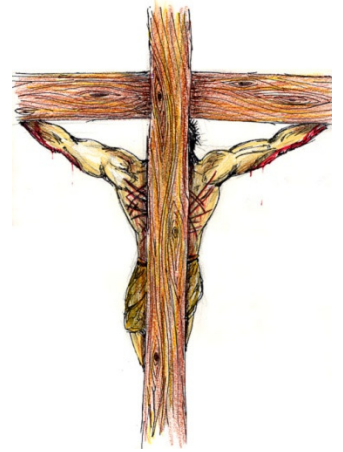


# **St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church-WELS**

**Sermon by Pastor Anthony E. Schultz**

**Pentecost 19. Series A. October 23, 2011**

**Philippians 2:5-11 NIV 11**



<sup>5</sup> In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup> Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; <sup>7</sup> rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross! <sup>9</sup> Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

People of God – rescued from the flaming lake of fire in hell by the innocent blood of the very Lamb of God:

I read the other day about a little grandpa named David – 67 years old. David was driving too fast or not paying attention – or an animal ran out into the road – and he swerved and went off the road – over the edge and down into a ravine plunging some 200 feet! Wow! That's like 20 stories – that's a long way down! There he sat! He had multiple rib fractures, a dislocated shoulder, a broken arm and multiple fractures in his back! Day after day he ate bugs and leaves and drank water from a little creek for the better part of 6 days. His family searched frantically for him – stopping by every ravine – looking over every hill – calling out to him. At last they heard him scream, "Help! Help!" They found him. They rescued him. Again what a pale pale picture of our helplessness – because of our sins. Oh, the greatness of Jesus' mercy and love – that he came to suffer to save us! Because Jesus died and rose again to save us:

## **We Have Grace Rewards For Eternity!**

- 1. Jesus humbled himself to save us**
- 2. We will glorify him forever!**

The part of God's Word we are concentrating on – is part of the Apostle Paul's letter to the believers in the city of Philippi. After 16 weeks in a row of reading from Paul's letter to the Romans – we are doing 4 Sundays – one each from the 4 chapters of Philippians. Remember the background about Philippi? Philippi – named after Philip the father of Alexander the Great! Philippi – a place of trade and commerce – literally gold nuggets in the hillsides around Philippi. Remember the assassination of Julius Caesar – on the Ides – the 15<sup>th</sup> of March? Remember the decisive battle between the assassins Brutus and Cassius against Marc Antony and Octavian. By the wisdom and planning of our Heavenly Father – Antony and Octavian are victorious. Octavian back to Rome – naming himself Augustus – Caesar Augustus – the one who issued a decree that all the world should be taxed. **And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was Governor of Syrian. And all went to be taxed everyone into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee into Judea unto the city of David which is called Bethlehem because he was of the house and lineage of David – to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife – being great with child. Remember?**

To retired Roman soldiers living and defending the edge of the Empire the Apostle Paul wrote, **<sup>5</sup> In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup> Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage <sup>7</sup> rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross!** Our sermons are about Jesus – his cross and his empty tomb. This is the point. Jesus is the reason we come to this building again and again – to be reminded of the greatness of Jesus’ forgiving love. What does Jesus look like? Did you ever wonder? The Holy Spirit breathed into Isaiah to write, **<sup>1</sup> Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? <sup>2</sup> He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.** Jesus didn’t have remarkable hair. You see that in shampoo commercials – people with beautiful hair. Jesus didn’t have remarkable eyes – although I do think they were unique – eyes that could look deep inside of you – eyes that could see people who only pretended to love Jesus. Jesus could see the people who looked at him with hatred to the point they could literally spit on him! Jesus had eyes that watched sparrows and appreciated the beauty of a wild flower. Jesus had eyes that loved little children. Eyes that overflowed with tears when he saw the pain and heartache in the eyes of people he loved. Jesus didn’t have a remarkable beard. I have seen those, too. Jesus had a beard that people literally pulled out – as they tortured his body. But even that pain couldn’t compare to the pain he felt in his heart – when his Heavenly Father’s white hot anger against all our sins was poured out on his head to the point he cried out, **“My God, my God – why have you forsaken me?”** Surely the part of Jesus’ body that is remarkable – Jesus’ hands – marked, engraved by the nails that nailed him to the cross. When Jesus holds out his hands to welcome you into heaven – you will know these remarkable carpenter hands – the hands that will welcome you to your forever home!

Jesus **humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross!** That’s both the reason and the ability to do what the Apostle Paul encourages. In your relationship with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus! Put your faith into practice! It’s all about attitude! You can have the most humble job – and with an attitude that imitates Jesus – you can glorify God! Do you know who Mike Rowe is? He’s the guy on the Discovery Channel that does that Dirty Jobs program. I don’t watch that program – but just think about it! On purpose he goes out to find the most difficult and distasteful jobs in the world – and he has found a whole bunch of them! Imagine if your job was to spend the whole day cleaning up the most gross and disgusting garbage in the world! Imagine every day filled with terrible smells and terrible things all around you! You would need a very good attitude to do that job well day in and day out – day after day! Could you do that? I don’t know! Some days you don’t have to go far to find people with a bad attitude. I was at a hospital the other day – when I tried to get one of those heart pillows. Where is the cardiac care unit of this big hospital? I thought – I could just step out into the hall – clutch my chest and keel over – and they would take me to the cardiac care unit – but they wouldn’t let me back out for a while. So I checked a sign. I went to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor – cardiac care registration. “I’m Pastor Schultz from St. Luke’s, Watertown. May I have a heart pillow please?” “You need to go to the nurses’ station and ask them!” “Hi there! I’m Pastor Schultz from St. Luke’s, Watertown. May I have a heart pillow please? I will trade you ½ my kingdom for a heart pillow!” I was met with a frown. “Normally we only sign them out to cardiac patients who have just had surgery.” I said, “I appreciate that! I will use this pillow to teach children. I would be willing to pay for it!” “They are donated!” “I would give a

gift to the people who donated it!" "You'll have to wait here!" "Thank you!" 5 minutes later – here you go!" And she went back to her paper work! Not a happy heart! On the other hand – there are crossing guards – I go past all the time! Some of them are happy – some are not! You can tell! I used to bag groceries when I was in high school. This too can be a very happy job! You can do a simple job with exceptional skill by the grace of God. Put the heavy stuff on the bottom – but not all in the same bag – so one bag is 50 pounds and the other one is 5. Spread it out. Put breakable stuff like eggs on the top. Put soft bread and bakery on the top so it doesn't get squashed. If you are really quick – you can have all the groceries – in the cart ready to go before the check out lady has given the customer their change. Would you like help taking this out to your car? If it's raining or snowing – just pull your car up and we will load it for you! And break time? You are in a grocery store! Literally thousands of things to pick from – fresh fruit for a very healthy snack! It was great! And if you needed groceries for home – you just bring it with you when you got off! They say a really neat job is serving fancy little snacks at a party! You get to mingle with some of the most beautiful and most learned people in the world! Just keep your ears open! You can do the most simple job – with skill from Jesus – all to the glory of your Savior – when he makes you strong! You can thank people when they do something very well. Make your words of encouragement specific to what they have done. And you will be surprised how often they will say – no one – absolutely no one has ever remarked about how they do their job. And you can tell them – I appreciate what you do – for Jesus' sake! It takes a little practice and a little God-given courage – but you can talk about Jesus to almost anyone almost anywhere! And God will be glorified in your life!

**<sup>9</sup> Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.** A man named Steve Jobs died the other day. You would almost have to live under a rock – not to know that! Steve Jobs fought liver and pancreatic cancer for many years. And all the money in the world couldn't save his physical life. It is pretty well known that Steve didn't graduate from college. In fact he dropped out during his first year. It has been said people who are gifted can hit a target when no one else can. That people who are blessed with creative genius can hit a target no one else can even see! Steve Jobs was blessed with creative genius. Early on he traveled to India – and returned with a shaved head – saying he was now a Buddhist! What you may not know is Steve Jobs was adopted – and his adoptive parents brought him to church when he was little. He even attended confirmation classes – learning from Luther's Small Catechism that we are saved by grace alone, faith alone and Scripture alone. It is one of the most powerful comforts in all of God's Word – the Gospel promise – Train up a child in the way he should go – and when he is old he will not depart from it. And again – Jesus said, "If you have faith like a mustard seed – you can say to this mountain – throw yourself into the sea!" If we have family, God-children, people we love that have drifted and strayed – pray that the broken marsh grass – the smoldering wick of faith will not be eternally squashed! Pray for the people you love. And as you have opportunity – Jesus will give you the words – with gentleness, humility and great patience – to call them back to worship and glorify God!

**<sup>9</sup> Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.** Remember David – the little grandpa who drove over the cliff in his car – down into a ravine some 20 stories – eating ants and drinking creek water – until his children

heard him screaming for help? Remember? Right next to where David's car came to rest – right beside him – was another car – another little grandpa – 88 years old from LA – dead! Rescue for this other little grandpa never came! David's ER Doctor said David was *extremely lucky* – that he should go out and buy a Lottery Ticket – he was so extremely lucky! I wonder if David got to tell his Doctor that luck had nothing to do with it – at all! David was blessed – that his merciful Heavenly Father spared his physical life – by grace alone. I would hope and pray that David knows that Jesus died on the cross – so that he might thank and praise Him – today and forever in Heaven. Jesus has rescued you and Jesus has rescued me from eternal death and destruction far worse than the most terrible car crash. Jesus has bought back our immortal soul. Forever will not be too long to thank and praise Him. Amen!

**To God alone all glory!**

Rev. Anthony E. Schultz