://stjohnslutheran.net/give/>

You may also mail your offering to St. John's (3521 Linda Vista, Napa, CA 94558)

Memory Verse for This Week

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe,

Hebrews 12:28

Serving in Worship Today

Preacher	Rev. Michael A. Schmid
Lay Readers	Erin Blackwood
Communion Assistants	Mike Newton, Rebecca Vitkus Gerry Schneider Bob Klein,
Sound Technician	Tyler Roberts
Streaming Technician	Martin Meissenhalter
Projection Technician	Sarah Kramer
Worship Preparation Team	Marlen Virkus & Ruth Peterson
Ushers	Steve & Christy Wood
Worship Band	Judi & Steve Rock, Pastor Mike & Teresa Schmid, Scott Ondek, Chris Newman, Andy Schweiger

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