

Concordia Lutheran Conference

Daily Devotions

for the

Week of the 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

– Wednesday –

I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. – Matthew 9:13.

We have so far, since Epiphany Day, beheld Jesus' divine glory, from His miracles. We shall now view His saving glory, the glory of His mercy toward poor sinners. When our Lord had healed the man sick of the palsy in Capernaum, He went to the Sea of Galilee with His disciples. And He saw a man named Matthew (also called "*Levi*" – Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27) sitting at the receipt of custom. This was one of the justly ill-famed and proverbial publicans (tax-collectors), who were often guilty of much injustice. Jesus said to him: "*Follow me.*" He became the Apostle Matthew (Matthew 10:3). This same Matthew then made a great feast in his own house for Jesus and His disciples, and there was a great company of publicans and other sinners that sat down with them (Luke 5:29). And when the self-righteous, sanctimonious Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples: "*Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?*" When Jesus heard this, He said to them: "*They that be whole need not the physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth – I will have mercy and not sacrifice; for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance*" (Matthew 9:9-13). Jesus has come expressly for us poor and condemned sinners, and not for the good and righteous, those who do not see what wretched sinners they are before God. The Apostle Paul confessed: "*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief*" (I Timothy 1:15). Let us confess to our all-knowing God with the psalmist: "*I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid; I said: 'I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin'*" (32:5). For each of us and for all of our fellow sinners, Jesus gave us this invaluable and ever-needed counsel and instruction: "*Repent ye and believe the Gospel*" (Mark 1:15b).

PRAYER. – Dear Heavenly Father, who through Thy Word has called us miserable sinners "*out of darkness into [Thy] marvelous light*" (I Peter 2:9b), so that now we know Thy dear Son, who has satisfied Thy holy justice in our place and in the place of the whole world, and has also paid the punishment and penalty for the sins of all sinners, so that, as a result, Thou hast forgiven all of our sins and given us righteousness before Thee, not because of anything which we have done, but because of what Christ did for us and for the whole world of sinners. Accept our profound thanks and gratitude for these great, unearned, unmerited, and free gifts from Thee, the Source of "*every good gift and every perfect gift*" (James 1:17a). We bring all of this before Thee in the name of Him who is "*the Way, the Truth, and the Life*" (John 14:6a). Amen.

Jesus sinners doth receive; oh, may all this saying ponder,
who in sin's delusions live, and from God and heaven wander!
Here is hope for all who grieve; Jesus sinners doth receive.

We deserve but grief and shame, yet His words rich grace revealing;
pardon, peace, and life proclaim; here their ills have perfect healing.
Who with humble hearts believe; Jesus sinners doth receive.

Sheep that from the fold did stray, no true shepherd e'er forsaketh;
weary souls that lost their way, Christ, the Shepherd, gently taketh,
in His arms that they may live; Jesus sinners doth receive.

Hymn 324, stanzas 1-3 (TLH)

Weekly Theme: Miracles of Jesus

Scripture Reading: Luke 5:12-16