

Lessons for Pentecost 12 – August 28, 2022

Collect: Lord of all power and might, the author and giver of all good things: Graft in our hearts the love of your Name; increase in us true religion; nourish us with all goodness; and bring forth in us the fruit of good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. *Amen.*

First Reading: Sirach 10:12-18

The beginning of human pride is to forsake the Lord; the heart has withdrawn from its Maker. For the beginning of pride is sin, and the one who clings to it pours out abominations. Therefore the Lord brings upon them unheard-of calamities, and destroys them completely,. The Lord overthrows the thrones of rulers, and enthrones the lowly in their place. The Lord plucks up the roots of the nations, and plants the humble in their places. The Lord lays waste the lands of the nations, and destroys them to the foundations of the earth. He removes some of them and destroys them, and erases the memory of them from earth. Pride was not created for human beings, or violent anger for those born of women.

The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Psalm 112

Hallelujah! Happy are they who fear the Lord
 and have great delight in his commandments!
Their descendants will be mighty in the land;
 the generation of the upright will be blessed.
Wealth and riches will be in their house,
 and their righteousness will last for ever.
Light shines in the darkness for the upright;
 the righteous are merciful and full of compassion.
It is good for them to be generous in lending
 and to manage their affairs with justice.

For they will never be shaken;
the righteous will be kept in everlasting remembrance.
They will not be afraid of any evil rumors;
their heart is right; they put their trust in the Lord.
Their heart is established and will not shrink,
until they see their desire upon their enemies.
They have given freely to the poor,
*and their righteousness stands fast for ever; they will hold up their head
with honor.*
The wicked will see it and be angry; they will gnash their teeth and pine away;
the desire of the wicked will perish.

Second Reading: Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16

Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels, without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured. Let marriage be held in honor by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers. Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, "I will never leave you or forsake you." So we can say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?" Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Gospel: Luke 14:1, 7-14

On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the sabbath, they were watching him closely. When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor he told them a parable. "When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, 'Give this person your place,' and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.'" He said also to the one who had invited him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

The Gospel of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Sermon preached by The Rev. Charles Rowins at St. Christopher-by-the-Sea, Gibson Island, Maryland, 12th Sunday of Pentecost, August 28, 2022.

We have today a very interesting and instructive set of lessons. Together, they are like a recipe for a good and decent life. They are not complicated. Nor are they unfamiliar. We can handle these lessons to our benefit and to the benefit of those we touch.

Let's look at today's Collect. We recognize first that God is Lord of all power and might, the author and give of all good things. Then we ask God to help us achieve certain things, the recipe, if you will.

Graft in our hearts the love your Name.
Increase in us true religion.
Nourish us with all goodness; and
Bring forth in us the fruit of good works.

Is there any doubt that following these steps will lead to a happy and productive life for ourselves and others?

To go deeper into this recipe, we have a set of lessons, each one of which is a combination of observations and suggestions.

The first reading is from the Book of Sirach (**Sirach 10:12-18**). It's a source that we don't explore often. We find it in the collection called The Apocrypha, a name that means "hidden." Some editions of the Bible include this collection. Others do not. But, as is the case with today's insert, checking in on this collection of books from time to time is helpful. Helpful because the content is "wisdom." That is, helpful information and advice. A positive source for productive daily living.

In today's case, we are reminded that pride in the extreme, as in "I'm better than you are," is not a healthy way to live. Indeed "unheard of calamities" can result. Certainly be proud, but not at the expense of others. Wisdom indeed.

Our second reading is from the Epistle to the Hebrews (**Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16**). Remember that the first Christians were Hebrews. They understood Jesus as the

arrival of the promised Messiah, not an imposter. The author's message is "Stay the course." You waited a long time for the Messiah, and now, he, Jesus, has arrived. "I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?"

The Book of Hebrews is a pep-talk for the early Christians. And who doesn't need a pep-talk? From time to time, you and I have probably waived in our faith in Christ. And often it is the firm belief of others that has carried us through our doubt to renewed faith.

Such renewal is often the subject of the Psalms. These are really positive expressions of God's love for us, particularly in trying times. "Hallelujah! Happy are they who fear the Lord and have great delight in his commandments!"

(Psalm 112:1)

Jews and Christians value this special Collection. The psalms represent daily reminders that God is on our side. Often we memorize the psalms and call upon them in times of trial and jubilation. They can be our best friend. And having a best friend is always a wise decision.

And then we have each week a passage from one of the Gospels, a source for the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The Good News. Not just wise news, but great news, victory news, glorious news which we are commissioned to share with a world in constant need of Good News.

Assuming that the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus is the Truth, can there be a more fulfilling gift to successions of people from all walks of life than to share this Good News?

Of course not. It's our joy to share, because we know that this Good News is what the world needs and what God provides. We should not keep it to ourselves. It is meant to be shared, and this we do in all sorts of ways, including how we live day to day with all sorts of challenges.

For us, the Good News is Wisdom, because the News comes directly from the Lord. Indeed, that's the definition of Wisdom. From whom does it come? As parents and grandparents and godparents in the age of the Internet, we are

concerned, aren't we, about the sources of information that our children and grandchildren are choosing.

It would be foolish to ignore the Good News, or worse, keep the Good News to ourselves. The world needs it, and we have it, with an expectation from the Author not to sit on it, but to "give a banquet, with a special invitation to the "crippled, the lame, and the blind." (**Luke 14:14**) And, let's add "to the distracted."

It's a competitive world out there. The acquisition and sharing of Wisdom is not automatic. It's deliberate. It's thoughtful. And, contrary to some thinking, it's exciting. It can not only hold its own, it can prevail. And the One who will insure victory is the Author of Wisdom. The only question is whether we will join in this victory. Our presence today and each time we gather for a service or offer grace at a meal or hold the hand of one who is sick or clap for one who achieves a goal is our answer to that question.

Bring it on, Internet Age. The Author of Wisdom has handled all sorts of Ages and all sorts of challenges, and will continue to do so, even if we are slow to adapt the Good News to these challenges. Adaptation isn't automatic. We have to work at it. What we do here and what you all do out there is the Lord's work. And, lest we forget, whatever our shortcomings, they are well within the grasp of the Lord.

So, let's keep up the good work. And let's not forget God's recipe:

graft in our hearts the love of God's Name,
increase in our lives true religion,
nourish us and others with all goodness, and
bring forth in us the fruit of good works.

For our closing hymn today we will sing stanzas 1, 2, 3 and 5 of **Hymn 616** (*Hail to the Lord's Anointed*). Two of the phrases in stanza 5 are "*from age to age*" and "*his Name shall stand for ever.*" Today is our age, and *it is/we are* part of the "for ever." And it's a pretty special feeling, isn't it.

Amen.

Pentecost 12 Morning Prayer Service – August 28, 2022

Prelude

Hymn 631 – Book of books, our people’s strength

Book of books, our people’s strength, statesman’s, teacher’s, hero’s treasure,
bringing freedom, spreading truth, shedding light that none can measure;
wisdom comes to those who know thee, all the best we have we owe thee.

Thank we those who toiled in thought, many diverse scrolls completing,
poets, prophets, scholars, saints, each a word from God repeating;
till they came, who told the story of the Word, and showed his glory.

Praise we God, who hath inspired those whose wisdom still directs us;
praise him for the Word made flesh, for the Spirit which protects us.
Light of knowledge, ever burning shed on us thy deathless learning.

Opening sentence - BCP page 40

This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Invitation to Confession – BCP page 41

So that we may prepare ourselves in heart and mind to worship Almighty God, let us, with penitent and obedient hearts, confess our sins, that we may obtain forgiveness by his infinite goodness and mercy.

Confession – BCP pages 41-42

Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep, we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts, we have offended against thy holy laws, we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and have done those things which we ought not to have done. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, spare thou those who confess their faults, restore thou those who are penitent, according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord; and grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.

Absolution – BCP page 42

The almighty and merciful Lord grant you absolution and remission of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of his Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Gloria – BCP page 42

O Lord, open thou our lips.
And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Venite – BCP page 44

Come, let us sing to the Lord;
 let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation.
Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving,
 and show ourselves glad in him with psalms.
For the Lord is a great God,
 and a great King above all gods.
In his hand are all the corners of the earth,
 and the strength of the hills is his also.
The sea is his and he made it,
 and he prepared the dry land.
O come, let us worship and fall down
 and kneel before the Lord our Maker.
For he is the Lord our God,
 and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.
O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
 let the whole earth stand in awe of him.
For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth,
 and with righteousness to judge the world and the people with his truth.

Psalm 112 – insert

First Reading: Sirach 10:12-28 – insert

Second Reading: Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16 – insert

Hymn 554, repeated once – ‘Tis the gift to be simple

‘Tis the gift to be simple, ‘tis the gift to be free,
‘tis the gift to come down where we ought to be,
and when we find ourselves in the place just right,
‘twill be in the valley of love and delight.

When true simplicity is gained to bow and to bend we shan’t be ashamed,
to turn, turn, will be our delight till by turning, turning we come round right.

Gospel Lesson: Luke 14:1, 7-14 - insert

Sermon – The Rev. Charles Rowins

Apostles’ Creed – pp 53-54

*I believe in God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth;*

*And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried,
He descended into hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father
almighty.
From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Ghost,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.*

Lord's Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come,

thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Suffrages A – page 55

O Lord, show thy mercy upon us;

and grant us thy salvation.

Endue thy ministers with righteousness;

and make thy chosen people joyful.

Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;

for only in thee can we live in safety.

Lord, keep this nation under thy care;

and guide us in the way of justice and truth.

Let thy way be known upon earth;

thy saving health among all nations.

Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;

nor the hope of the poor be taken away.

Create in us clean hearts, O God;

and sustain us with thy Holy Spirit.

Collect for 12th Sunday after Pentecost – insert

Lord of all power and might, who are the author and giver of all good things:

Graft in our hearts the love of your Name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and bring forth in us the fruit of good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Prayers for Sundays (BCP p 56) and Future of Human Race (BCP p 828)

O God, you make us glad with the weekly remembrance of the glorious resurrection of your Son our Lord: Give us this day such blessing through our worship of you, that the week to come may be spent in your favor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O God our heavenly Father, you have blessed us and given us dominion over all the earth: Increase our reverence before the mystery of life; and give us new insight into your purposes for the human race, and new wisdom and determination in making provision for its future in accordance with your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

General Thanksgiving - BCP pp 58-59

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we thine unworthy servants do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all men. We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.

And we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful; and that we show forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

Announcements and *America*

*My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing;
Long may our land be bright with freedom's holy light;
Protect us by thy might, great God our King.*

Prayer of St. Chrysostom – BCP, p 59

Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication unto thee, and hast promised through thy well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name thou wilt be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. *Amen.*

The Grace – BCP, p 59

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

Hymn 616, stanzas 1-3 and 5 – Hail to the Lord's Anointed

Hail to the Lord's Anointed, great David's greater son!
Hail, in the time appointed, his reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression, to set the captive free;
to take away transgression, and rule in equity.

He comes with succor speedy to those who suffer wrong,
to help the poor and needy, and bid the weak be strong;
to give them songs for sighing, their darkness turn to light,
whose souls, condemned and dying, were precious in his sight.

He shall come down like showers upon the fruitful earth,
and love, joy, hope, like flowers, spring in his path to birth:
before him on the mountains shall peace, the herald, go;
and righteousness in fountains from hill to valley flow.

O'er every foe victorious, he on his throne shall rest;
from age to age more glorious, all blessing and all blest:
the tide of time shall never his covenant remove;
his Name shall stand for ever, his changeless Name of Love.

Dismissal and Postlude

Alleluia! Alleluia! Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!