



Are You Satan?

Saturday, 8/29 at 4:00 | Sunday, 8/30 at 9:00

13th Sunday after Pentecost / 12th Sunday after Trinity – 2020

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: Last week Jesus clarified His identity as *the Christ, the Son of the living God*; then He told His disciples to *keep His identity a secret*. In today's Gospel reading, the focus shifts to ➔ Jesus' upcoming death and resurrection, ➔ Jesus calling Peter Satan, and ➔ Jesus calling His disciples to deny themselves and follow Him!

1. **The Completion of Jesus' Work:** ²¹ **From that time** [*when Jesus solidified that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God*] **Jesus began to show His disciples that He must** [*δεῖ, it is necessary*] **go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes** [*the Sanhedrin, the Jewish leaders*], **and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.** // Think about Jesus' disciples and others who were looking for the coming Messiah: They did not fully understand the OT, so *they did NOT expect Jesus to*

✦suffer, ✦be killed, and ✦be raised. But note the key Greek word used by Jesus: δεῖ, which means, *it is necessary!* When JESUS used that word – *even though suffering and death are horrible*, THEY WERE DEFINITELY NECESSARY to ✨remove our sins and ✨open the way to heaven!

2. **Peter's Misunderstanding:** ²² Peter took [Jesus] aside and began to rebuke Him [to strongly express his disapproval], saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You." ²³ But [Jesus] turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me [you are trying to cause me to sin, to abandon my mission]; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's." // Let's think about the two perspectives:

- a. Peter: His perspective was **man-centered** – *as he cared about THIS LIFE*. Peter ✦knew Jesus, ✦cared about Him, and ✦didn't want anything bad to happen to Him; therefore, he said, "**God forbid it, Lord!**" *We might say the same to a close friend in physical danger!* However, when Peter said it – *even though he didn't realize it*, he was acting like Satan by trying to discourage Jesus from suffering and dying for us.
- b. Jesus: His perspective was **God-centered** – *as He cared about THE LIFE TO COME*. Jesus' will was in perfect alignment with the Father's will; since the Father willed for us to be saved, *He also willed for Jesus to suffer and be killed*. That might sound horrible, *but IT WAS NECESSARY!* It was the only way to save us, *and it shows HOW MUCH God loves us!*

3. **Jesus' Call to Deny Self and Follow Him:** ²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me,

he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.” // What does that mean? **First, what is the sinful self we are being called to deny? “The... sinful self... centers in the things of men and has no desire for the things of God” (Lenski, 643). **Second**, what does it mean to take up our cross? That is referring to “suffering which results from our faithful connection with Christ” (ibid, 644). Then Jesus explained the consequences...**

- a. ²⁵ **“For whoever wishes to save his life [which gets at the belief and attitude of the heart] will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.” //**
- i. How does a person “save his life”? Think of a Christian who is about to suffer and possibly die – *because of his connection to Christ*. When such a person denies knowing Jesus, *then his earthly life is saved*, but *his eternal life is lost!*
 - ii. How does a person find his life? Similar scenario: Think of a Christian who is about to suffer and possibly die – *because of his connection to Christ*. When that Christian values his connection to Christ MORE than his earthly life, *then he continues to embrace God’s gift of eternal life!*
- b. ²⁶ **“For what will [future] it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” //** Notice the HUGE contrast between the world and his soul: Imagine you become the **wisest, wealthiest, most powerful person** in the whole world, YET, when you die, *you are apart from God and in torment forever and ever!* On earth you get 90 years; in torment you get a zillion years! Let me ask you: Would those 90 years be worth it? In

other words, would they be so wonderful, that you would be okay with a zillion years in torment?

- c. Jesus' return: ²⁷ **“For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.”** // Jesus will come in **ALMIGHTY POWER**, and no one will be able to resist His will; in fact, **“...EVERY KNEE WILL BOW [and]... every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord”** (Phil. 2:10-11 NAU). But what are the DEEDS upon which he will judge every person? Jesus already told us in v. 24; it's only three things: **Have we** (1) denied self or not, (2) taken up our cross or not, and (3) followed Him or not?

4. **Jesus' Reference to a Future Event**: ²⁸ **“Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.”** // Jesus said those words almost 2,000 years ago; is someone from then still alive? No! Jesus reference is to when He came in AD 70 *with a PRELIMINARY judgment upon Jerusalem*. What happened? The Roman army overcame the city and killed 1.1 million people – who ignored Jesus' instructions (Matthew 24) and did not flee. *That's a picture of the horror to come in the FINAL judgment for those who reject Jesus!*

Let Us Pray: Dear Jesus, TY for coming and completing Your saving work for everyone! Help us to see how very important You are in comparison to this life; then enable us to ▶deny self, ▶willingly suffer for You, and ▶keep following You!