

1 John 5:9–15

“The Victory Goes On and On”

Easter 7

May 13, 2018

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

Pastor Hartwig

Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you from God, Our Heavenly Fathers
And Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

[Introduction] Christ has risen! He has risen, indeed. Alleluia!

Easter... April 1st wasn't that long ago.

And Easter was such a great day, with exuberance and joy – a great celebration.

But then... the day comes and the day goes...

and life seems to return all too quickly to normal.

It's back to the daily grind, doctor appointments, trouble with kids,

It's back to the daily schedule stress at the workplace and challenges at home.

And six weeks later we ask ourselves – has anything changed since Easter?

Look around and see...

Look at the Gathering Place...

Look at the Chapel...

Look at the Sanctuary...

A lot has changed. Look and see... BUT it is not just the building...

A lot has changed with you.

Look and see....

Over the past six weeks...

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

You have been reminded of your baptism!

You have heard the Word of God – both Law and Gospel.

You have received God's grace, His mercy, and known His peace.

And I could go on and on and on.

Easter means an ongoing victory.

Grammatically speaking, many of the words of our text in the Greek language are in the present tense. The present tense in Greek mean an ongoing reality.

The great theologians Journey got it right!

Journey, an American rock band that reached the height of their popularity in the early 1980s, sang about this Biblical reality in their song “Don't Stop Believin'.”

“It goes on and on and on and on”

Mathematically – you say... infinity...

“It goes on and on and on and on”

Our text is in the present tense so that we will realize that.

“It goes on and on and on and on”

We believe in Christ as Savior, and in him we conquer.

“It goes on and on and on and on”

That doesn't change just because the day of Easter is past,
or even when the Easter season comes to an end. Ours is an ongoing victory.

[Thanks to Jesus]

We enjoy this on-going victory due to the one who came.

Jesus came to reveal himself as the Christ or Messiah.

He came by water and blood.

At his Baptism both the Father and the Spirit testified
to his identity as the Son of God.

On the cross, Jesus finished what he started
and was manifested as the innocent Lamb of God,
who shed his blood for the sin of the world.

The thief on the cross and the Roman soldier they knew it! They confessed it.

[Illustration]

We earnestly began the remodeling of

the Narthex, the Gathering Place, and the Chapel back in December.

We began early! We weren't supposed to start until January,

but after learning about the asbestos in the Preschool,

we knew and we tested and we found asbestos upstairs.

Boy-oh-boy did we find it – On the floor, in the ceiling, in the walls we found it.

As we peeled back the thick layers and rehab this place,

we found a new purpose – the Gathering Place.

For millennia the thick layers of man's sin came between God and the human race.

But in Christ's death and resurrection,

God has broken through and revealed his grace.

His effects on us are great: he totally “rehab” us.

[New Life] He came to give us a new birth.

Jesus was born so we would have new birth.

This new birth is given to us in our Baptism,

when Jesus came to us through water and the Word.

Easter means that we are justified,

that the Father's justice was satisfied

by the Son's sacrifice on our behalf.

Christ lives, and we know that we are forgiven. New life is ours!

Easter means new life through death.

God has brought forth something totally new in us.

Through Baptism into Christ's death and resurrection,

God has made us into a new creation,

given us anew birth,

and endowed us with eternal life.

[Continues]

We continue to enjoy this victory through the one who continues to come.

"It goes on and on and on and on"

Jesus abides with us always.

His words to his disciples were, "Peace be with you".

That blessing is given us too through absolution, Word, water, bread, and wine.

As Jesus once came by blood,

so he continues to come to us today in the Lord's Supper,

giving us peace and pardon,

nurturing the new life in us.

The Spirit bears witness of these things.

[Testimony]

This is why John urges us to hear only the testimony of God.

John urgently makes the distinction between

the "testimony of men" and the "testimony of God,"

the word of men and the Word of God.

The testimony of men says – nothing has changed.

AND So often, the testimony of men even says there's no God,

that the Bible is just one big fairy tale made up by men,

that abortion is not killing a human being,

that marriage should be for couples of either sex who want to live together,

that sin is simply an archaic idea that was introduced to control people,

that we should be able to do WHATEVER we want.

Furthermore, some men try to pass off their testimony as being from God.

Joseph Smith claimed that the angel Moroni guided him to discover hidden

golden plates to translate, and thus reform the church.

All of this goes against the greater "testimony of God."

The testimony of men calls God an outright liar and tries to confuse the weak in faith.

All who promote these falsehoods do not believe

“the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son” (v 10).

But John reveals that “the testimony of God is greater” (v 9).

This greater testimony is the direct opposite of the testimony of men.

John speaks of the truth of God’s testimony that ***“gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life”*** (vv 11–12).

Since we love God, we love those who are born of God.

We love God’s Word, receive his Sacraments, and treasure his commands.

Easter means that no matter what the worldly circumstances,
we are united with Christ and thus victorious.

This victory manifests itself in what we say and do.

[Conclusion]

No one knows what will come in the days and years ahead.

And now Easter Season has come and gone.

And the world is a hostile place.

But this we know: in Christ we are victorious, and will remain so.

“It goes on and on and on and on”

Sin, death, and the evil one cannot defeat us.

Christ’s victory does not fade after the Easter lilies drop their petals.

This victory, like our faith, is renewed day by day through Christ
as he comes in Word and Sacrament.

The reality of the matter is...

Every day for the Christian is a victorious Easter!

“It goes on and on and on and on” Amen!

“Now may the God of peace... equip you with everything good
that you may do his will, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever.
Amen.” (Heb 13:20-21)
