

Mark 1

You are a Preacher

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday af. Epiphany

February 7, 2021

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

Rev. Brent Hartwig

Grace, Mercy, and Peace be unto you from God our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

**[Introduction]**

[1] When I was in Florida, I had a chance to visit a friend.  
When he first knew me, I wasn't a pastor.  
You all know me as pastor.  
I think it is still a little awkward for him.  
But while at dinner, he asked, "How's the preaching going?"

How do you respond?

I should respond by telling them to ask you, the people at church.

It is fun. It is an honor.

It is also a lot of work and a lot of pressure  
to proclaim the Good News  
that God has accomplished salvation for us in Jesus Christ,  
that we have the forgiveness of sins, and  
that we have life everlasting.

[2] Now, I turn the tables and ask you.

I ask *you*. How is your "preaching" going?

Some of you may respond that you have given it up.

You were told a long time ago to stop preaching—  
by your children, your spouse, or a sibling.

Some of you might say you would like to be a preacher;  
you have a thing or two that you would like to say.  
But you haven't taken your chance.

Some of you may say you never got into the business.

Indeed, your job is not to be a public preacher like a pastor.  
But in the broadest sense,  
ALL Christians are proclaimers of the Gospel.

And some of you might even say  
you would not touch being a preacher with a ten-foot pole.  
But you may not have a choice.  
For there is something about being in Christ,  
being in the kingdom of God, that propels us to preach.

**[Two Kinds of Preaching]**

**[3]** So let's not over theologize this...

I am a preacher because you called me to be pastor at Our Redeemer.  
I have a public call for preaching.

You preach because you are a follower of Jesus Christ.  
You preach through your words and actions as you go about your daily life.  
You have a private call for preaching.

In our readings we see Jesus doing both kinds of preaching...

**[4]** On the Sabbath (last sermon, last week's Gospel)—

Jesus taught in the service "as one who had authority."

It was ordinary in so many ways, yet it was extraordinary!

Jesus cast out an evil spirit who knew him as "the Holy One."

Jesus was publicly preaching!

**[5]** On the Sabbath (this sermon, this week's Gospel)—

Jesus healed Simon Peter's mother-in-law.

Jesus tended to the needs of many with various diseases and  
"drove out many demons" (v 34).

Jesus was privately preaching through his words and actions.

**[6]** Our responsibility,

for me publicly and for you privately is to preach,  
preach with our words and preach with our actions.

**[People Respond]**

**[7]** As a result... people respond.

You see...

There are consequences of preaching the Good News

Some will hear it and rejoice.

Some will hear it and reject the message.

Some will hear it and reject the messenger.

These responses...

[8] They are always the clearest to me when we hand out 8,000 bottles of water  
At the Coralville fourth of July parade.

When we hand out the water...

Some clamor to get the water.

Some cannot get enough. They want 2 or 3 bottles

Some reject and say give it to an older person.

AND

Some flat out reject the person giving the water.

Nevertheless, people respond.

People responded to Jesus.

[9] Peter's mother-in-law, now healed, "began to wait on them."

She served not because she was a woman and  
certainly not because it was her house.

Her response was an act of love, the response of thankfulness.

[10] The townspeople too responded too.

Having witnessed Jesus' authority in the synagogue

both in Word and deed, the town knew the grace he offered.

They wanted "the sick and demon-possessed"  
to share Christ's healing power.

**[Pick Your Words]**

[11] It is clear there will be a response.

So you better pick your words wisely.

Scripture tells us that we need to be prepared.

Peter says:

*Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason  
for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15)*

All Christians "preach" by testifying in some way to the Good News of Christ.

This year we are focusing on mission.

[12] Christ says, "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel."

So we respond, "Here I am."

[13] We know we can summarize the Apostles' Creed.

When asked what you believe, you respond...

You can give a summary of the creed,

as it is the most summarized source of Christians beliefs!

[14] We also spent time in the fall going through LASSIE in Adult Bible study.  
The LASSIE Approach to Witnessing:  
Listen—Ask—Seek—Share—Invite—Encourage

[15] So what are you going to say?  
WHO  
WHAT  
HOW  
WHY

For the season of Lent we have a sermon series that will get us thinking.  
It will help us to explore Biblical themes and  
create our own person Christian summary.

In fact, in seven words.  
Can you summarize what it means to be a Christian in seven words?  
This will be our focus during lent.

[*Conclusion*] How is your “preaching” going?  
As you announce the Good News of God’s salvation in Jesus Christ,  
I pray that you will see results of your preaching.  
I pray that you will have courage and strength  
for those times the message will be resisted, rejected;  
maybe even you are resisted, rejected.  
That can be painful, for you have such good news to tell and  
you care so much for the people to whom you proclaim it.

One of Dr. Martin Luther’s regrets was that he was not called upon to be a martyr.  
Perhaps you or I will be. Preaching has those risks.

But this I know.  
You, like Jesus in Galilee,  
like Paul in Corinth,  
like those who preceded us and those who join us all over the world,  
preach the Good News we have to tell through our words and actions.  
Amen.

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So we... Declare his glory among the nations,  
his marvelous deeds among the people. AMEN! (Psalm 96:3)

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