

July 19, 2015
Sermon for the Eighth Sunday after Pentecost, Sunday after VBS
St Peter Lutheran Church
Bowie, TX
Larry Knobloch, Pastor
Genesis 9:8-17

J.J.- Jesu Juva—Help me, Jesus

Genesis 9:8–17 (ESV)

⁸ Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹ “Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, ¹⁰ and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth. ¹¹ I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” ¹² And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³ I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴ When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵ I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶ When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” ¹⁷ God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

Grace, mercy and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Amen.

If anything is more awesome than walking on water as we heard IN OUR Gospel, it might be deluging the whole world with water.

How thankful, then, the disciples must have been to hear Jesus say *“Take heart; it is I, do not be afraid”* or Noah and his family to hear of God’s covenant, a promise never again to destroy the world by water.

The psalmist assures such love of God “endures forever. In our Old Testament Text today, God says the covenant He is establishing is His, and He says it three times: v 9: *“I establish my covenant”*; v 11: *“I establish my covenant”*; v 15: *“I will remember my covenant.”*

Mine, mine, mine. We know these words, don’t we?

A few weeks ago I talked about a room with three toddlers in it can be playing along just fine and then you put one toy in the room and it won’t be long before you hear the word MINE ringing out in the room.

It’s one of the first words that we learn. Mama, dada, no and Mine!

It happens on Black Friday. The line just to get into the store is long. Then the doors open. The store clerks say, “No running,” without effect. The crowd pushes and shoves to get the greatest deal of the season. That TV, that new iPhone, that gaming system is . . . mine! . . . MY new treasured possession.

A couple goes to a dance. The man steps away to talk to a friend and comes back to find another guy is talking to his date. He is overwhelmed with jealousy. Mine!

Two people are up for the promotion. They started at the company at the same time. Both have been hard working and successful. One gets the promotion, and the other cries, More jealousy, Mine!

Oh, we know these feelings well! A treasured possession! We love it! And we're jealous because we love it and it's mine, we don't want to share.

God certainly knows it too.

His people, you, are His treasured possession. Yes, God is jealous when you go off and about leaving Him behind.

Never thought of it that way, did you?

Then hear the Word of God! God calls you his treasured possession, and you are!

Ex 19:5: "... *you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples...*"

Deut 7:6: "... *The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.*"

Deut 26:18: "*And the Lord has declared today that you are a people for his treasured possession, as he has promised you,...*"

Mal 3:17: "*They shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession...*"

Titus 2:14: "*who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.*"

1 Pet 2:9: "*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession...*"

God calls you his treasured possession, and He is jealous for you!

Ex 20:5: "*I the Lord your God am a jealous God.*"

Ex 34:14: *“You shall worship no other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.”*

Deut 4:24: *“The Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.”*

Deut 5:9: *“You shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God.”*

Nah 1:2: *“The Lord is a jealous and avenging God.”*

God calls you His treasured possession, and He is jealous for you! It is His covenant. Not jealous in a sinful way...God is only claiming His people that are rightfully His.

Yet there are times when we think God’s covenant is ours.

How many times do we think we’re in charge as God’s children?

Like a two-year-old we want to cry out: “It’s all Mine.”

How many times do we think we’re in control?

How many times do we think we can change God’s covenant to make it fit our whims or selfish choices?

I want what I see as mine, selfish or not, it’s mine, even if for no other reason that I said so!

Here is a portion of Dr. Martin Luther’s explanation of the First Article of the Apostle’s Creed. It might help us to understand how powerful we really are.

“I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have.”

What do we have that isn’t included in that list?

The explanation of the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed covers something even more important.

"I believe that I cannot by *my* own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me."

God takes care of even our ability to believe!

We aren't in charge... in control... or able to change anything.

But God is!

Consider the flood. It was unlike anything mankind has seen before or since. The flood was, without doubt, a holocaust of enormous and exceptional proportions.

The rains and flooding that we saw earlier this year were nothing but a little trickle compared to the worldwide flood that God brought about.

One day everything was normal, and then the of water came and kept on coming!

The water rose for 40 days, and the whole earth remained flooded for 150 days. God is in charge.

So as God created the world, He then re-created. He set the rainbow in the cloud. He established His covenant with you, plural—that is, all of you!

He established His covenant with every living creature. He established His covenant with all flesh.

He established His covenant for all future generations. And He remembers His covenant, forever.

Even when we fail, He does not go back on His Word.

His covenant endures.

His covenant with Noah, His covenant with Abraham, His covenant at Sinai, His covenant with David, His covenant with Israel, it is *God's* covenant.

You are His. His covenant is with you. God is saying you are Mine!

Without a doubt, you are God's treasured possession. God said so Himself. He said,

"When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵ I will remember my covenant that is between me and you ..." Gen 9:14–15

What was the covenant? That He will never forsake us. And He hasn't!

Jesus Christ will never, leave or forsake you. (Heb 13:5).

Jesus did the will of the Father.

Jesus did the will of the Father and stood before Caiaphas, before Herod, and before Pilate.

Jesus did the will of the Father and took the beating, the scourging.

Jesus did the will of the Father and endured the weight of the cross.

Jesus did the will of the Father and willingly gave up His spirit on the cross for you.

But more than that, He rose on Easter morning for you.

So that you could be His. So that you could be His prized possession.

So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Eph 3:17–19)

Yes, you are God's treasured possession!

Our God is jealous for you!

In our text today God says it is *His* covenant, and he says it three times: v 9: “*my* covenant”; v 11: “*my* covenant”; v 15: “*my* covenant.”

Three times! He must really want you to know it.

God’s Covenant Says Mine, Mine, Mine. You are His His Treasured Possessions.

In Jesus’ name.

Amen.

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

Amen.

S.D.G.—Soli Deo Gloria