

+ IN THE NAME OF JESUS +

**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church**  
**The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost**

July 6, 2025

***"THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF JESUS"***

Luke 10:1-20

Our text exemplifies what we mean when we confess that the Church is a \_\_\_\_\_. The Church is a \_\_\_\_\_, first, because she is s\_\_\_\_\_ by Christ. Secondly, she proclaims the apostolic w\_\_\_\_\_ (cf. Eph 2:20), and does so with great confidence, since Christ himself has s\_\_\_\_\_ her to do this.

***I. THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH IS \_\_\_\_\_ BY CHRIST.***

The root of the word "apostle" means "to \_\_\_\_\_." To be an "apostle" is different than being a "disciple." A disciple is a s\_\_\_\_\_, one who is d\_\_\_\_\_, molded in his master's image. By why do that? So that the master can s\_\_\_\_\_ him on his mission. The apostolic Church is sent by Christ to carry his \_\_\_\_\_ to the world he has redeemed, so Jesus said to his apostles: "As the Father has s\_\_\_\_\_ Me, I also s\_\_\_\_\_ you" (Jn 20:21).

Of course, the apostles are long gone from the Church on earth, but the Church remains a \_\_\_\_\_ – sent by Jesus. And this is no mere s\_\_\_\_\_. "\_\_\_\_\_"! Jesus says. "And p\_\_\_\_\_!" "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." This is urgent business! Don't get bogged down in what to pack; the Lord will p\_\_\_\_\_. And "greet no one on the road," not because the Lord wants his messengers to be rude, but because, in Jesus' day, a greeting was not a quick "Hi!" or "Good morning!" You had to catch up on all the latest news, and his gospel mission was too i\_\_\_\_\_ to be delayed by t\_\_\_\_\_ things.

The Church of Jesus is apostolic, sent as the earthly r\_\_\_\_\_ of the heavenly \_\_\_\_\_. Do we take this to heart? Or is our faith bent in on ourselves, where we are concerned for our own s\_\_\_\_\_, but not that of others? If your air-conditioning broke down you would find the money to fix it. But when it comes to the very mission of the Church, the spreading of the Gospel, our missionaries are left to "m\_\_\_\_\_ d\_\_\_\_\_." When it comes to *receiving* God's forgiveness, the gospel is for \_\_\_\_\_. When it comes to *proclaiming* that gospel, it becomes s\_\_\_\_\_ e\_\_\_\_\_ 's responsibility.

***II. THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH IS F\_\_\_\_\_ ON THE APOSTOLIC WORD.***

The Church is also apostolic in another sense, brought out by this cynical joke: "What do you get when you cross a Jehovah's' witness with an agnostic?" (Answer). The point is, z\_\_\_\_\_ alone is not enough. Being fired-up about missions helps no one if the message proclaimed is not f\_\_\_\_\_ to the apostolic Word.

The Church is b\_\_\_\_\_ upon the apostolic word. In Acts 2, we read how the 3000 who were converted on Pentecost "continued steadfastly in the apostles' d\_\_\_\_\_..." (Acts 2:42). They were not b\_\_\_\_\_ by the Word. They loved it! They were d\_\_\_\_\_ in the temple to hear the apostles' t\_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 2:46). Through those apostles, the Holy Spirit was leading them to \_\_\_\_\_ and strengthening their faith in him.

The apostolic Church is sent with the apostolic m\_\_\_\_\_ that points them to Christ \_\_\_\_\_. We are not sent to point people to something they are supposed to do to \_\_\_\_\_ themselves, or to point people to their own e\_\_\_\_\_. And, while the Church will surely show compassion to people facing physical s\_\_\_\_\_, the Church's chief mission is to p\_\_\_\_\_ the apostolic

message that “[Christ] was delivered up for our offenses, and was raised for our justification” (Rom 4:24-25).

“The one who hears you hears \_\_\_\_\_,” Jesus told them. His apostolic Church speaks “in the stead and by the command” of the Lord Jesus Christ. But woe to the one who t\_\_\_\_\_ with the message, and woe to the one who r\_\_\_\_\_ it, either with defiance or with apathy. “I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.” Sodom’s sin was infamous; but on the Day of judgment, it will fare better than those who rejected Christ and his Gospel m\_\_\_\_\_. “The one who rejects you rejects \_\_\_\_\_, and the one who rejects me rejects him who \_\_\_\_\_ me.”

### III. THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH WILL BE BLESSED WITH S\_\_\_\_\_.

This does not mean the Church will leap from one tr\_\_\_\_\_ to the next. Our Lord says plainly that there are places where he will not be r\_\_\_\_\_, where his gospel will be r\_\_\_\_\_, where his messenger will be left with no recourse but to shake the dust of his feet off in warning against such un\_\_\_\_\_. In a sinful world, that’s the reality.

Still, it is the \_\_\_\_\_ Word, and his Apostolic Church will be blessed with success (as \_\_\_\_\_ defines it). “For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall s\_\_\_\_\_ in the thing for which I sent it” (Is 55:10–11). The Church can proclaim God’s Word, confident that Word will do what he sent it to do.

Still, our confidence is not in our v\_\_\_\_\_ for the sake of the Gospel. Our confidence is in the \_\_\_\_\_’s victory for us! “Do not rejoice in this, that the

spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.” This has happened totally a\_\_\_\_\_ from us. God wrote our names in his book of life. In Christ Jesus, he did all that was needed to a\_\_\_\_\_ our salvation. Christ f\_\_\_\_\_ the Law with his holy life; he suffered our p\_\_\_\_\_ with his innocent suffering and death; and he rose again to demonstrate that God has a\_\_\_\_\_ his sacrifice on our behalf. He has b\_\_\_\_\_ us into his Church, and “in this Christian Church, he daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the last day he will raise up me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ. This is most certainly true!”

This puts you, the Christian, in the best of all possible positions. You can go out with c\_\_\_\_\_, boldly proclaiming God’s p\_\_\_\_\_ in Christ. “If a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him.” God’s Gospel will do its saving work. “But if not, it will return to you,” and you will have lost n\_\_\_\_\_. For, as Luther’s famous hymn reminds us, “And take they our life,/ Goods, fame, child, and wife,/ Let these all be gone! / They yet have nothing won. / The kingdom ours remaineth!”

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