

St. Andrew's Anglican Church, Douglas, GA

The Rev. Fr. John E. Commins+ Rector

Scripture: Various

"In Christ Alone"

There were two different factions in the Temple – there were the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The Pharisees believed in eternal life and as we saw in today's Holy Gospel, right at the very top, *"some of the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Jesus."* The easy way to remember the difference: the Sadducees do not believe in eternal life- and that is 'so sad you see!' As we know, and we have read time after time in the Holy Gospels, Jesus spent quite a bit of His time ministering to lepers, and other people who were considered by others as sinful, unclean, and outcasts of society. Lepers, by the Law, had to announce themselves to those around them by shouting "Unclean" when anyone was nearby. Can you just imagine the emotional scars left on these people – probably even greater than the physical scarring and loss of limbs? Those who were considered unclean had to live in total abandonment, rejection, hatred, anger, mockery, and abuse. Jesus reached out to these who were unclean – but more importantly Jesus touched and confirmed their faith and their importance in the eyes of Almighty God – and then restored them to a right place in society by instructing them to go to the priest so that their restoration could be certified. In Luke chapter 17 – Jesus healed ten lepers – but sadly only one returns to Jesus to give glory to God. Jesus asks those people who were present where the other nine are – but then turns to the now healed Samaritan and says: *"Stand up and go; your faith has made you well."* (Luke 17:19)

Another time Jesus was on the way to bring Jairus' daughter back to life when He was stopped by the woman who had been bleeding for twelve years. This poor woman had endured suffering with hemorrhaging, spending all that she had on doctors, living in the despair and the emotional trauma of uncleanness as well as the isolation, anger, rejection and shame that went along with it – somehow she knew that if she could only touch the hem of Jesus' garment that her life would suddenly change, would be transformed, would be made new. She did touch His garment – and sure enough her bleeding instantly stopped. Mark's Gospel says *"The woman fearing and trembling, aware of what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your affliction."* (Mark 5:33-34) What important and powerful words – that told the truth and touched the heart! Jesus compassionately and selflessly stopped what He was doing, and the mission that He was on for Jairus' daughter, to speak with this woman. Jesus compassionately listened to her story, He didn't cut her off and say – listen I have got to go somewhere – no He listened to her telling Him the "whole truth." Jesus listened – giving her His undivided attention – just as He does when we pray to Him. He had already given her His power and healing, but He didn't rush off –and instead He heard the depth of her faith and then He told her that **it was her faith that healed her!** She put her faith in Christ Alone.

I want to suggest to you today that just as Jesus went to the cross to free us from sin and death – offering eternal life and forgiveness of sins repented, He also took our illness and disease with Him – offering healing to those who will faithfully receive it. The words of Peter's first

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letter ring true: *“He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.”* (1Peter 2:24) The Prophet Isaiah proclaims the very same thing: *“But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.”* (Isaiah 53:5) We can be healed in Christ Alone.

I want to encourage you to ask God to give you the courage to seek, in faith, **the healing that Christ has already paid for – for you.** Ask Jesus to prepare your hearts and minds and seek His healing. If you are in need of healing and anointing – please come forward in just a few moments during this service. God wants you to be healed; He wants you to receive the precious gift that He has for His people who have been given the Name above all names in which we put our faith – Jesus Christ alone. In Acts chapter 3 – Peter and John are going to the Temple to pray, into the Beautiful Gate – and they see a man who has been crippled since birth. Listen to what Peters says: *“Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.”* (Acts 3:6) The Apostles continued to pray for healing and wonders all in the power of One Name – Jesus, even though the Sanhedrin forbade them to speak that Name, the Name of Jesus. We are healed in Christ Alone.

In the Epistle of James, James asks: *“Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise. Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”* (James 5:13-16)

As Jesus told many – and tells each one of us here today, personally **“Your faith has made you well!”**

(the congregation was given the words to the song “In Christ Alone” – see next page and they sang that song.)

In Christ Alone

Words and Music by [Keith Getty](#) and [Stuart Townend](#)

VERSE 1:

In Christ alone my hope is found
He is my light my strength my song
This cornerstone this solid ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm
What heights of love what depths of peace
When fears are stilled when strivings cease!
My comforter my all in all
Here in the love of Christ I stand

VERSE 2:

In Christ alone! - who took on flesh
Fullness of God in helpless babe!
This gift of love and righteousness
Scorned by the ones He came to save
Till on that cross as Jesus died
The wrath of God was satisfied -
For every sin on Him was laid;
Here in the death of Christ I live

VERSE 3:

There in the ground His body lay
Light of the world by darkness slain
Then bursting forth in glorious Day
Up from the grave He rose again!
And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me
For I am His and He is mine -
Bought with the precious blood of Christ

VERSE 4:

No guilt in life no fear in death
This is the power of Christ in me
From life's first cry to final breath
Jesus commands my destiny
No power of hell no scheme of man
Can ever pluck me from His hand
Till He returns or calls me home
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand!