

Trust God – Choose Life

**“I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse.
Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live”
(Deuteronomy 30:19).**

The choice set before us really runs deeper than life and death.

When faced with difficult situations, do we trust in God to be with and help us or do we turn to “other gods” offered by the world?

We can trust God! We can make God-pleasing choices!

Why? Because God has chosen us in Christ Jesus to be His special people!



Sanctity of Life Sunday • Lutherans For Life

Prelude

Opening Hymn “I am Trusting Thee, Lord Jesus” (LSB 729) ¹

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| 1 I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus,
Trusting only Thee; Trusting Thee
for full salvation, Great and free. | 4 I am trusting Thee to guide me;
Thou alone shalt lead,
Ev’ry day and hour supplying All my need. |
| 2 I am trusting Thee for pardon;
At Thy feet I bow, For Thy grace and
tender mercy Trusting now, | 5 I am trusting Thee for power;
Thine can never fail. Words which Thou
Thyself shalt give me Must prevail. |
| 3 I am trusting Thee for cleansing
In the crimson flood; Trusting Thee to
make me holy By Thy blood. | 6 I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus;
Never let me fall. I am trusting Thee
forever And for all. |

Invocation

Pastor: Remembering God’s calling us as His chosen ones in our baptisms, we begin in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen!**

Confession

Pastor: Chosen of God, let us draw near with a humble heart and confess our sins to our heavenly Father and ask that, for Jesus sake, He would forgive us.
Our help is in the name of the Lord,

People: **Who made heaven and earth.**

Pastor: I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,

People: **And You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

Lord God, we confess that we do not always behave as your chosen people. We fail to trust in You and turn to other sources for rescue from our problems. Our lack of trust leads to all kinds of sins of thought, word, and deed. We bow before You and plead for Your mercy for the sake of Jesus.

Pastor: People of God, your heavenly Father grants You His mercy in Christ who bore God’s punishment for all of your sins. You can trust His faithfulness to you. Therefore, in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen! Thank you, Father. Renew our spirits and enable us to live as Your chosen people trusting in You and being obedient to Your will.**

Entrance Psalm (Psalm 139:13-18)

Pastor: For you formed my inward parts;

People: You knitted me together in my mother's womb.

Pastor: I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

People: Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.

Pastor: My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret,

People: intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

Pastor: Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them,

People: The days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

Pastor: How precious to me are your thoughts, O God!

People: How vast is the sum of them!

Pastor: If I would count them, they are more than the sand.

People: I awake, and I am still with you.

**All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit
As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Kyrie

All: Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.

Hymn of Praise "In Thee is Gladness" (LSB 818) ²

1 In Thee is gladness Amid all sadness,
Jesus, sunshine of my heart.
By Thee are given The gifts of heaven,
Thou the true Redeemer art.
Our souls Thou wakest,
Our bonds Thou breakest;
Who trusts Thee surely Has built
securely; He stands forever: Alleluia!
Our Hearts are pining To see Thy
shining, Dying or living
To Thee are cleaving; Naught can us
sever: Alleluia!

2 Since He is ours, We fear no powers,
Not of Earth nor sin nor death.
He sees and blesses In worst distresses;
He can change them with a breath.
Wherefore the Story
Tell of His glory
With hearts and voices;
All heav'n Rejoices In Him forever:
Alleluia! We shout for gladness,
Triumph o'er sadness, Love Him and
praise Him And still shall raise Him
Glad hymns forever: Alleluia!

Collect

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And with your spirit.

Pastor: Let us pray to the LORD.

Gracious Lord, Who has chosen us in Jesus to be Your special people, increase our faith and trust in Your love and power as we face the trials and temptations of this present life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen!**

Old Testament Reading Deuteronomy 30:11-20

“For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it. ‘See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.’”

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Gradual

Pastor: Praise the LORD, all nations!

People: **Extol him, all peoples.**

Pastor: For great is His steadfast love toward us,

People: **And the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever.**

Pastor: Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;

People: **Bring an offering and come into his courts! (Psalm 117; 96:8)**

Epistle Reading 1 Peter 2:9-12

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once

you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

Pastor: This is the Word of the LORD.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Reading John 15:12-17

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Creed

Hymn of the Day “If Thou but Trust in God to Guide Thee” (LSB 750) ³

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| 1 If thou but trust in God to guide thee
and hope in Him through all thy ways,
He'll give thee strength, what-e'er
Betide thee, And bear thee
through the evil days.
Who trusts in God's unchanging love
Builds on the rock that naught can move. | 3 Be patient and await His leisure
In cheerful hope, with heart content
To take what-e'er thy Father's pleasure
And His discerning love hath sent.
Nor doubt our inmost wants are known
To Him who chose us
for His own. |
| 2 What can these anxious cares avail thee,
These never ceasing moans and sighs?
What can it help if thou bewail thee
O'er each dark moment as it flies?
Our cross and trials do but press
The heavier for our bitterness. | 4 God knows full well when times of gladness
Shall be the needful thing for thee.
When He has tried thy soul with sadness
And from all guile has found thee free,
He comes to thee all unaware
And makes thee own His loving care. |

5 Nor think amid the fiery trial
That God hath cast thee off unheard,
That he whose hopes meet no denial
Must surely be of God preferred.
Time passes and much change doth bring
And sets a bound to ev'rything.

7 Sing, pray, and keep His ways unswerving,
Perform thy duties faithfully,
And trust His Word; though undeserving,
Thou yet shalt find it true for thee.
God never yet forsook in need
The soul that trusted Him indeed.

6 All are alike before the Highest;
'Tis easy for our God, we know,
To raise thee up, though low thou liest,
To make the rich man poor and low.
True wonders still by Him are wrought
Who setteth up and brings to naught.

Sermon

Offering

Prayers

Pastor: Father in Heaven, we come before You as Your chosen people declared holy through the merits of Your Son Jesus Christ.

People: Therefore we are confident You will hear our prayer.

Pastor: We pray for our nation and its leaders.

People: Instill in them a sense of the innate value given to all human life from the moment of conception and move them to put an end to the choice of death and all that destroys and devalues the work of Your hands so we might once again be a nation that “chooses life.”

Pastor: We pray for Your chosen ones, the Church.

People: May she boldly and courageously proclaim the value You give to all human life and call Your people to a faith and a trust that “chooses life.”

Pastor: We pray for Your chosen ones here in this congregation.

People: Increase our faith and trust to “choose life” and turn to You for rescue in times of distress. Help us share with others the hope and help that only You can provide.

Pastor: We pray for those facing difficult choices in their lives.

People: Help them trust in Your great love given in Jesus that assures them of your presence and power that they may “choose life.” Move us to support them in this choice and demonstrate Your love in real, practical ways.

Pastor: We pray for those who have made wrong choices.

People: Turn their hearts to trust in Your mercy and fill their hearts with Your complete and free forgiveness. Use us to welcome them here with the rest of us sinners.

Pastor: We pray for Lutherans For Life.

People: May they continue to serve You by equipping us all to “choose life” and be Gospel-motivated voices For Life to one another and to the world.

Pastor: We now bring the needs and joys of our congregation before You. (*Special intercessions may be offered here.*) Into Your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Your Son Jesus Christ, who has taught us to pray

People: Our Father ...

Benediction

Pastor: The LORD bless you and keep you as His chosen ones. The LORD make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

People: Amen!

Closing Hymn “Rejoice, My Heart, Be Glad and Sing” (LSB 737) ⁴

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| 1 Rejoice, my heart, be glad and sing, A cheerful trust maintain; For God, the source of ev'rything, Your portion shall remain. | 4 Did not His love and truth and pow'r Guard ev'ry childhood day? And did He not in threat'ning hour Turn dreaded ills away? |
| 2 He is your treasure, He your joy, Your life and light and Lord, Your counselor when doubts annoy, Your shield and great reward. | 5 He only will with patience chide, His rod falls gently down; And all your sins He casts aside In ocean depths to drown. |
| 3 Why spend the day in blank despair, In restless thought the night? On your Creator cast your care; He makes your burdens light. | 6 His wisdom never plans in vain Nor falters nor mistakes. All that His counsels may ordain A blessed ending makes. |
| | 7 Upon your lips, then, lay your hand, And trust His guiding love; Then like a rock your peace shall stand Here in heav'n above. |

(Endnotes)

- 1 Text: Frances R. Havergal, 1836-79; Tune: Henry W. Baker, 1821-77; Text and music: Public domain
- 2 Text: Johann Lindemann, 1549-1631; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-78, alt.; Tune: Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi, c. 1556-c. 1622; Text and tune: Public domain
- 3 Text and tune: Georg Nuemark, 1621-81; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-78, alt.; Text and music: Public domain
- 4 Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607; tr. John Kelly, 1833-90, alt. Tune: Harmonischer Lieder-Schatz, Frankfurt, 1738; setting: The Lutheran Hymnal 1941. Text and music: Public domain.

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