

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

God is the Law Giver. Faith rejoices in the Law. The Law is Divine. It is of God. The Law is a description of perfect holiness, that for which faith strives. Faith joins the Psalmist in praying “Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day. You, through Your commandments, make me wiser than my enemies...”

With Divine Law comes order. God is a God of order. He ordains. He foresees. Randomness and chaos are not attributes of God. Hierarchy and taxonomy are God-pleasing. They are an expression of Divine order, and so of Divine Law. Faith strives to live within the Divine order, within the taxonomy that pleases God.

Consider what the Apostle writes to the Church in Colosse: “Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men...” Scripture provides a hierarchy for families, for married couples, for male and female, and for the relationship between God and man. Faith blesses and rejoices at such Divine structure, for the only True God is a God of order.

But there is a “lawless one”. There is one who thrives on chaos. There is one who twists the Divine Word attempting to lead the faithful astray. The lawless one works through temptation, deceit, lies and sin. He leads men to reject God’s order, to break God’s Law. He does it because he knows that to break God’s Law is at its base, to choose a different god, a god whose rules can be bent or stretched or ignored to satisfy the fleshly desires of sinners.

That you be warned, St. Paul writes of the lawless one. Elsewhere in Scripture he is called antichrist. The antichrist will have power, and signs, and lying wonders. By them he will deceive many men, who will perish in sin and false belief. From that first hissing lie, the power of the devil has been to deceive by falsehood.

False doctrine is no plaything. Consider the nonsensical question the Sadducees ask our Lord about the woman who sequentially marries seven men. It is meant not to learn the Truth, but to cause Truth to stumble, if that were possible.

In the ignorance and blindness that comes with unbelief, they really thought they had crafted a hypothetical that would trap the Divine Son of God. The Lord answered from Scripture, from His Word, showing Israel’s teachers that their question grew out of an ignorance of Scripture.

Thanks be to God, the Truth is clear, and is presented clearly in the Holy Scriptures for all men to hear, learn, and understand. But many will not believe the Truth.

Many do not believe the Truth because their fallen flesh desires something else. Many do not believe the Truth because false preachers have already filled them with lies. So, St. Paul writes, God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie. And believing the lie, they will take pleasure in unrighteousness, and so will be condemned.

The idea that some men, believing falsehoods, take pleasure in unrighteousness, is no surprise to any of us. We see it all around us. We see it in the division, the dissension, the hatred, and the

destruction that fills our headlines. Unrighteousness is advanced by our government, and even in some churches that use the Name Christian. And we see the results of unrighteousness – broken families, men in wretched spiritual states, perversion and transgression portrayed as good and normal, the unborn put to death, and the flames of hell stoked and prepared for the fodder of sinful flesh.

But the work of the lawless one, while visible in society, is really quite personal. It begins with individual souls. It begins with personal unrighteousness. So fallen men sin against even those closest to them. Fallen men come to believe there will be no punishment for sin. Every fallen man harbors doubt about Holy Scripture, even when the Word of God is quite clear. And the sins you have committed are no different. They are no less sinful. They are no less a breaking of God's Law, a rejection of God's order.

So beware. The soul is not like reality t.v. You can't turn off the damage that false doctrine, transgression, lustful thoughts and sinful actions do to the soul. Sin works to destroy faith. And where faith is destroyed, a right knowledge of God is impossible. Not knowing God, and not desiring God's forgiveness, finally God sends a strong delusion, and believing the lie, sinners die eternally in their sin.

But that you be saved from the wiles of the antichrist, that you know the Truth, the lawless one is revealed. And as antichrists come, they will be revealed. For God has given you the Truth, by which you can extinguish the flaming darts of the evil one. God has given you His Word, by which you can judge the teaching of any man. God has given you the Truth, that you be saved.

In His mercy, God chose you for salvation from the beginning. This He did out of love. And that that salvation be yours, He sent His only Son to die for you. Jesus Christ endured the hell you earned. His Blood was shed. But He is not dead. He lives that you too live. For He is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

By the work of His Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit that proceeds from the Father and the Son, the Counselor, He sunders you from the fallen world, and keeps you in His Holy Church. This He does through sanctification, by which you live out a life of faith, not believing the lie, but trusting in the Truth, hearkening to God's Law and God's order.

By the Spirit you know the True God, the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. For the Spirit works through the Word of Truth, the Holy Gospel, that you be set apart from the dying world to obtain the glory of your Lord Jesus Christ.

This day that Glory comes to you hidden in Bread and Wine. Christ is applied to you, Christ is fed to you, Christ fills you by His Spirit, that your sins be forgiven, and that you be strengthened in your belief in the Truth, to which He has called you by the Holy Gospel.

So you will not die. God has declared you worthy to attain unto the coming age. He has made you equal to the angels. God has made you His sons, sons of the resurrection. For He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for you live to Him.

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2 Thessalonians 2:8-14
Wednesday of Trinity I / Pentecost II, 2020 A. ✠ D.