

Life Sunday Sermon 2022

Isaiah 62:1-5 “Two Princes (God Chose You)”

Rev. Michael W. Salemink, Executive Director of Mission and Ministry, Lutherans For Life
lutheransforlife.org

Sermon from Concordia Pulpit Resources © 2022 Concordia Publishing House. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

“One, two princes kneel before you.” So began a pop tune from 1993. Irresistible little toe-tapper—annoyingly catchy. Went number one in Iceland and got nominated for a Grammy. Sounds like a fairy tale, doesn’t it? Kind of timeless, remarkably relatable, and even rather flattering. Martin Luther once labeled man a beast between two riders. Why not envision ourselves instead pursued by two princes?

The Bible likes weddings. The Scriptures speak frequently of marriage. Genesis gets it going with, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him,” and, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” Israel’s history progresses from patriarch Jacob and matriarch Rachel to Grandma Ruth and Grandpa Boaz to King David and the other woman to their son the sage Solomon and so, so many mates—but oh, the Song of Solomon!

Then Hosea the prophet and Gomer the harlot, Queen Esther and King Ahasuerus, and Virgin Mary betrothed to noble Joseph. The first of His signs Jesus did at a wedding of Cana in Galilee and manifested His glory. The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son and likened to ten maidens who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. The mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the Church, and blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. This afternoon, “You shall be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land Married; for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married. As the bridegroom rejoices over the

Life Sunday Sermon 2022

Isaiah 62:1-5 “Two Princes (God Chose You)”

Rev. Michael W. Salemink, Executive Director of Mission and Ministry, Lutherans For Life
lutheransforlife.org

Sermon from Concordia Pulpit Resources © 2022 Concordia Publishing House. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.” The reception hasn’t ended yet and will endure unto eternity.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ tells a love story. Indeed it tells THE love story. And one, two princes kneel before you. One has eyes for you. He doesn’t so much kneel as he leans. He struts by, he saunters up, and he leans in. This one has charisma and chemistry. This one has confidence. This one makes your knees weak enough to sweep you right off of your feet. This one brings the smooth moves and the slick lines. This one has put in the practice and put on the polish. He sports stylish shades and the tailored suit, with his tie pulled down and his sleeves rolled up. He wears twinkle on his fingers and carries sparkle in his pockets.

He’s gonna buy you that top-shelf drink. Maybe two or six. Better yet, he’ll mix you up one himself, slip in his special ingredient and add a little something extra. And he drives you in that late-model car, the sharp turns, the squealing tires, swerving across lanes and sprinting through lights. He turns heads, recognized in every city and every club. All the women wink, and all the ladies wave at this tall, toned, and tan one. They have a history but no interest in a future.

This one gets around. This one gets you alone, off in a corner, over at the private table, out in some hallway. How about his place or a hotel, even the passenger seat or just a back alley? This one, he specializes in no-strings-attached, casual and non-committal. This one, he excels in one-night stands. He likes the darkness. He delivers the danger. He slips off those clothes. He slides his hands over. You feel his heat, see his sweat, smell his scent, hear heavy breaths, inhaling exhilaration. He can’t even speak your name, doesn’t need to, doesn’t know it, doesn’t

Life Sunday Sermon 2022

Isaiah 62:1-5 “Two Princes (God Chose You)”

Rev. Michael W. Salemink, Executive Director of Mission and Ministry, Lutherans For Life
lutheransforlife.org

Sermon from Concordia Pulpit Resources © 2022 Concordia Publishing House. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

care. It's nothing like love, just lust enough to get lost in. Who needs delight when you can indulge? Who needs rejoicing when you've got gratification?

And when he's had his fill of fooling around, he'll fire up a cigarette. He flings a couple crumpled bills to cover your trouble and catch you a cab. He reaches for his shirt, not bothering to button it, chuckles and shuffles off into the evening. He didn't come to take care, only to take advantage. And you can't decide whether he defiled you or you failed yourself. You thought for a minute this might be what you wanted, but it was him who had his way with you. When you've surrendered ever being viewed as a treasure, you'll settle for being used as a toy. When you lack somebody to see you as precious, you'll let anybody treat you as paraphernalia.

Ask around. Many remember his name, though few speak it for the shame. Call him sexual immorality, a cruel suitor, an abusive on-again, off-again boyfriend. Prince? Of demons, prince of darkness. Sometimes he moonlights as sexual promiscuity. Sometimes he masquerades as sexual preference. But he has a hundred other aliases: greed and gluttony and gossip, envy and anger and adultery and idolatry, apathy and pride and pornography. None worse than another but none any better either.

His given name is Sin. But he goes by self-expression, personal choice, rights, and equality. Hell himself disguised as death dressed up in freedom and promising heaven to have you in bed. Sinfulness doesn't love you. Sexual promiscuity doesn't love you. Sexual preference doesn't love you. Sexual immorality doesn't love you. Look at how he leaves you, but you just can't get yourself to quit him and this addiction. Sin, even so pretty and popular, it doesn't rescue humankind. It ruins us. Selfishness doesn't create. It consumes. Death doesn't redeem. It

Life Sunday Sermon 2022

Isaiah 62:1-5 “Two Princes (God Chose You)”

Rev. Michael W. Salemink, Executive Director of Mission and Ministry, Lutherans For Life
lutheransforlife.org

Sermon from Concordia Pulpit Resources © 2022 Concordia Publishing House. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

discards. It doesn't choose you; it uses you and then accuses you. It doesn't delight or rejoice in anyone; it despises and ridicules and at last abandons all.

But one, two princes kneel before you. The other has a heart for you still. The other has a heart for you anyway. This one doesn't need you, yet He wants you. This one has character, and this one has compassion. This one has a courtship. He genuinely kneels, humbles Himself in servanthood, gentle but relentless. He bends low, not so much to sweep you off your feet as to sit beside you on the curb, in the gutter. He comes near to take you in His arms, strengthen you to stand, and walk with you, not to have His way with you but to walk the way alongside you. He escorts you from the cheap roadhouses, any of them and all of them, right down the middle of the city streets in full sight of the gawking onlookers. Him next to you takes the blame for your indiscretions and transgressions, the adulteries, idolatries, thieveries, and gluttonies. Him next to you pays the price for your jealousies, hostilities, apathies, and blasphemies. He leads you on to a castle, lifts you up to a kingdom and a mansion, yes, a palace and a paradise, making His your own.

His scarred hands protect. His scored shoulders provide. His stricken side and stinging scalp preserve. No pretty pick-up lines, but presence and promises. No fancy booze, but daily bread, everything we need to support this body and life. This one doesn't entice or seduce but embraces, absolves, accepts. This one doesn't turn away from blemishes, bruises, and broken-hearted wounds but tends to them. This one won't rip your coverings off and rub His nasty against you. He will robe you in his majesty and cloak you beneath His favoring. This one won't flaunt His expensive apparel. He'll outfit you in attire of dignity and sanctity. He pours His

Life Sunday Sermon 2022

Isaiah 62:1-5 “Two Princes (God Chose You)”

Rev. Michael W. Salemink, Executive Director of Mission and Ministry, Lutherans For Life
lutheransforlife.org

Sermon from Concordia Pulpit Resources © 2022 Concordia Publishing House. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

sweat, not over you but for you, yes, sheds His blood and spends His last breath to defend and to cleanse you from guilt, advocates for you and sacrifices for your life. He has broken the bank and emptied the treasury in buying your release and freedom from whatever lays claim to shame you.

This one gives you a new name. He calls you by His name. This one doesn't ravage your body. He asks for your hand. This one delights in you. He rejoices over you. This one creates you special. He redeems you precious. He calls you priceless, for better and for worse, for richer and for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, to have and to hold until death and beyond, tonight's darkness and tomorrow's daylight. Yes, from this day forward and even forevermore. This one doesn't leave you in regret. He leads you through His resurrection to royalty. Welcome, bride of the Heir, daughter and son of the King Himself! Welcome to dancing and laughter, to celebrating and song, to community and family and security and home! Welcome not returning to work but with a purpose. Welcome not back to labor but in a vocation. Welcome to maybe not always what you immediately want but ultimately to what you need all along!

Know Him as grace. Call Him Savior. Know Him as forgiveness, and call Him Father. Meet faithfulness and patience, and greet Him as Jesus, Son of God and Lord of all. You chose sin, but God chose you. Life chose you. Baptism chose you. Communion chose you. Heaven chose you. Hold Him as hope and healing. Kneel before Him, kneel your mind and your life, your days and your deeds before Him. Kneel beside Him as prince and princess now yourself. Kneel as He does in front of every human being, that you may receive them the way He has

Life Sunday Sermon 2022

Isaiah 62:1-5 “Two Princes (God Chose You)”

Rev. Michael W. Salemink, Executive Director of Mission and Ministry, Lutherans For Life
lutheransforlife.org

Sermon from Concordia Pulpit Resources © 2022 Concordia Publishing House. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

embraced you, that we may receive them the way He has selected us. Each one, a privilege from fertilization to forever. Each one, a gift whatever age, appearance, and abilities. Each one, a neighbor even in difficulties and sufferings. Each one, a sister even struggling with same-sex attraction and a brother even experiencing gender dysphasia. Delight in them, no matter how many other so-called princes pass them by. Rejoice in them, no matter how many other would-be princes push them away. For you were created for this. We were created for this, and in this we shall be crowned world without end. Amen.