

Kristi gerninger

Prædiken på 3. søndag i advent, 15.12.2024 LGJ

Evangelium: Matthæus 11,2-11

Da Johannes i fængslet hørte om **Kristi gerninger**, sendte han bud med sine disciple og spurgte ham: "Er du den, som kommer, eller skal vi vente en anden?" Jesus svarede dem: "Gå hen og fortæl Johannes, hvad I hører og ser: **Blinde ser, og lamme går, spedalske bliver rene, og døve hører, og døde står op, og evangeliet forkyndes for fattige.**

Og salig er den, der ikke forarges på mig." Da de var gået, begyndte Jesus at tale til folkeskarerne om Johannes: "Hvad gik I ud i ørkenen for at se? Et siv, der svajer for vinden? Nej, hvad gik I ud for at se? Et menneske i fornemme klæder? Se, de, der bærer fornemme klæder, findes i kongeslottene. Nej, hvad gik I ud for at se? En profet? Ja, jeg siger jer, også mere end en profet. **Det er om ham, der står skrevet: Se, jeg sender min engel foran dig, han skal bane din vej for dig.** Sandelig siger jeg jer: Blandt kvindefødte er der ikke fremstået nogen større end Johannes Døber. Men den mindste i Himmeriget er større end han.

Herre Jesus Kristus, vi beder dig: Bøj dit øre til vore bønner, oplys vore hjerters mørke ved at lade din nåde omslutte os - du, som med Faderen lever og regerer i Helligåndens enhed, én sand Gud fra evighed og til evighed. Amen.

1. Prædikanten

Skal man have medlidenhed med en fængslet prædikant? Hvis han bliver fængslet på grund af prædikenen, er han vel selv ude om det. Eller hvad? Men NEJ: Man skal ikke have medlidenhed med dem, der prædiker Guds ord. De er jo sendebud og under Guds omsorg og beskyttelse. De er højt betroede tjenere. Sådant en prædikant var Johannes Døber.

Jesus fortæller om Døberen, som var fængslet på grund af prædiken af Guds bud og af profeternes forjættelser om Kristus: **Hvad gik I ud i ørkenen for at se? Et siv, der svajer for vinden? Nej, hvad gik I ud for at se? Et menneske i fornemme klæder? Se, de, der bærer fornemme klæder,**

The Works of Christ

Sermon, 3rd Sunday of Advent, Dec. 15, 2024 LGJ

Gospel: Matthew 11,2-11

2 Now when John had heard in the prison **the works of Christ**, he sent two of his disciples, **3** And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? **4** Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: **5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.** **6** And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

7 And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? **8** But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. **9** But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. **10 For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.** ¹¹ Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Lord Jesus Christ, we beseech you: incline your ear to our prayers, illumine the darkness of our hearts by allowing your grace to encircle us, you who live with the Father and reign in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one true God from eternity to eternity. Amen.

1. The Preacher

Should you feel pity for an imprisoned preacher? If he is imprisoned because of the sermon, he is probably out of it himself. Or what? But NO: One should not have pity on those who preach God's Word. After all, they are messengers and under God's care and protection. They are highly trusted servants. Such a preacher was John the Baptist.

Jesus tells of the Baptist, who was imprisoned because of the preaching of God's commandments and of the prophets' promises about Christ: **What did you go into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the wind? No, what did you go out to see? A human being in distinguished clothes? Behold, those who**

findes i kongeslottene. Nej, hvad gik I ud for at se? En profet? Ja, jeg siger jer, også mere end en profet. Det er om ham, der står skrevet: Se, jeg sender min engel foran dig, han skal bane din vej for dig. Sandelig siger jeg jer: Blandt kvindefødte er der ikke fremstået nogen større end Johannes Døber. (Matt. 11,7-11).

Det er store ord om en fængslet mand profet og prædikant. Vi mærker, at Jesus ikke taler om ham som en, vi skal have medlidenhed med. Det er en, vi skal lytte til! Han gik ikke i bløde klæder. Han sad i fængsel. Han prædikede ikke som vinden blæser, men prædikede, hvad han skulle: Om Guds bud og om Kristus! Og i fængslet tænkte han på sine disciple. Han sendte dem til Jesus, som han havde prædikeret for dem om. Han var trofast til det sidste.

Når du får lov til at være i Herrens tjeneste som mor, far, søsken, ægteemand, hustru, da lad det bare blive svært. Hør, hvad Gud siger om dig, som tror på Jesus og er døbt: Du er salig i din gerning. Ikke på grund af den, men i den. Og du er Guds kære barn. Du når ikke op på siden af Johannes Døber. Men Jesus siger jo om et lille barn, som tror på ham: det er størst i Guds rige. Den mindste er den største! Det største for os at være Guds kære børn.

Apostlen Paulus hjælper os også til at betragte os selv rigtigt, når han fortæller, hvordan man skal se på ham som apostel: *Sådan skal man betragte os: som Kristi tjenere og som forvaltere af Guds hemmeligheder; her kræves det så af forvaltere, at de findes tro. Men mig er det ligegyldigt, om jeg bliver bedømt af jer eller af nogen menneskelig domstol, ja, jeg bedømmer ikke engang mig selv.* - Det er så vigtigt for os som kristne: se på, hvad Gud har kaldet os til. Og holde os til det. Blive i det. Uanset hvad det ellers fører med sig. Vend tilbage til, hvad Gud siger, at du er: hans kære barn ved dåb og tro. Og hans tjener, der skal elske din næste som dig selv. Også når det ser svært ud.

2. Prædikenen

Hvad ved vi om hans prædiken? Vi ved, hvordan han prædikede ved Jordan: *Håb og opfyldelse af profetens ord. Trøst. Herren kommer.* Han sagde om sig selv: Jeg er en røst i ørkenen. Han hørte Herrens ord hos profeterne og gentog dem og sagde: Nu er det opfyldt. Her er han.

wear noble robes are found in the royal palaces. No, what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, even more than a prophet. It is of him who is written, "Behold, I am sending my angel before you, and he will prepare your way for you." Assuredly, I say to you, among the born of women there has not arisen any greater than John the Baptist. (Matthew 11:7-11).

These are big words about a prisoned man, prophet and preacher. We feel that Jesus does not speak of him as someone we should have pity on. It's one we need to listen to! He did not wear soft clothes. He was in prison. He did not preach like the wind blows, but preached what he was supposed to do: about God's commandments and about Christ! And in prison, he thought of his disciples. He sent them to Jesus, about whom he had preached to them. He was faithful to the end.

When you are allowed to be in the Lord's service as a mother, father, sibling, husband, wife, just let it be difficult. Hear what God says about you who believe in Jesus and are baptized: You are blessed in your work. Not because of it, but in it. And you are a dear child of God. You do not reach the side of John the Baptist. But Jesus says of a little child who believes in him: he is the greatest in the kingdom of God. The smallest is the biggest! The greatest thing for us to be God's dear children.

The apostle Paul also helps us to view ourselves correctly when he tells us how to view him as an apostle: *This is how we are to be viewed: as servants of Christ and as stewards of God's mysteries; here it is then required of stewards that they be found faithful. But I do not matter whether I am judged by you or by any human court, yes, I do not even judge myself.* - It is so important for us as Christians: look at what God has called us to. And stick to it. Stay in it. Whatever else it brings. Return to what God says you are: His dear child by baptism and faith. And his servant, who will love your neighbor as yourself. Even when it looks difficult.

2. The Sermon

What do we know about his sermon? We know how he preached at the Jordan: *Hope and fulfillment of the words of the prophet. The Lord is coming.* He said of himself: I am a voice in the wilderness. He heard the words of the Lord from the prophets, and repeated them, saying: Now it is fulfilled. Here he is.

Han prædikede i en ørken. Både bogstaveligt talt og i overført betydning. I Ørkenen ved Jordanfloden. Og til mennesker, som selv var en slags ørken – uden håb – hvor så meget var visnet og gået ud. Ligesom hos os. "I har meget at angre. Men det kan I gøre hos ham, som bærer jeres synder." Det kan I gøre frimodigt. Jeg døber jer til syndernes forladelse. Så er alt vel. Det lød til folket! Og de angrede. De gik i sig selv. De troede på at Messias nu kom. De så ham. Jesus så de. Så var alt vel. Og vi mærker, hvad der var hovedsagen for Johannes: nemlig Kristus. **Da Johannes i fængslet hørte om Kristi gerninger, sendte han bud med sine disciple og spurgte ham: "Er du den, som kommer, eller skal vi vente en anden?" Jesus svarede dem: "Gå hen og fortæl Johannes, hvad I hører og ser: Blinde ser, og lamme går, spedalske bliver rene, og døve hører, og døde står op, og evangeliet forkyndes for fattige. Og salig er den, der ikke forarges på mig."**

Det han har gjort for os er vores redning.

Men det var ikke så ligetil dengang for Johannes' disciple og heller ikke for andre almindelige jøder. For nu var Johannes fængslet. Mon Døberens prædiken om Kristus duede, når han selv sad i fængsel? – Vil Gud lade sin profet lide ondt? Vil Gud lade sin Søn lide ondt på et kors? Kan det virkelig være til nogen hjælp?

Sådan udfordres vi også i dag, når vi hører en kristen prædiken. Vi ser JESUS på et kors, død for vore synder. Men er sådan en frelser værd at tro på?

Paulus nævner problemet samme brev, som vi har hørt fra om apostlens tjeneste. Det er i første kapitel af brevet: *Gud besluttede at frelse dem, som tror, ved den dårskab, der prædikes om.* ²² *For jøder kræver tegn, og grækere søger visdom,* ²³ *men vi prædiker Kristus som korsfæstet, en forargelse for jøder og en dårskab for hedninger;* ²⁴ *men for dem, der er kaldet, jøder såvel som grækere, prædiker vi Kristus som Guds kraft og Guds visdom. 1 Kor 1,21-24.*

Jesus siger til dem og os: **"Salig den, som ikke forarges på mig"**. Du er salig, når du holder dig til Guds frelse, til Kristi gerninger.

Jo, vi ved, at Jesus blev vores frelser ved at dø og opstå for os. Og Jesus sammenfatter sådan: **Blinde ser, lamme går, spedalske renses, døde oprejses og evangeliet forkyndes for fattige.**

He preached in a desert. Both literally and figuratively. In the desert by the Jordan River. And to people who were themselves a kind of desert – without hope – where so much had withered and gone out. Just like with us. "You have a lot to regret. But you can do this with him who bears your sins." You can do so boldly. I baptize you for the remission of sins. Then all is well. It sounded to the people! And they regretted it. They went into themselves. They believed that the Messiah was coming. They saw him. They saw Jesus. Then all was well. And we feel what was the main thing for John: namely, Christ. **When John heard about Christ's works in prison, he sent word with his disciples and asked him, "Are you the one who is coming, or should we expect someone else?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: The blind see, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised, and the poor are preached. And blessed is he who is not offended at me."**

What he has done for us is our salvation.

But it was not so straightforward then for John's disciples nor for other ordinary Jews. For now John was imprisoned. Was the Baptist's preaching about Christ good when he himself was in prison? – Will God let his prophet suffer evil? Will God let His Son suffer evil on a cross? Can it really be of any help?

This is also how we are challenged today when we hear a Christian sermon. We see JESUS on a cross, dead for our sins. But is such a savior worth believing in?

Paul mentions the problem in the same letter from which we have heard about the apostle's ministry. It is in the first chapter of the letter: *God decided to save those who believe by the foolishness that is preached.* ²² *For Jews demand signs, and Greeks seek wisdom,* ²³ *but we preach Christ as crucified, an offense to Jews, and a foolishness to Gentiles;* ²⁴ *But to those who are called, Jews as well as Greeks, we preach Christ as the power of God and the wisdom of God. 1 Corinthians 1:21-24.*

Jesus says to them and to us: **"Blessed is he who is not offended at me"**. You are blessed when you cling to the salvation of God, to the works of Christ.

Yes, we know that Jesus became our Savior by dying and rising for us. And Jesus summarizes it like this: **The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the dead are raised and the gospel is preached to the poor.**

Nogle undrer sig over, at Johannes gav disciplene et spørgsmål at gå med. Tvivlede han?

Matthæus nævner ikke ordet tvivl. Det gør han ellers ikke så sjældent. Men ikke her. Hvad skulle spørgsmålet da til for?

Jesus underviste også selv ved at stille spørgsmål. Han spurgte engang sine disciple: *"Hvem siger I, at Menneskesønnen er? Er han Davids Søn?" "Hvis Gud giver fuglen mad og klæder blomsten smukt, vil han så ikke også sørge for jer, I lidet troende?"* Spurgte Jesus, fordi han var i tvivl? Nej, det var hans undervisningsmetode. Og Johannes brugte samme metode. Skulle han lære sine disciple at tro på Kristus, skulle de høre Jesus' svar på spørgsmålet, så de også selv kunne sige: Jesus er Kristus! Spørgsmål fik disciplene til at tænke med. Og svaret bliver taget imod og sætter sig godt fast i hjertet og i tankerne.

3. Jesus Kristus og prædikanten

Og Jesus slutter med at disse ord: ***Men den mindste i Himmeriget er større end han.***

Hvem taler han om? Den mindste i Himmeriget er større end Johannes Døber? Større end den største profet. Større end Johannes, som beredte vej for Kristus. Hvem er det, siden det også er den mindste i Himmeriget?

Det må være Kristus. Han blev den mindste, den ringeste, den mest usle af alle. Og samtidig er han den største, Gud af Gud, lys af lys, født ikke skabt. Af samme væsen som Faderen. Han er vor frelser.

Her bliver alle prædikanter sat på plads. Her får vi ham som Herre. Og prædikenen får ét hovedemne, som altid fylder: KRISTUS. Amen

Some wonder why John gave the disciples a question to go with. Did he doubt?

Matthew does not mention the word "doubt". He often does, but not here. Why does John the Baptist then ask the question?

Jesus himself also taught by asking questions. He once asked his disciples: *"Who say you that the Son of Man is? Is he the Son of David?" "If God feeds the bird and dresses the flower beautifully, will he not also provide for you, you unbelieving ones?"* Did Jesus ask because he had doubts? No, that was his teaching method. And John used the same method. If he were to teach his disciples to believe in Christ, they should hear Jesus' answer to the question, so that they could also say for themselves: Jesus is the Christ! Questions made the disciples think. And the answer is received and firmly stuck in the heart and in the mind.

3. Jesus Christ and the Preacher

And Jesus concludes with these words: ***But the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.***

Who is he talking about? The smallest in the kingdom of heaven is greater than John the Baptist? Greater than the greatest prophet. Greater than John, who prepared the way for Christ. Who is it, since it is also the smallest in the kingdom of heaven?

It must be the Christ. He became the smallest, the lowest, the most vile of all – in the manger and on the cross. And at the same time, he is the greatest, God of God, light of light, born not created. Of the same essence as the Father. He is our Savior.

Here all the preachers are put in their place. And we receive Jesus as our Lord. And the sermon has one main topic, which always fills the space: CHRIST. Amen