

Gaines Congregational United Church of Christ

May 12, 2024 Mother's Day

1st Reading; Acts 1: 15-17, 21-26

Responsive Reading; Psalm 1

Epistle Reading; 1st John 5: 9-13

Gospel Reading; John 17: 6-19

Sermon Title: **SANCTIFIED BY THE TRUTH**

By Rev. Jim Gardner

Summary: I am the way the truth and the life...and the truth will set you free. Free to find the way that will allow you to live life and not to just exist.

It is only right that a message titled Sanctified by the Truth should fall on Mother's Day.

To me there seems to be two universal truths in this world; Mothers and The Word of God. This is probably because in most cases mothers most truly personify the truth found in the

Bible. Mother's truth is real and down to earth, not lofty and wordy.

Check out the words in our hymn of preparation, Faith of Our Mothers.

In cradle song and bedtime prayer; In nursery lore and fireside love, Thy presence still pervades the air; Faith of our mothers.

Fount of our childhood's trust and grace, Oh, may thy consecration prove Source of a finer, nobler race; Faith of our mothers.

For youthful longing, youthful doubt, How blurred our vision, blind our way, Thy providential care without: Faith of our mothers.

In truth beyond our stumbling creeds, Still serve the home and save the church, And breathe our spirit through our deeds. Faith of our mothers, Christian faith! We will be true to thee till death.

Truth beyond our stumbling creeds, i.e. simple truth.

God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life. TRUTH

We love because God first loved us. TRUTH

We live in an ordered world and people need order not to get distracted i.e. people needed 12 disciples after Judas hung himself so they appointed a replacement. Maybe a little silly but still Truth.

Then let's look at the Psalm reading. Does this sound like your mother or what?

*Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,
Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the
scornful.*

I.E. don't hang out with troublemakers or you will get in trouble.

If you try to do good and you do your homework you will be successful in life and it will be easier to be happy.

Aww mom, what a bore, but TRUTH.

The Epistle lesson gets a little more grown up.

*If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater;
for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son.*

Men will encourage us to do things that will entertain them but hurt us. God does not do that.

God encourages us to believe in, and to follow the blue print that his son has given us. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son does not have life. These things I have

written you, not to beat up on the non-believer but to encourage you because you are on a better path. TRUTH

God is an unbelievably loving God. God will give us hundreds of second chances but God would rather we did not bruise our heads by banging them on the wall. God wants us to take the easy way by accepting Jesus in the first place. If we do he will gladly answer the prayer of Jesus that we find in the gospel lesson.

Jesus says that the twelve and all of those of us to follow in the steps of Jesus and the twelve are gifts of God to Jesus. All of us who are gifts of God to Jesus belong to Jesus and we also belong to God. We are as special to God as we are to Jesus, and here is the crazy part; we are just as special to God as Jesus is to God.

This sounds like blasphemy. How could we, mere creatures be as special to God as is his only begotten Son?

The answer is not in us. The answer is in God.

Remember back near the beginning of this message when I quoted, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whoever believes in him would not perish but have everlasting life?

Jesus was about to die for us and he was more worried about us than he was about himself. Jesus put us, wretches that we are, on par with himself.

But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth, Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

God's word is truth lovingly given to us much like a mothers truths are lovingly given to her children.

God is a straight shooter and so are our mothers. Maybe this is why mothers are so special to God and all of us children are so special to our mothers and to our heavenly father.

Go out this week and be sanctified by the truth that you are special, you are loved and you are the children of God and the brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ.

Hallelujah and Amen

