

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church  
Quincy, IL  
Rev. Martin R. Eden

The Second Sunday after Pentecost  
Saturday, June 5, 2010 at 5:00 p.m.  
Sunday, June 6, 2010 at 8:00 a.m. & 10:15 a.m.

## “Life in the Real World”

Luke 7:1-10

Last week, I spoke of how faith, hope, and trust play such important roles in our lives. Faith is putting trust in something that we have not seen or do not understand. When pondering the complexities of and the incomprehensible nature of the Trinity as we did last week on the Sunday of the Holy Trinity, sitting here in God’s house, of course we recognize that we are people of faith, hope, and trust.

However, there is a misguided, sinful attitude that prevails in the minds of many that when you leave the cozy confines of Sunday morning church (or Saturday evening church) – you notice that I did not describe this as the “friendly confines” because within the church we never mix together or confuse that which is sacred and that which is profane. (My apologies to the Cubs fans. I just couldn’t resist). Therefore we speak of the comfortable place within Christ’s church as the “cozy confines.”

We are comfortable to speak about our faith when we are here. And then we get this misguided, sinful attitude that out there is the “real world.” Out there we need to be different than when we are here. We need to be guarded in what we say. We need to blend in.

This is why I usually wear a collar instead of a tie. I don't want to blend in. I don't want to be just some "guy in a tie." There is always the temptation to hide in the crowd. Life seems easier that way.

I think about our recent high school graduates. As children of God, they are entering the most hostile environment in the Western world – college. There is no more spiritually hostile environment for a child of God than a college campus. But, as we heard last week from King David, "You have made known to me the paths of life." Ah yes, participation in the Kingdom of God is the real life. This is the real world. And David continued, "you will make me full of gladness with your presence."

No matter where we go in this world, we only experience the "real world" when we experience the presence of God. He is the architect of this world, and He is the One governing and guiding our lives and everything around us. Those who avoid Him, deny Him, or outright mock Him have no idea what the "real world" is all about.

While I was a pastor in Pana, I had a daughter of our congregation graduate and go off to college – in fact, we had many of them, but one stood out to me. Her name is Jillian. She was a seemingly soft spoken teenager. She was in church every Sunday with her family until she went off to school.

At Illinois Wesleyan (supposedly a college with Christian roots) she was berated and verbally attacked by a professor and many of the students in class for her views on God, creation, abortion,

homosexuality and the like. Apparently some very unkind, hostile words were projected in her direction. She stood her ground and professed her beliefs, professed her faith.

In talking to her, what bothered her in this ongoing ordeal was not that she was attacked – she is plenty capable of defending herself. She was armed with the Word of God and a great deal of confidence. This year, she should just about be finishing her officer’s training through the ROTC program. Her plan is then to serve in the military and get her law degree. Then she hopes for a career in politics.

What bothered her throughout this ordeal was that she had friends in class who privately professed similar beliefs, but they did not rise to the occasion to defend her. They were seeking to blend in.

At the end of a very difficult semester, after this professor had attacked her beliefs and allowed the other students to verbally abuse her, this professor took her aside privately and informed her that he was recommending her for a one year internship in Washington D.C. working in the House of Representatives.

I know that Jillian’s mom did not approve of this professor’s teaching style, even if it was good for Jillian to go through that refinement by fire. However, the point is, we never know when we will be called upon to profess our faith.

The reality of the “real world” is that we are always to be professing our faith. God is present and active everywhere, not just here. You

are a child of God no matter where you go, not just when you are here.

The centurion in our Gospel reading understood the present and active nature of God and His Word. He didn't need to see it to believe it. He demonstrates what real faith is – the Word and will of God is fulfilled even if I don't see it with my own eyes. The Word and will of God is present and active everywhere.

The sinful, misguided attitude of the world outside the church being the “real world” comes from the sinful, misguided attitude that outside of these walls I need to exercise more authority, I need to take more control of my life, because faith and hope don't get you too far in the “real world”.

Life in the Kingdom of God, life in the presence of God is the “real world.” It is where we live each day of our lives. The “real world” is where God loves His children whom He has created. The “real world” is the world which God loved so much that He sent His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Therefore, the “real world” is a world filled with faith, hope, and trust. Amen.