

March 24-30, 2019

By Dave Mason

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Escanaba, MI

Sunday March 24, 2019

Text: Luke 13:6-9

Then He told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the gardener, 'See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting soil?' He replied, 'Sir let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good, but if not you can cut it down.'"

Lent is a time for each of us to self-examine our lives and to repent. The listeners in Luke's community were in the position of the tree. As we are in the present day. I sometimes wonder if we need to be positioned in a pile of manure to help us with some growing. Might be a little messy but it would get our attention. Also, when Lent is over, whether we realize it or not, repentance continues every day of our lives! Repentance is always in season. Repent and move on and grow in the faith.

Let us Pray: *Thank you, Lord, for the gift of repentance. May each day be a new day to grow in your grace. Amen*



Monday March 25, 2019

Text: 2 Corinthians 1:3-5

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. the Father of mercies and the God of all consolations, who consoles us in all our afflictions, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God.

If you look up the word "comfort" in the dictionary you will find the definition "something that promotes a state of ease or provides freedom from pain and anxiety." According to God's word, when consolation is needed, the only true solution is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Lord personally provides consolation and reassurance because no one knows our hurts the way He does. The Spirit's reassuring whisper to our hearts gives more comfort than the solace of family or the encouragement of friend. So often we fail to understand the true source of comfort and we try to escape the pain by seeking out material pleasures or wealth. He brings joy into every situation.

Let us Pray: Lord, help us to realize the source of comfort and consolation lies with you and the Holy Spirit. Amen



Tuesday March 26, 2019

Text: Luke 5:27-28

After this He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax collector booth; and He said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and left everything and followed Him.

I've always wondered how anyone could just drop everything and follow Jesus or any person. Leaving everything behind. You know, Lord, I have a bunch of "stuff" and lots of family, etc. So how do we accept Jesus in our life? How do we place all of our faith and strength and being in this man called Jesus? When we receive Jesus as Savior, we immediately become children of the King. Allowing Jesus to live out His lordship through our life means yielding our will and desires to His. When this is accomplished and our will is His, we will drop everything and follow.

Let us Pray: Lord, I pray for your will to be pressed into my heart. Guide my every step. Amen



Wednesday March 27, 2019

Text: Mark 4:9-12

And He said, "Let anyone with ears to hear listen!" When He was alone, those who were around him along with the twelve asked him about the parables. And He said to them, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside, everything comes in parables; in order that they may indeed look, but not perceive, and may indeed listen, but not understand, so that they may not turn again and be forgiven."

Every wonder why we have two ears and one mouth? Pretty obvious that we need to listen more than we need to speak. Our parents helped to, in most cases, shape us in our early years. Teachers played a big part in shaping us, as did most of our friends. Our experiences played a big part in shaping us, sometimes painful as it might have been. These experiences had a lot to do with our understanding of how God treats us. All these experiences become filters through which we see life and our understanding the Lord. We need to ask for God's help in allowing us to "listen" to His speaking.

Let us Pray: *We ask, Lord, that you strip away any misconceptions so we can hear you accurately. Amen*



Thursday March 28, 2019

Text: John 10:2-4

The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them and they follow him because they know his voice.

This goes along with listening. Do you know God's voice? There are so many voices calling for our attention today. We need to listen very carefully so we can distinguish Christ's words from all others because He alone speaks the truth. The Bible teaches us that God is Righteous; He is Gracious; He is Faithful; He is our Heavenly Father; and He is our Judge! Only listen to His voice. All others distract from His goodness.

Let us Pray: *Again, Lord, we ask that in our listening we will hear your true voice above all other distractions. Amen*



Friday March 29, 2019

Text: Psalm 37: 3-5

Trust in the Lord, and do good; so you will live in the land and enjoy security. Take delight in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust in Him and He will act.

Do we really trust in the Lord? When times are good, it is so easy to say "Yes I trust Him." When trials come our way, how do we feel then? Do we feel abandoned? We are by nature worrisome humans. We can clip along in life and feel everything is going smoothly and all of a sudden, the bottom drops out and we say, "God, where are you?" Psalm 55:22 says, "Cast your burden upon the Lord, and He will sustain you." Don't forget that He is always with us. He is right next to you. Listen, He is talking you through any circumstances. When trials come your way, Run--Run to the Lord!!!

Let us Pray: *Help us, Lord, to always know you are just a heartbeat away. Amen*

Lent



Saturday March 30, 2019

Text: Matthew 7:7-8

Ask and it will be given you; search and you will find, knock and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks will receive and everyone who searches finds and everyone who knocks the door will be opened.

How often do we forget the most important ingredient in our walk with God: Prayer!!! Need I say more? During this Lenten season and for all seasons, remember to take time out each and every day to talk with our Lord. Yes - and LISTEN! Will you hear His answer?

Let us Pray: *Lord, thank you for the opportunity to talk with you. Help me to be patient with the answer you give me. I know you love me and help me walk with you this Lenten season. I know when I stumble you will pick me up. May we be quick to help others to truly know you. Thank you for all the blessings you shower us with. Amen.*

Lent

