



THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER  
**TRINITY**

Study Notes for the Christian Layperson

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**Collect of the Day:**

O Lord, grant that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by Your governance that Your Church may joyfully serve You in all godly quietness; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

**Introit:**

Psalm 27:3-4a (antiphon: Psalm 27:1-2)  
– *The LORD is my light and salvation*

**Psalm:**

Psalm 138 (antiphon: v. 8b)  
– *Give thanks to the LORD*

**Old Testament Reading:**

Genesis 50:15-21 – *God's good purposes*

**Gradual:**

Psalm 79:9-10a – *Atone for our sins, for your name's sake*

**Epistle:**

Romans 8:18-23 – *Future glory*

**Verse:**

Psalm 9:4b, 9 – *Alleluia. You have sat on the throne, giving righteous judgment. The LORD is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. Alleluia.*

**Luke 6:36-42** ESV

**Author and Date:**

Luke around AD 55-60. This teaching is part of Jesus' Sermon on the Plain (6:17-49).

<sup>36</sup> **“Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.**

- The word translated “merciful” stresses the sympathy and pity shown to the unfortunate and needy (a major focus in Luke’s Gospel). It is used only here and in James 5:11 – “Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.”
- As children of the heavenly Father, one imitates the Father’s mercy. This is all expressed in the name “Christian”.
- Cf., “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” (Luke 23:34)
- “The Lord God does not need our services; they make Him neither greater nor smaller. However, He has placed our neighbor beside us as a test; He wishes to test us to see if in our hearts we love our neighbor. In fact, the Lord God has so inseparably fastened love of him to the love of one’s neighbor that in this gospel Christ expressly states that, if we forget love and compassion for our neighbor, and frivolously judge and condemn him, then He will judge and condemn us. God will not be merciful toward anyone who is not merciful toward his neighbor (James 2:13): ‘For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy.’” (Johann Gerhard, *Postilla* 2:51)

<sup>37</sup> **Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven;**

- Four passive verbs are used (“be judged”, “be condemned”, “be forgiven”, “be given”). God is the subject of these verbs.
- This flows right out of the previous verse – all you do begins with the mercy that has been shown to you. The subsequent verses explain how one is to be merciful in the world.
- “Christ preaches repentance when He says, ‘Forgive,’ and He adds the promise, ‘and you will be forgiven’. He does not say that when we forgive we merit the forgiveness of sins by our outward act (ex opere operato) as they term it. But He requires a new life, which certainly is necessary.” (*Apology to the Augsburg Confession IV: 259*)
- “For God forgives freely and without condition, out of pure grace, because He has so promised, as the Gospel teaches. But God says this [“as we forgive those who trespass against us”] in order that He may establish forgiveness as our confirmation and assurance, as a sign alongside of the promise, which agrees with this prayer in Luke 6:37, ‘Forgive, and you will be forgiven.’” (Large Catechism, Lord’s Prayer, Fifth Petition, paragraph 96)
- “Therefore ‘judge not’. Do not be quick to condemn what you hear or see. For the fault is perhaps in you that you do not see rightly what does not seem right to you.” (*Luther’s Works 11:32*)

<sup>38</sup> **give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”**

- Note that this is in stark contrast to how Israel and Judah distributed grain (Amos 8:4-6, Micah 6:9-12).
- “Keep the poor in mind. I say this to all of you. Give alms, my brothers and sisters, and you won’t lose what you give. Trust God.” (Augustine, Sermon 376A.3)

<sup>39</sup> **He also told them a parable: “Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit?”**

- Jesus phrases the first question to elicit the answer “no” and the second the answer “yes”.

- “Truly the good and worthy Spirit, knowing that the whole welfare of the common people depends on the right instruction of the leaders, teaches them first in a friendly and fatherly way, so that they yield to His mind and are all the more ready to be instructed; for they do not direct their own affairs but the matters of all those under them, and they cannot make mistakes without harming the whole people. As it is written: ‘A blind man leads a blind man, and both fall into a pit.’” (*Luther’s Works 14:341*)

<sup>40</sup> **A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.**

- “Here Christ relates this figure of speech to us, lest we be displeased or hurt when we must suffer something in the world for His sake and together with Him. He wants to say: “I am your Master; you are My servants. Why do you want a better fate than Mine?” It is incongruous for the Head to wear a crown of thorns and the members to sit on a velvet cushion. Thus Christ also declares in Luke 6:40: ‘A disciple is not above his master; but everyone, when he is fully taught, will be like his teacher.’ This is both right and proper, and he who experiences both good and bad in his master’s company is a true and faithful servant.” (*Luther’s Works 24:278*)

<sup>41</sup> **Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?**

- The word translated “notice” means to consider diligently in order to learn.
- It’s not that the brother’s eye is ignored, rather just the opposite: one’s own eye is ignored. The neighbor’s sin is a call to repent.

<sup>42</sup> **How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,’ when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother’s eye.**

- Hypocrite – refers to one who would seek his salvation in legalism. The hypocrite is the one who would presume to lead blind men when he himself is also blind.
- The word “hypocrite” is used two other times in Luke: of the crowd who did not know how to interpret the present time (12:1) and of the synagogue ruler regarding the Sabbath (13:15).

