

May 14, 2017  
 Sermon for Mother's Day 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter  
 St Peter Lutheran Church  
 Bowie, TX  
 Larry Knobloch, Pastor  
 An Orphan No More  
 John 14:1-14, 15-21

*J.J.- Jesu Juva—Help me, Jesus*

### **John 14:1-14 (ESV)**

#### **I Am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life**

14 "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. <sup>2</sup> In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

<sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. <sup>4</sup> And you know the way to where I am going." <sup>5</sup> Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" <sup>6</sup> Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. <sup>7</sup> If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

<sup>8</sup> Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." <sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? <sup>10</sup> Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. <sup>11</sup> Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

<sup>12</sup> "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. <sup>13</sup> Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup> If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.

### **John 14:15-21 (ESV)**

#### **Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit**

<sup>15</sup> "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. <sup>16</sup> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, <sup>17</sup> even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

<sup>18</sup> "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. <sup>19</sup> Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. <sup>20</sup> In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. <sup>21</sup> Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."

Grace, Mercy, and Peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

While I was still at seminary, Cyndi and I attended a seminar on adoption. It was very informative and spoke of domestic and foreign adoptions. The need was great for adoptive parents. The paperwork was long but what amazed me the most was the cost. It cost almost three times as much as having your own child; including the hospital stay as well as all of the supplies and doctor's visits.

One couple that I know of who adopted several children from Russia said that they had to visit the orphanage several days in a row. Each day they were able to visit the children but in order to get to the infant section of the orphanage, they had to pass through a play yard where numerous two- and three-year-old children were. They said that as soon as they entered the gate, the children would line up, give them their biggest smile, and say "hi."

It was their biggest hope that maybe, just maybe, they, too, would be adopted into a family. The couple left each day with heavy hearts. If they would've been able too, they would have taken all of them home.

Sadly, these children, at least for now, would remain orphans, and would need to face all that orphans face in a country like Russia. No one would call them their own or make a fuss over them or make sacrifices for them or share with them their values or help them shape a future or multiply their joys, divide their sorrows, or give them hope.

These children were orphaned through no fault of their own. It could be that their parents loved them very much but just could not care for them, placing them in the orphanage with great regret. It could be that their parents loved them not at all and placed them in the orphanage as a way of getting out of the responsibility.

The end result was the same. They are orphaned.

We begin our lives in much the same way.

Spiritually, we all begin as orphans. In one sense it is no fault of our own.

From the moment we are conceived, we are sinners.

Sin makes us orphans. As orphans we will need to fend for ourselves.

There is no one to call us their own, no one to fuss over us, no one to sacrifice for us, no one to share with us their values, no one to help shape us for the future, no one to multiply our joys, no one to divide our sorrows, no one to give us hope. That's what sin does.

But the very good news for us this day is that we are orphans no more.

Before we could even line up and say "hi," our Lord claimed us; for most of us, that happened through the waters of Baptism. That is when He put his mark on us, when He declared that we would be His very own, His heirs, the ones for whom He would sacrifice.

We are the ones who would receive His values and be given an eternal future.

Our joys He would multiply and our sorrows He would divide. He would give us hope!

He did this though, at a great cost.

Adoption, as I mentioned earlier, is hardly ever inexpensive; it costs, and it costs much.

For God to adopt us it cost us His only Son. Christ gave it all so that we could be robed in His righteousness. For us to bear His name, He had to empty Himself.

It is a wonderful thing for us to be adopted by our heavenly Father. We are His heirs and He declares us His own!

### **Touched by a Mother's Love**

One of the most powerful, most dramatic, most tender ways in which our Lord communicates that we are adopted, that we are orphans no more, that we are His heirs, is through mothers.

I was blessed with such a mother; perhaps you also were.

If so, you know what I mean. From the very beginning, a real Christian mother assured taught us and assured us that there is one God who has created us, one God who loves us with

steadfast and perfect love, Even when our Mom's made mistakes, our Mothers taught us that God is perfect and forgiving.

We were and are taught that there is one God who gives us saving and sustaining faith.

Throughout our lives, whatever else we may learn and experience, above all we know God's great love for us.

We who have been blessed by such mothers have wonderful stories to tell about their examples and about their resolve and their teaching that we did not follow a god that had no real value. Godly mothers are never hesitant to tell us about their faith, and they did so with gentleness and sacrifice. Even when they make mistakes they teach us God's forgiveness through themselves.

There are many reasons for honoring mothers this day, but the best reasons are for those who helped bring us to the assurance that we are orphans no more.

If you have a chance to tell your mom that on this Mother's Day, do it.

Don't wait. But I don't have to tell you that. You know the value of a mother's love, and you probably tell them on many other days besides Mother's Day.

But this year, surprise them. Tell them "Thanks for assuring me that I am an orphan no more, tell them how you appreciate how they taught you about Jesus and taught you how to rejoice in God's love. Tell them that you treasure your relationship with God and that you have full hope and faith in Jesus as your Savior.

It may be the greatest thing that you could share with your mother, because every Christian mother wants to know that their children know Jesus as their Savior.

When they carried you to baptism, when they taught you about Jesus, it wasn't just to pass the time, it was to care not only for your physical body, kissing boo boos and putting on band-aids, teaching you about Jesus was to protect and care for your eternal soul.

If you are a mom, I know you will treasure all the expressions of love that will be given to you.

Enjoy them. Your children will say a lot of nice things in a flattering way, but treasure most of all those evidences you have in the lives of your children that they have heard your gentle encouragement that they are orphans no more, that they know the one true God and cherish their relationship with him, that they know the eternal heritage that is theirs in Christ Jesus. It is an answer to your prayers.

Some mothers (and fathers) have done their best to teach their children about the Triune God who wishes to declare them orphans no more, but their children have rejected the teaching and the modeling.

Parents, Mothers, keep praying and keep modeling.

There was a wonderful example of that in The *Lutheran Witness* a while back.

A mother kept praying for her son, Gus, who not only rejected the Christian faith, but also ridiculed it with his lifestyle and teaching—only to come to understand the wonderful comfort that comes from our Lord's assurance that he was an orphan no more.

He became one of the great early fathers of the Christian church—St. Augustine.

With great regret we know that not all mothers will have that kind of conversation this day. Some will not hear from their children at all.

Some mothers will have taught their children about many gods—the gods of athletics or music or the arts or of being self-serving and even have modeled following after those gods.

The urgency of this day is to make sure that as many orphans as possible may come to understand that they are orphans no more.

For those mothers and fathers and children whose false gods have taken priority in their lives, the good news is that God still wants to embrace them, still will receive them into His family, still will forgive them, still wishes to declare that they are orphans no more!

There are a great many who feel orphaned yet in our world. They don't know about the God who would claim them as His own children, which is reflected in the way they behave.

They follow all sorts of gods—they are very religious, they sacrifice much for these gods, but they have no hope within them. They follow empty gods. They remain orphans.

But by the grace of our God, by His great sacrificial love, He wishes to say to them what He declares to us. I wish to fuss over you. I have sacrificed for you. I wish to share with you my values. I wish to multiply your joys. I wish to divide your sorrows. I wish to give you hope.

He declares that we are His—you are His and His love for us is steadfast and sure, for we are orphans no more!

Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and mind through Christ Jesus!

Amen.

*Soli Deo Gloria-To God alone be the Glory*

### **Sermon Outline**

#### ***Orphans No More***

*John 14:1-21*

- I. Adopted to Be God's Children
- II. The Cost of Adoption
- III. Touched by a Mother's Love