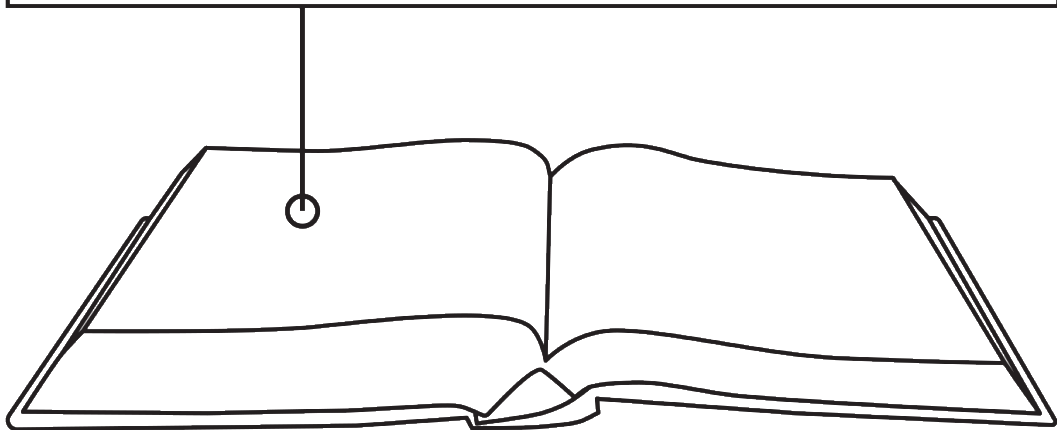


# Define: Christian



## **THE CHRISTIAN SEEKS SPIRITUAL WEALTH**

The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

# **BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH** | York, Nebraska

*July 30, 2023*

## **SERIES THEME: DEFINE CHRISTIAN**

Ask ten different people to define Christian and you may get ten different answers. One might say, "A Christian is someone who believes in Jesus." Okay. But the demons believe that Jesus exists and is the Son of God. So is that definition adequate? Another person might have a more negative view. He says, "A Christian is someone who believes he is better than others." Is that completely false? And if you aren't humble, does that mean you aren't Christian? In our next worship series Christ himself defines the term Christian and describes what Christians do. We will be struck by how often we do not do all those things. There likely are times when people could look at our behavior and assume we were unbelievers. Yet throughout this series Jesus will demonstrate that ultimately a Christian is one who runs to Christ for forgiveness precisely because he has failed to live like what he is—a Christian. As we receive the mercy of Christ, it moves us to strive with all our being to better fit Christ's beautiful definition, doing all the things Jesus says that Christians do.

## **THEME OF THE DAY: THE CHRISTIAN SEEKS SPIRITUAL WEALTH**

What do you consider your life's priorities? If you made a list, what would be near the top? Faith, family, and friends would probably head the lists of many. Financial security and health would be right up there. Reputation and recreation would likely make the cut. But perhaps a more interesting question than "What do you consider your life's priorities?" is "Which of the items on that list would you be willing to sacrifice to save your top priority?" What if you had to give up the whole list—family, friends, finances, health, reputation, recreation—to save just one priority: faith? This week we are given an honest assessment of what really matters in life. The kingdom is worth everything. Worldly wealth can buy the things of this world, the type of things that rust and decay, things that will not last. True wealth is spiritual wealth. It can be found only in God and his eternal blessings for us in Christ. The Christian seeks first spiritual wealth and will sacrifice anything to obtain it.

**Worship Leader**  
**Organist/Pianist**

Pastor Justin Wilkens  
Timothy Richert

## **Acknowledgments**

Software distributed in partnership with Northwestern Publishing House. Created by Christian Worship: Service Builder © 2022 Concordia Publishing House. Scripture quotations The Holy Bible, Evangelical Heritage Version® (EHV®) copyright © 2017 The Wartburg Project/NPH. All rights reserved.  
[www.wartburgproject.org](http://www.wartburgproject.org)

## **The Service, Setting Two (page 172 in Christian Worship 21)**

**Hymn: 620 O Worship the King**

*sts. 1–2*

*Stand*

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

### **Confession**

Forgive us for the sake of Jesus Christ, who suffered and died for us.

**Cleanse me from my sins.**

**Release me from my guilt.**

**Grant me your Holy Spirit to amend my sinful life.**

Jesus says to his people, "If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven." Do you believe this?

**Yes, I believe.**

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

### **Lord, Have Mercy**

*CW 174*

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**Amen.**

## Glory Be to God on High

CW 157



Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men.



We praise you, we bless you, we wor - ship you, we glorify you,



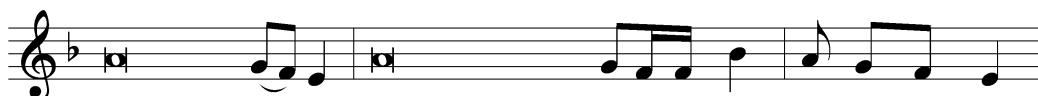
we give thanks to you, for your great glory, O Lord God, heav'n-ly King,



God the Fa-ther Al - mighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Je-sus Christ;



O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sin of the world;



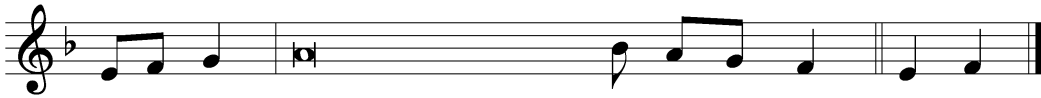
have mercy on us. You take away the sin of the world; re-ceive our prayer.



You sit at the right hand of God the Father; have mercy on us.



For you on-ly are holy; you on-ly are the Lord. You only, O Christ, with the



Ho - ly Spirit, are most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

## THE WORD

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

## Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

O God, you reveal your mighty power chiefly in showing mercy and kindness. Grant us the full measure of your grace that we may obtain your promises and become partakers of your heavenly glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*Be seated*

## First Reading

*1 Kings 3:5–12*

*The Lord offered to give Solomon anything he wanted. Solomon requested the spiritual wealth of a believing heart that could discern right from wrong.*

<sup>5</sup>The Lord appeared to Solomon in Gibeon in a dream at night.

God said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you."

<sup>6</sup>Solomon said, "You have shown great mercy and faithfulness to your servant, my father David, just as he walked before you in truth, righteousness, and uprightness of heart toward you. You have shown this great mercy and faithfulness to him and have given him a son who is seated on his throne to this very day. <sup>7</sup>O Lord my God, now you have made your servant king in the place of my father David, but I am a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. <sup>8</sup>And I, your

servant, am among your people whom you have chosen, a great people, who cannot be counted or numbered because they are so many. <sup>9</sup> Now give to your servant a perceptive heart to judge your people, to distinguish between good and evil, for who is able to judge this great people of yours?"

<sup>10</sup> In the eyes of the Lord, Solomon's request was good. <sup>11</sup> So God said to him, "Because you have asked for this, and you have not asked for a long life, nor have you asked for riches, nor have you asked for the lives of your enemies, but you have asked for discernment to reach just verdicts, <sup>12</sup> therefore I will act according to your words. Yes, I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you before you, nor will anyone like you rise up after you.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Second Reading**

*1 Timothy 6:17–21*

*Paul warns against the two pet sins of those who have worldly wealth: arrogance and false hope.*

<sup>17</sup> Instruct those who are rich in this present age not to be arrogant or to put their hope in the uncertainty of riches, but rather in God, who richly supplies us with all things for our enjoyment. <sup>18</sup> Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and willing to share. <sup>19</sup> In this way they are storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

<sup>20</sup> O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, turning away from godless, empty talk and the contradictions of what is falsely called "knowledge." <sup>21</sup> By professing it, some have veered away from the faith. Grace be with you. Amen.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

## Gospel Acclamation

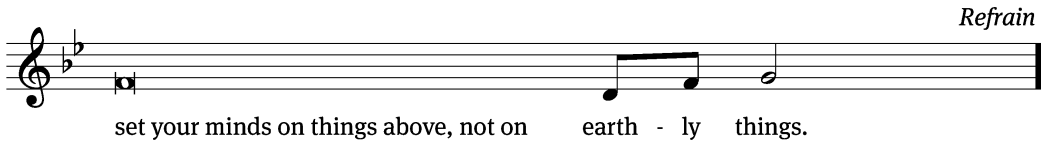
Colossians 3:1,2



### Refrain



### Tone



Tune: © 2010 GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 713578

## Gospel

Matthew 13:44–52

*Through a series of parables Jesus teaches about the kingdom of heaven and what God is doing in the world through Jesus.*

### The Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl

<sup>44</sup>“The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid again. In his joy, he goes away and sells all that he has and buys that field.

<sup>45</sup>“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls. <sup>46</sup>When he found one very valuable pearl, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

### The Parable of the Net

<sup>47</sup>“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered fish of every kind. <sup>48</sup>When the net was filled, they pulled it onto the shore. They sat down and gathered the good fish into containers, but threw the bad ones away. <sup>49</sup>That is how it will be at the end of the world. The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous who are among them. <sup>50</sup>And they will throw the wicked into the fiery furnace where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” <sup>51</sup>Jesus said to them, “Did you understand all these things?”

They answered him, “Yes.”

<sup>52</sup> He said to them, "Therefore every expert in the law who has been trained as a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his treasure both new things and old things."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

*Be seated*

## **Hymn of the Day: 859 Your Kingdom, O God, Is My Glorious Treasure**

**Sermon:** Matthew 13:44-52

*Stand*

### **Nicene Creed**

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is,  
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one being with the Father.**

**Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,  
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.**

**He suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.**

**He ascended into heaven**

**and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**



**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who in unity with the Father and the Son  
is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

*Be seated*

## **Prayer of the Church**

*Brief intercessory prayers may be added in a fitting place.*

Almighty God and Father, we thank you for all your mercies, especially for the gift of your Son, through whom you have revealed your gracious will. We praise you for the Holy Spirit and his working through the means of grace.

**Plant your Word in our hearts, and cause it to produce fruit in our lives.**

Strengthen and defend your Church, that by your Word and sacraments faith may grow and love toward all may increase.

**Support all who spread the light of your truth throughout the world.**

Keep our children in the grace of their baptisms. Enable their parents to train them in lives of faith.

**Raise up Christians to serve you in the ministry of the Word and in all godly walks of life.**

Preserve our nation in justice and honor. Guide and bless all who make, administer, and judge our laws.

**Give them wisdom that they may promote justice and hinder evil.**

Let your blessing rest on planting and harvest, commerce and industry, medicine and science, the arts and culture. Protect all who travel, and care for those whose work is difficult or dangerous.

**Be with all who devote themselves to any useful task.**

Comfort all who are in sorrow or need, sickness or adversity, *[especially . . . here name the person and the cause of the petition]*. Remember those who suffer persecution for the faith. Have mercy on those for whom death draws near.

**Grant them your love, and take them into your tender care.**

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

*Silent prayer*

We remember with thanksgiving those who have loved and served you, who now rest from their labors, *[especially . . . here name the person]*. Console those who are mourning or living with sadness.

**Keep us in the true faith, and bring us at last to the joys of heaven.**

Grant us these things, Father, for the sake of Jesus, who died and rose again.

**Amen.**

**Offering**

**Offering Hymn: 750 We Give Thee but Thine Own**

## **THE SACRAMENT**

*Stand*

**Preface**

CW 183

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who promised that wherever two or three come together in his name, there he is with them to shepherd his flock until he comes again in glory. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

### **Holy, Holy, Holy**

*CW 184*

The musical score is written in G major (one flat) and 4/4 time. It consists of seven staves of music with lyrics underneath. The melody is simple and hymn-like, featuring a mix of quarter, eighth, and half notes. The lyrics are: "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er, God of might. Heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est!"

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er,  
God of might. Heav - en and earth are full of your  
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.  
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the  
Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho -  
san - na in the high - est!

Tune: Marty Haugen  
Tune: © 1984, 1985 GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 713578

## **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Lord God, you are worthy to receive thanks and praise from all people. You created the world and all who live in it, and in your mercy you saved us. We give thanks to you for the grace of your Son, Jesus Christ.

Though in very nature God, he took the nature of a servant and became obedient to death, even death on a cross. He offered himself as a sacrifice for sin and redeemed us from its curse and penalty. He rescued us from the terrors of death and restored eternal life with you. He conquered our enemies and gained for us the kingdom of grace and glory.

Bless us as we receive your Son's body and blood, and lead us to remember his suffering, death, and resurrection. Forgive our sins and fill us with the hope of new life in heaven. Hear our praise and receive our thanks as we worship you—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## **Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom  
and the power and the glory  
forever and ever. Amen.**

## **Words of Institution**

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my + body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my + blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**Amen.**

## Jesus, Lamb of God

CW 186

Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
sin of the world; grant us your peace.

The musical score is written in G major (one flat) and 4/4 time. It consists of seven staves of music. The first two staves form the first line of the hymn, and the next five staves form the second line. The lyrics are placed below the notes. The melody is simple and suitable for congregational singing.

Tune: Marty Haugen

Tune: © 1984, 1985 GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 713578

*Be seated*

## **Distribution**

**Close Communion** *We ask that only those who have previously spoken to our pastor or are members in good standing of this or another WELS or ELS congregation come to Holy Communion today. Our practice of Close Communion (which has been the practice of the Christian Church throughout the ages) is in no way trying to judge anyone's faith. What we are trying to do is follow the Bible's clear teaching (1 Corinthians 11) to first study God's Word together. As we do so, we can share with/review with you what the Lord's Supper is all about. You, then, also have an opportunity to examine what we believe and teach before you come to the Lord's Supper and make a public profession that you agree with what we teach.*

## **Distribution Hymn: 670 I Come, O Savior, to Your Table**

*Stand*

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
**his mercy endures forever.**

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,  
**we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.**

We give you thanks, O Lord, for the foretaste of the heavenly banquet you have given us in this Sacrament. Through this gift you have fed our faith, nourished our hope, and strengthened our love. By your Spirit, help us to live as your holy people until that day when you will receive us as your guests at the wedding supper of the Lamb, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **Blessing**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

**Amen.**

## **Hymn: 827 Rejoice, My Heart, Be Glad and Sing**



## **NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Today:** 10:30 AM Worship and Communion

**Sunday:** 10:30 AM Worship

**CONNECTION CARDS:** Visitors or members with changes in contact information, please fill out a connection card online at [www.bethelyork.com](http://www.bethelyork.com) on the member connect tab or scan this code.



Find us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/bethelyork](http://www.facebook.com/bethelyork)



Personal assisted listening devices are available.

**Given to the Lord:** Attendance: Worship 54, Offerings: Operating: Needed 2,920.37, Given \$2,115.25. **To God be the glory!**

800 N East Ave | York, NE | [www.bethelyork.com](http://www.bethelyork.com)