

## Hvem er en kristen? Og hvordan skal vi leve som kristne?

17. søndag e. trinitatis (II) d. 22. september 2024 i Aarhus og København (LGJ)

Læsninger: Salme 40,2-6; Judasbrevet 20-25.

Evangelium: Markus 2,14-22

Salmer: 277, "Alt mit håb satte jeg til dig" (Sl. 40), 454 // 176, 461. Udgangsvers SOS 306v1

### Markus 2,14-22

Da han gik videre, så han Levi, Alfæus' søn, sidde ved toldboden, og han sagde til ham: "Følg mig!" Og han rejste sig og fulgte ham. Senere sad Jesus til bords i hans hus, og mange toldere og syndere sad til bords sammen med ham og hans disciple, for der var mange, som fulgte ham. Da de skriftkloge blandt farisæerne så, at han spiste sammen med syndere og toldere, spurgte de hans disciple:

"Hvorfor spiser han sammen med toldere og syndere?" Men da Jesus hørte det, sagde han til dem: "De raske har ikke brug for læge, det har de syge. Jeg er ikke kommet for at kalde retfærdige, men syndere."

Johannes' disciple og farisæerne holdt faste. Da kom der nogle til ham og spurgte: "Hvorfor faster Johannes' disciple og farisæernes disciple, men dine disciple faster ikke?" Jesus svarede dem: "Kan brudesvendene faste, mens brudgommen er sammen med dem? Så længe de har brudgommen hos sig, kan de ikke faste. Men der kommer dage, da brudgommen er taget fra dem, og den dag skal de faste. Ingen sætter en lap af ukrympet stof på en gammel kappe; for så river den nye lap det gamle i stykker, og hullet bliver værre. Og ingen fylder ung vin på gamle lædersække; for så sprænger vinen sækkene, og både vin og sække ødelægges. Nej, ung vin på nye sække!"

**Hvad vil det sige at være en kristen? - Og hvordan leve som en kristen?** Vi får svaret, når vi lytter til Jesus.

Nogle spurgte ham, hvorfor hans disciple ikke fulgte de regler, som troende og fromme mennesker ellers fulgte. "Hvorfor faster dine disciple ikke ligesom andre gør?" Og han mødte en tolder, som levede af andres ulykke. Jesus kaldte på ham og festede derefter sammen med både ham og andre syndere. *Hvorfor?* Når vi lytter til, hvad Jesus svarer, finder vi ud af, hvad det vil sige at være kristen, og hvordan en kristen lever.

### I

**Det første spørgsmål:** "Hvorfor faster dine disciple ikke, ligesom andre gør?" Farisæerne fastede to gange i ugen for at understrege deres fromhed. Det ved vi fra Jesu fortælling om en tolder og en farisæer, som bad i templet. Farisæeren bad og sagde ved sig selv: "Jeg faster 2 gange om ugen" (Luk 18,12). Hvad fik han ud af det? Intet! Jesus sagde jo, at han "ikke gik hjem som

## Who is a Christian? And how should we live as Christians?

17. Sunday after Trinity (II) d. Sep. 22. 2024 in Aarh and Cph (LGJ)

Readings: Psalm 40,2-6; Jude 20-25. Gospel: Mark 2,14-22

Hymns: 277, "I waited patiently for the LORD; And He inclined to me and heard my cry" (Ps. 40), 246; 454 // 176, 461. Exit verse SOS 306v1

### Mark 2:14-22 NAU

14 As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me!" And he got up and followed Him. 15 And it happened that He was reclining at the table in his house, and many tax collectors and sinners were dining with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many of them, and they were following Him. 16 When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that He was eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they said to His disciples, "Why is He eating and drinking with tax collectors and sinners?" 17 And hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners." 18 John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and they came and said to Him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?" 19 And Jesus said to them, "While the bridegroom is with them, the attendants of the bridegroom cannot fast, can they? So long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. 20 "But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day. 21 "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; otherwise the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear results. 22 "No one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost and the skins as well; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins."

**What does it mean to be a Christian?—And how to live as a Christian?** We get the answer when we listen to Jesus.

Some asked him why his disciples did not follow the rules that believers and pious people otherwise followed. "Why don't your disciples fast like others do?" And he met a tax collector who made profit of the misfortune of others. Jesus called him and then partied with both him and other sinners. *Why?* When we listen to Jesus' answers, we find out what it means to be a Christian and how a Christian lives.

### I

**The first question:** "Why don't your disciples fast like others do?" The Pharisees fasted twice a week to emphasize their piety. We know this from Jesus' story about a tax collector and a Pharisee who prayed in the temple. The Pharisee prayed and said to himself, "I fast twice a week" (Luke 18:12). What did he get out of it? Nothing! Jesus said that he "did not go home righteous" (Luke 18:14). It did not save him. Jesus warns and says in Matthew 6:16,

retfærdig" (Luk 18,14). Det frelste ham ikke. Jesus advarer og siger i Mattæus 6,16: *Når I faster, må I ikke gå med dystre mine som hyklerne. For de gør deres ansigt ukendeligt, for at det skal være kendeligt for mennesker, at de faster. Sandelig siger jeg jer: Det har fået deres løn. Men når du faster, så salv dit hoved og vask dit ansigt, så du ikke faster synligt for mennesker, men for din fader, som er i det skjulte.*"

**Vi lægger mærke til, at Jesus ikke advarer mod faste**, men mod at tænke, at faste gør os bedre end andre. For det gør os ikke bedre! - Johannes Døbers kald til omvendelse indeholdt også faste. Jesus var heller ikke selv imod faste. Han siger jo i evangeliet, at der vil komme dage, da hans disciple vil faste. For ham var det en del af livet som Guds barn at give afkald og at faste. Men faste gør os ikke til bedre kristne. Faste skal have mening for hjertet, og ikke kun være noget, man gør for andres skyld, eller for at blive noget i Guds øjne.

Jesus siger: *"Kan brudesvendene faste, mens brudgommen er sammen med dem? Så længe de har brudgommen hos sig, kan de ikke faste. Men der kommer dage, da brudgommen er taget fra dem, og den dag skal de faste."* Lige nu havde disciplene Jesus hos sig, og de var glade. Hvorfor skal de da faste? Men ville komme en dag, hvor de blev ramt af noget svært, og da skulle de faste. Det, som blev ufatteligt vanskeligt for disciplene, var, at deres Mester blev taget fra dem. Brudgommen blev taget fra brudesvendene. Det var skærtorsdag aften, da han blev fanget i Getsemane have, og langfredag, da han blev henrettet på et kors, og lørdag, hvor han lå i graven. På den dag fastede de. Jesus taler ikke om faste som en regel, der skal overholdes på visse dage, men som noget, der rammer en kristen, når vi rammes af synd og skyld, og hvor vi ser Jesus på korset. Derfor fastede de første kristne langfredag. Og kristne mindedes årligt i den kristne kirke, at Jesus led og døde for dem i den såkaldte "fastetid". Og fastetiden har vi stadig. Det er 40 dage fra februar til hen i slutningen af marts, når vi fejrer Jesu opstandelse fra de døde. Det er en tid, hvor vi særligt mindes hans lidelse og død for os, og at vi er de syndere, som han elsker os og døde for. I fastetiden giver vi afkald på luksus og overvejer både vore synder, og hvad Jesus har gjort for os.

Det er individuelt, hvad kristne giver afkald på i fastetiden. Det kan være en eller anden form for underholdning og særlig luksus. Det kan også være, at vi nøjes med simple måltider og føres tilbage til det basale. Det kan også være, at man spiser godt om morgenen, men undlader måltid middag og aften. Det kan endda være sundt til tider at holde en fastedag. Og vi kan se os nøgne overfor vor Skaber. Samtidig kan værdien af den luksus, vi afstår fra, samles sammen som gave til mennesker, som har brug for mad og tøj og for at høre evangeliet.

*"When you fast, do not walk with a gloomy face like the hypocrites. For they make their faces unrecognizable, so that it may be recognizable to people that they are fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, it has received its reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not fast visibly before men, but before your Father who is in secret."*

**We notice that Jesus does not warn against**

**fasting**, but against thinking that fasting makes us better than others. It doesn't make us better! - John the Baptist's call to repentance also included fasting. Nor was Jesus himself against fasting. He says in the gospel that there will be days when his disciples will fast. For him, renunciation and fasting were part of life as a child of God. But fasting does not make us better Christians. Fasting must have meaning for the heart, and not just be something you do for the sake of others, or to become something in God's eyes.

Jesus says: *"Can the bridesmaids fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But there will be days when the bridegroom has been taken from them, and on that day they will fast."* Right now, the disciples were with Jesus, and they are happy. Why should they need to fast? But there would come a day when they are hit by something difficult, and then they have to fast. What became unimaginably difficult for the disciples was that their Master was taken from them. The groom was taken from the bridesmaids. It was Maundy Thursday evening, when he was imprisoned in the Garden of Gethsemane, and Good Friday, when he was executed on a cross, and Saturday, when he lay in the tomb. On that day they fasted.

Jesus does not speak of fasting as a rule to be observed on certain days, but as something that affects a Christian when we are struck by sin and guilt, and where we see Jesus on the cross. That is why the first Christians fasted on Good Friday. And Christians were annually reminded in the Christian church that Jesus suffered and died for them during the so-called "Lent-season." And we still have Lent. It is 40 days from February to the end of March when we celebrate Jesus' resurrection from the dead. It is a time when we especially remember His suffering and death for us, and that we are the sinners for whom He loves us and died. During Lent, we give up luxury and consider both our sins and what Jesus has done for us.

It is individual what Christians renounce during Lent. It can be some form of entertainment and special luxury. It may also be that we settle for simple meals and are led back to basics. It may also be that you eat well in the morning, but do not eat at noon and evening. It can even be healthy at times to observe a fasting day. And we can see ourselves naked before our Creator. At the same time, the

Den måde at faste på er noget helt andet end den måde, farisæerne fastede på. Fasten kan være nyttig, som Luther også siger i forklaringen til Herrens nadver i Lille Katekismus. Men det afgørende er troen på syndernes forladelse. Og når vi giver afkald på overflod og luksus, kan der blive bedre plads til bøn, anger og tjeneste for andre.

### **Dagens ord til farisæere dengang og i dag er**

**derfor:** *"De raske har ikke brug for læge, det har de syge. Jeg er ikke kommet for at kalde retfærdige, men syndere" (Markus 2,17).* Gud bekræfter det hos profeterne: *"I overstrømmende vrede skjulte jeg et øjeblik ansigtet for dig, men i evig troskab viser jeg dig barmhjertighed, siger Herren, der løskøber dig. ... For bjergene kan rokkes og højene vakle, men min troskab mod dig rokkes ikke, og min fredspagt vakler ikke, siger Herren, der viser dig barmhjertighed."* Es 54,8-10. Og i Matt 9,13 siger vor Herre: *"Gå hen og lær, hvad det vil sige: ›Barmhjertighed ønsker jeg, ikke slagtoffer.‹ Jeg er ikke kommet for at kalde retfærdige, men syndere."* Vi skal lære det af Gud! Barmhjertighed!

**At være kristen er at leve af barmhjertighed, af Guds barmhjertighed. Og at være kristen er at vise barmhjertighed, den barmhjertighed, som Gud har vist os i Jesus Kristus.**

## **II**

**Svaret uddybes, når vi møder tolderen Levi og ser Jesus sammen med toldere og syndere.** Hvorfor er han sammen med dem? Det var jo ikke mennesker som havde levet anstændigt. - Det var dem, der brugte selvisheden for at få noget ud af livet, sådan som vi også kender til det fra os selv. Vi kender jo begæret i hjertet til at følge vore egne egoistiske lyster, uanset om det, vi har lyst til, er rigtigt eller forkert. Bare følge lysten. For har man ikke lov til at have det godt? Og hvis Guds bud gør livet svært for os, kan det så være meningen, at vi skal følge Guds vilje? Er han ikke kærlighed? Og fristelsen er så, at vi gør vores følelser om kærlighed til det samme som Guds kærlighed. Men ifølge Bibelen er kærlighed ikke, at vi syndere får opfyldt vore længsler og behov for at opleve og udleve vore lyster. Nogle kalder det kærlighed. Men Gud kalder det "synd", hvor vi derved overtræder hans klare bud og vilje, som han har givet os i De 10 bud. Bibelens stærke definition på kærlighed har vi i Første Johannes' brev 4: *Gud er kærlighed. Derved er Guds kærlighed blevet åbenbaret iblandt os: at Gud har sendt sin enbårne søn til verden, for at vi skal leve ved ham. Deri består kærligheden: ikke i at vi har elsket Gud, men*

value of the luxuries we give up can be gathered together as gifts for people who need food and clothing and to hear the gospel.

This way of fasting is something completely different from the way the Pharisees fasted. Fasting can be useful, as Luther also says in the explanation of the Lord's Supper in the Small Catechism. But what matters is faith in the forgiveness of sins. And as we give up abundance and luxury, there can be more room for prayer, repentance, and service to others.

### **Today's word to Pharisees then and today is**

**therefore:** *"The healthy do not need a doctor, the sick do. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (Mark 2:17).* God confirms it in the prophets: *"In overflowing anger I hid my face from you for a moment, but in eternal faithfulness I show you mercy, says the Lord, who redeems you. ... For the mountains may be shaken and the hills may waver, but my faithfulness to you will not be shaken, neither will my covenant of peace waver, says the Lord, who will have mercy on you."* Isaiah 54:8-10. And in Matthew 9:13, our Lord says, *"Go and learn what it means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."* We must learn it from God! Mercy!

**To be a Christian is to live by mercy, by God's mercy. And to be a Christian is to show mercy, the mercy that God has shown us in Jesus Christ.**

## **II**

**The answer is elaborated when we meet Levi the tax collector and see Jesus together with tax collectors and sinners.** Why is he with them? It was not people who had lived decently. - They were the ones who used selfishness to get something out of life, as we also know it from ourselves. We know the desire in our hearts to follow our own selfish desires, regardless of whether what we want is right or wrong. Just follow the desire. And we argue: Are you not allowed to feel good? And if God's commandments make life difficult for us, are we meant to follow God's will? Isn't he love? And the temptation is then that we make our feelings about love the same as God's love.

But according to the Bible, love is not that we sinners have our longings and needs fulfilled and live out our desires. Some call it love. But God calls it "sin", where we thereby violate His clear commandments and will, which He has given us in the 10 Commandments.

The Bible's strong definition of love is found in 1 John's letter 4: *God is love. In this way, God's love has been revealed among us: that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world that we may live through Him. Therein love consists not in loving*

*i at han har elsket os og sendt sin søn som et sonoffer for vore synder. Mine kære, når Gud har elsket os således, skylder vi også at elske hinanden (v9-11). Derfor er det forkert at kalde det, mennesker har lyst til i seksualitetens navn eller i egoismens og selvtilfredsstillelsens navn, for guddommeligt.*

Mange jøder og mange toldere og syndere på Jesu tid levede i strid med skaberens vilje, fordi de tænkte, at det kunne give dem et bedre liv. Og mange kristne i dag tager ikke Guds lov alvorligt. Gud mener det vel ikke så strengt. Og mon der kommer en dom?

**Og tænk, her siger Jesus til os i denne søndags evangelium:** *"De raske har ikke brug for læge, det har de syge. Jeg er ikke kommet for at kalde retfærdige, men syndere."* Og til Levi, Alfæus' søn, siger han: *"Følg mig!"* Forlad det gamle hverv, hvor du levede af andres ulykke for at nyde dig selv, og hvor ulydigheden ikke betød noget for dig mere. Du er syg og har brug for læge. Du er en synder, som jeg kalder på og vil tilgive. Her mærker vi, at Jesus er en Frelser og Befrier. Han styrer IKKE sine disciple med regler om faste og ydre bud, men med tilgivelse. Han lægger ikke en kæde om din hals, men han har en arm om din skulder. Han er kommet for at være læge for de syge. Og det er os, der er de syge. Følg Jesus!

**Jesus fortæller om vin og vinsække.** Og han siger, at man ikke kommer ny vin på gamle sække. Hans budskab passede ikke ind i den tids fromhedsregler og lovforståelse. På samme måde kan budskabet om Guds barmhjertighed ikke forenes med den tanke, at vi frelses ved vor egen åndelighed og kristelighed og ved vore oplevelser og godhed. Nej. Jesus er Frelseren. Jesus ser, at vi alle er syndere. Det står overalt i Den hellige Skrift. Fx i Salme 51: *Se, jeg er født i misgerning, min moder undfangede mig i synd (v7).* **Og hvad gør Jesus ved det?** Han siger: *Jeg er din læge (2 Mos 15,26).* Jesu bestilling var og er kun at tage sig af syge, svage, uretfærdige, for at give dem den sande retfærdighed. Nemlig tilgivelsen, fordi han døde og opstod for os.

**At være kristen er at stå op og følge Jesus, når han siger: "Følg mig!"** At være kristen er at bede ham om tilgivelsen, når vi er faldet for bedraget, at vi skulle følge vor egen lyst i stedet for hans ord. At være kristen er at leve af Jesu tilgivelse – ustandseligt. Amen.

**BØN:** Himmelske Far! Giv mig et hjerte, så jeg både kan indse det, jeg gør forkert, og kan bede om tilgivelse i tillid til din store kærlighed. Tak for din store kærlighed til mig i det din Søn, Jesus, har gjort for mig. Lad mig altid følge ham. Amen.

*God, but in Him loving us and sending His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, when God has loved us in this way, we also owe it to love one another (v9-11). Therefore, it is wrong to call what people want in the name of sexuality or in the name of selfishness and self-gratification divine.*

Many Jews and many tax collectors and sinners in Jesus' day lived against the Creator's will, thinking that it could give them a better life. And many Christians today do not take God's law seriously. God doesn't mean it so harshly. And I wonder if there will be a verdict?

**And think, here Jesus says to us in this Sunday's Gospel:** *"The healthy do not need a doctor, the sick do. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."* And to Levi the son of Alphaeus, he says, *"Follow me!"* Leave the old job where you lived off the misfortune of others to enjoy yourself, and where disobedience didn't mean anything to you anymore. You are sick and need a doctor. You are a sinner whom I call upon and will forgive. Here we feel that Jesus is a Savior and Deliverer. He does NOT govern his disciples with rules about fixed and outward commandments, but with forgiveness. He doesn't put a chain around your neck, but he has an arm around your shoulder. He has come to be a doctor for the sick. And we are the ones who are the sick. Follow Jesus!

**Jesus tells about wine and wine sacks.** And he says that you don't put new wine on old sacks. His message did not fit into the rules of piety and the understanding of the law of the time. In the same way, the message of God's mercy cannot be reconciled with the idea that we are saved by our own spirituality and Christianity and by our experiences and goodness. No. Jesus is the Savior. Jesus sees that we are all sinners. It is everywhere in Holy Scripture. For example, in Psalm 51: *Behold, I was born in iniquity, my mother conceived me in sin (v7).* **And what does Jesus do about it?** He says, *"I am your physician" (Exodus 15:26).* Jesus' commission was and is only to take care of the sick, the weak, the unrighteous, in order to give them true righteousness. Namely, forgiveness, because He died and rose for us.

**To be a Christian is to stand up and follow Jesus when He says, "Follow me!"** To be a Christian is to ask Him for forgiveness when we have fallen for the deception that we should follow our own lust instead of His Word. To be a Christian is to live by Jesus' forgiveness – constantly. Amen.

**PRAYER:** Heavenly Father! Give me a heart so that I can both realize what I am doing wrong and can ask for forgiveness in trust in your great love. Thank you for your great love for me in what your Son, Jesus, has done for me. Let me always follow Him. Amen.