

John 9:1-41

March 22, 2020

“Still Light”

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

4th Sunday in Lent

Vicar Miguel Gonzalez-Feliciano

Grace, Mercy, and Peace are yours from God our Heavenly Father and Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

[COVID-19]

Taking stock of the current situation, I think we can all agree on one thing: this virus has become a big deal. What used to be something across the sea in a far-off land has now come to our country and things are changing rapidly. What used to be the subject of countless internet memes and jokes is now the topic of Governor’s press conferences. You might think this isn’t *that* big of a deal. Maybe you’re scared. Or perhaps you’re worried about family and friends. No matter what fears or concerns you’re facing right now, I’m glad you’re taking the time to worship with us right now. Because no matter what goes on in our city, state, country, or world, God’s work is still being done. So long as God’s people worship and sing the praises of God, His work is still being done. This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it.

[What’s Going On?]

For the first time in many of our lives, Lent has broken into our lives in an all encompassing way. We are no longer placing a small limit on ourselves by refraining from eating chocolate or drinking only water. Instead, people have had to give up immensely more than they bargained for. For many of us, it is a new sensation. We are utterly powerless to make certain decisions that we took for granted just a month ago. A simple trip to Church is no longer simple, in fact, it’s no longer possible. This might cause us to look out our windows and proclaim internally and externally,

“What’s going on?”

And we’re not alone in asking this question. People all over the world are wondering. Wondering what will happen next. What will be shut down, when will this all be over, how soon can we make it back to normal? You and I are now so uncertain when it comes to lifestyle choices that were so common not too long ago.

Maybe, we can begin to pause and consider just how abundantly blessed we were not too long ago. As you and I look around and we see the Government's response and our Neighbor's response.

Schools are closed.

Shelves are cleared out.

No more Toilet Paper.

Isolated. Alone. You and I might rightly feel that we are on our own. Everybody is out for themselves.

What's going on?

[Fear]

This is the same question the Disciples are asking in our text today. They see a blind man on the side of the road, and they ask Jesus, "What's going on? Was it this man, or his parents who sinned, that he was born blind?"

Now, the disciples have seen blind people before in their lives. They aren't somehow surprised that someone was blind. They want to know *why*. **Why** was this man born blind? There had to be some reason. Something to explain why a person would be born blind. They know Jesus is the ultimate teacher, so they decide to ask.

It's a feeling you and I can sympathize with well. You and I also want to know *why*.

Perhaps you and I think that once we know the "why" of it all, we can have some better control. Like the disciples, maybe we think if we who sinned can keep away from that sin we can stop such a "punishment" from happening whether it be blindness or a virus.

However, when the chips are on the table and all is laid bare, you and I come face to face with the truth:

You and I are not in control.

And that's terrifying.

It's terrifying to not be the one in control. How else can you be sure that you are going to be taken care of? Who else is going to look out for your family? You and I begin to panic that nobody is looking out for us. So, people go out and seize control. They buy up all the goods they possibly can, giving little care to the needs of others. When all is going wrong and you're scared, what are you going to do who are you going to talk to?

[God's Work]

Why, God?

If that's what you've wondered in these past few weeks, hear Jesus' response to the Disciples,

“It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

You and I are not in control and that's a good thing. It's fantastic because God is in control. You and I will never truly understand why these things happen. But you and I know the one who is in control over all. The one who created the stars in the sky and knows them by name.

This same Jesus who stoops down to the blind man and heals his blindness comes to you and I in our suffering. He comes to us during our fear and uncertainty and He heals us. He forgives us of our sins and opens our eyes. The love of Christ shines into our Darkness and helps you and me to see our neighbor. Having this love, you and I have the hope that even if we get sick or even die, we belong to Jesus. The glory of God is displayed in His workmanship, the Church.

[It is Still Light]

Yes, we are in the midst of a darker Lent than many of us have experienced. But it is not the final darkness. Jesus said, “As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” Brothers and Sisters in Christ, it is still Light. Verse four says, “We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day.” So, you and I are not hopeless, solitary, and fearful. You and I are children of the Heavenly Father, bought and redeemed by Christ, called, gathered and enlightened by the Holy Spirit. You and I might not be able to meet here in this building, but **we are the Church.**

So, you and I have a lot of work to do. There are a lot of hopeless people out there. People who need to be uplifted. Healthcare workers who need prayer. Government in need of guidance from God. I’ve said it before and I’ll say it again, the Church is the only place where the Gospel is. And currently, the world desperately needs it. You and I need it.

The forgiveness of Sins

Salvation

And life Everlasting

These are still the precious gifts of God that have been given to you. And they are the gifts meant to be shared with the world. Let us love one another, let us pray for and call one another. Let’s provide for the people among us who are in need, looking to the needs of our neighbors. Simply put, let’s *Show Hospitality*.

It’s still light outside.

So Be it.

Amen.

As followers of Christ, “Keep loving one another earnestly
And show hospitality to one another without grumbling.” AMEN! (1Pt 4:8-9)
