



Greetings in Christ!

As you hear the Gospel readings Sunday after Sunday and read the New Testament during the week, you will hear over and over again about this group known as the “Pharisees.” You may also notice that the Pharisees are usually not receptive to Jesus. They interact with Him on many occasions, but many of them are unwilling to see Him as the Son of God and their Savior.

In Luke 15:1-10, the Gospel reading for Sunday, July 3, (the Third Sunday after Trinity), the Pharisees grumble against Jesus for receiving sinners and tax collectors and eating with them. In response, Jesus tells two parables – the parable of the lost sheep and the lost coin. In each parable, a diligent search is made for something that has been lost, and in each case, there is great rejoicing when the item is found.

Jesus indicates to the Pharisees (and to all who will hear), that He wants the lost to acknowledge their sin and believe in Him as their Savior from sin. He wants all people, including the Pharisees, to come to Him for forgiveness and new life. He comes “to seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10).

But on the basis of this Sunday’s Gospel and other passages in the Gospels, one may wonder if there are those whom Jesus does not need to seek and to save. After all, He says in Luke 15:7, “Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.” In Luke 5:31-32, Jesus says, (in response to the grumbling of the Pharisees and their scribes), “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.” On the basis of such passages, are there really those who do not need to repent? No. As Romans 3:23-24 tells us, “...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ

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Jesus.” All people need Jesus and His forgiveness.

In Luke 5 and 15, we learn that those who think they are right with God because of their own efforts and works will not see their need for Jesus. A person must first, by the power of the Holy Spirit, recognize his sin and need for a Savior. Those who have recognized their sin, who are broken by the Law of God, who see that their excuses and self-justification and self-defense cannot wash away their sin are ready to receive the Good News that Jesus died for them. We pray that such people will, by the power of the Holy Spirit believe in Jesus as their only Savior.

On the other hand, there are those who excuse their sin, who believe they are right with God because of how well they have acted, or who want to continue to live lives contrary to God’s Word. Such people are more like the unbelieving Pharisees of old than the repentant sinners who came to Jesus for forgiveness.

Many Pharisees did not see their need for Jesus. Many did not see the depth of their sins and the fact that only Jesus could save them. Some did repent, however. Some (like Paul), by the power of the Holy Spirit, joined the ranks of the tax collectors and sinners in clinging to Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins.

As Christians, we also live in the ranks of the sinners who came to hear Jesus and receive His forgiveness. We recognize we are sinners, and we eagerly come to Jesus in the Divine Service, where He forgives our sins and gives eternal life. Jesus came to seek and to

save the lost. No matter what sins you have committed, come this Sunday and every Sunday to confess those sins and believe in Jesus and receive His free gift of forgiveness.

Blessings in Christ,
Pastor Burfiend

Congratulations to our 2022 Confirmands: Ava Schlemmer and Hayden Alfeld. They were confirmed on Trinity Sunday, June 12. Pray that they may continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Savior and eagerly receive His gifts in Word and Sacrament all their lives.

Congratulations to our 2022 high school graduates: Bryce Bowman and Emily Todd. We thank God for graciously bringing them to this point in their formal education. May they grow in faith toward God and increase in love toward others.

Sunday Morning Bible Study: On Sunday mornings at 10:45, we will be studying world religions, comparing non-Christian religions to the truth of God’s Word. We plan to study Judaism, Islam, the Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormonism, and other religions that may be of interest to attendees.

Wednesday Bible Study: Please join us on Wednesdays at 7 pm in the Choir Room for a study of the Scripture texts for the coming Sunday.

YTD Financials from the Board of Finance:

Income: \$61,309

Expenses: \$70,434

(Income does not include donations toward the mortgage).

JULY 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3 3rd Sunday after Trinity Micah 7:18-20 1 Peter 5:6-11 Luke 15:1-10 Installation of Officers	4 Independence Day	5	6 Ephesians Bible Study 7:30 am Wells County Courthouse Prepare for Sunday Bible Study 7pm	7	1 8	2 9
10 4th Sunday after Trinity Gen. 50:15-21 Romans 12:14-21 Luke 6:36-42	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 5th Sunday after Trinity 1 Kings 19:11-21 1 Cor. 1:18-25 Luke 5:1-11 Pastor on Vacation	18 Pastor on Vacation	19 Pastor on Vacation	20 Ephesians Bible Study 7:30 am Wells County Courthouse Prepare for Sunday Bible Study 7pm	21 Pastor on Vacation Decatur Circuit Pastor's Bible study 9:30-10:30	22 Pastor on Vacation	23 Pastor on Vacation
24 6th Sunday after Trinity Exodus 20:1-17 Romans 6:1-11 Matthew 5:17-26 Voters' Meeting	25 Pastor at Bugenhagen Conference, Racine, WI	26 Pastor at Bugenhagen Conference, Racine, WI	27 Pastor at Bugenhagen Conference, Racine, WI	28 Decatur Circuit Pastor's Bible study 9:30-10:30	29	30
31 7th Sunday after Trinity Genesis 2:7-17 Romans 6:19-23 Mark 8:1-9 Voters' Meeting	August 1 Pastor on Vacation	2 Pastor on Vacation	3 Pastor on Vacation	4 Decatur Circuit Pastor's Bible study 9:30-10:30	5 Pastor on Vacation	6 Pastor on Vacation