

Lessons for Pentecost 19 – October 16, 2022

Collect: Almighty and everlasting God, in Christ you have revealed your glory among the nations: Preserve the works of your mercy, that your Church throughout the world may persevere with steadfast faith in the confession of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever an ever. *Amen.*

First Reading: Genesis 32:22-31

Jacob got up at night and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had. Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." Then the man said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed." Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved." The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because of his hip.

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

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills;
 from where is my help to come?
My help comes from the Lord,
 the maker of heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot be moved
 and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.
Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel
 shall neither slumber nor sleep.
The Lord himself watches over you;
 the Lord is your shade at your right hand,

So that the sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.

The Lord shall preserve you from all evil;
it is he who shall keep you safe.

The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in,
from this time forth for evermore.

Second Reading: 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

As for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God, and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work. In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

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

Gospel: Luke 18:1-8

Jesus told his disciples a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, 'Grant me justice against my opponent.'" For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, 'Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.'" And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night?"

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

Service of Holy Communion
Pentecost 19 – October 16, 2022

Hymn 414, stanzas 1-5 – God, my King, thy might confessing

God, my King, thy might confessing, ever will I bless thy Name;
day by day thy throne addressing, still will I thy praise proclaim.

Honor, great our God befitteth; who his majesty can reach?
Age to age his works transmitteth, age to age his power shall teach.

They shall talk of all thy glory, on thy might and greatness dwell,
Speak of thy dread acts the story, and thy deeds of wonder tell.

Nor shall fail from memory's treasure works by love and mercy wrought,
works of love surpassing measure, works of mercy passing thought.

Full of kindness and compassion, slow to anger, vast in love,
God is good to all creation; all his works his goodness prove.

BCP - Page 355

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever.

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.

*For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.*

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Let us pray.

Collect for Pentecost 19

Almighty and everlasting God, in Christ you have revealed your glory among the nations: Preserve the works of our mercy, that your Church throughout the world may persevere with steadfast faith in the confession of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

First Reading – Genesis 32:22-31

Psalm 121

Second Reading – II Timothy 3:1-4:5

Hymn 474 – When I survey the wondrous cross

When I survey the wondrous cross, where the young Prince of Glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, save in the cross of Christ, my God:
all the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to his blood.

See, from his head, his hands, his feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were an offering far too small;
love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.

Gospel – Luke 18:1-8

Sermon – The Rev. Charles Rowins

Nicene Creed – page 358

*We believe in one God,
the Father, the almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is seen and unseen.*

*We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again In accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.*

*We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.*

Prayers of the People Form IV – page 388

Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

Grant, Almighty God, that all who confess your Name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

Lord, in your mercy. *Hear our prayer.*

Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one another and serve the common good.

Lord, in your mercy. *Hear our prayer.*

Give us all a reverence for the earth as your own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to your honor and glory.

Lord, in your mercy. *Hear our prayer.*

Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours, and grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as he loves us.

Lord, in your mercy. *Hear our prayer.*

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation.

Lord, in your mercy. *Hear our prayer.*

We commend to your mercy all who have died, that your will for them may be fulfilled; and we pray that we may share with all your saints in your eternal kingdom.

Lord, in your mercy. *Hear our prayer.*

Confession and Absolution – page 360

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.*

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. *Amen.*

The Peace – page 360

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

Announcements and *America (portions of Hymn 717)*

*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.*

Eucharistic Prayer – page 361

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

*Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.*

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: this is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Lord's Prayer – BCP p. 364

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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.

Breaking of the Bread – BCP p. 364

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.
Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

Communion

Post Communion Prayer – BCP p. 365

*Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us
as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,
and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.
Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage
to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Hymn 368 – Holy Father, great Creator

Holy Father, great Creator, source of mercy, love, and peace,
look upon the Mediator, clothe us with his righteousness;
heavenly Father, heavenly Father, through the Savior hear and bless.

Holy Jesus, Lord of glory, whom angelic host proclaim,
while we hear thy wondrous story, meet and worship in thy Name,
dear Redeemer, dear Redeemer, in our hearts thy peace proclaim.

Holy Spirit, Sanctifier, come with unction from above,
touch our hearts with sacred fire, fill them with thy Savior's love.
Source of comfort, Source of comfort, cheer us with the Savior's love.

God the Lord, throughout every nation let thy wondrous mercies shine.
In the song of thy salvation every tongue and race combine.
Great Jehovah, great Jehovah, form our hearts and make them thine.

Dismissal

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

Sermon preached by The Rev. Charles Rowins at St. Christopher-by-the-Sea, Gibson Island, Maryland, 19th Sunday after Pentecost, October 16, 2022.

Our theme today is “What’s in a Name.”

First things first. “What’s in a Name” is not a question. It is a statement. Names are important. We each have one. And in most cases, we didn’t pick our names. Our parents did. A name was assigned. “Your older brother is James. But you will be Charles.” And, so it was, and so it is.

Today’s first lesson (**Genesis 32:22-31**) is about names. The Lord is engaged in some kind of trouble with Jacob. The Lord gets tired of this struggle, which had been going on all night, and tells Jacob, “Enough already.” To which Jacob says, “No, not enough. I won’t stop struggling until you give me a different name.”

And so the Lord did. From now on, you will be called “Israel.” To which, Jacob, now Israel, asks the Lord, “And what is your name?” The Lord, though, doesn’t tell Jacob his – the Lord’s – Name. Instead the Lord blesses Jacob. Following which, Jacob gives a name to the place where this exchange took place.

Note that the name Jacob gives to the place where this exchange happens is Peniel, which means “I have seen God face to face.” Now, why the editors use a different spelling of this place, I have no idea. Peniel vs Penuel. Maybe it’s simply the difference between a place and a person. For another time – perhaps.

The point, I believe, is simply that it is in struggles of all sorts that we sometimes get closer to God. If we come out of the struggle in good shape, we are grateful. If we don’t come of the struggle in good shape, we dig a little deeper to try to understand things. And, isn’t “digger deeper” a useful experience?

This is the sentiment of today’s Psalm (**Psalm 121**). “I lift up my eyes to the hills; from where is my help to come? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.” We ask a question, we dig a little deeper, and we get an answer. “My help comes from the Lord.”

This is the bottom line of faith. We don’t have all the answers, but we have some, including our own experience with a God who, though well beyond our

understanding, manages to get through to us often enough for us to stay with the program.

And the greatest effort of God to “get through to us” is Jesus, God in human flesh. The Incarnation. What an incredibly creative and profound method of sharing. To become one of us. God is brilliant. Not just in the Creation at a cosmic level – the Big Bang - but in the intimacy of human love and the birth that follows.

And, what follows a birth? It’s the naming of the child. In the case of Jesus of Nazareth, the parents – no doubt inspired – named their son Jesus. It was a fairly common name, which is significant in itself. If you want to identify with the masses, why would you choose a name unlike any other? The whole point of the birth of Jesus is to identify with humanity.

Now, like all names, Jesus, though fairly common, was significant. It meant and means “one who saves.” It suggests a life that will be significant. And, sure enough, Jesus of Nazareth has been and is significant. We’re here, honoring him, learning from him, thanking him, and proclaiming that he is not a normal human on steroids, but the Creator of the Universe on, let us say, aspirin.

A poor analogy perhaps, but, then again maybe useful, if it drives home the Good News that the Creator cares enough for you and me to become one of us.

St. Paul, in his Second Letter to Timothy (**2 Timothy 3:16**), reminds us that this notion of God becoming one of us is intended for wide distribution. “All scripture is inspired by God, and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness”

The Good News is not for the benefit of a few. It is for all. And, as we receive this News, there is the Divine expectation that we share the news. God does the heavy lifting in the birth of Christ. We have some lifting to do as well. Not as heavy as the Creation, but just as critical to us and to those who hear from us.

You and I are part of a “Pass it on” tradition. If we drop the ball, people will not hear the Truth and “will wander away to myths.” Paul is very clear about this responsibility. “As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.”

And, as we do so, we realize what a joy it is to be on the same page as the Creator. We are part of a cosmic adventure. We have a role to play.

Yes, we are part of a team, but our individual identities are not lost. Rather, they are fulfilled. We are part of something really special, something bigger than ourselves. Yes, we have our individual names, but we also have a corporate name.

Imagine if we were mere numbers rather than individuals. "I'd like you to meet my son, #2 in our family, and #120 billionth in human history." If we were #2 in a family, we would probably be more proud of that designation than being #120 billionth in human history.

So, what's your point, #2? Simply that, if we know ourselves as a unique individual, namely #2 in the Rowins Family, God, with far greater capacity for handling numbers, also knows us as Charles, #2 in the Rowins Family.

You and I couldn't handle that precision, but God can. Out of reach for us, but routine for the Creator of the Universe. An example: a billion people could offer the Lord's Prayer at the same moment, and God would hear all those prayers individually. How's that for capacity? How's that for Love?

Too good to be true? Well, here's our T Shirt for the day. "To be a person of faith takes faith." And, not any old faith, but, in the words of today's **Collect**, "Steadfast Faith."

Yes, we're here today in faith. And because of that faith – which we regard as God-given – all sorts of things come into focus. God loves us for who we are as individuals, and as a collection, a community, of individuals. When we pray by ourselves in the middle of a Bay, God hears us. And when we pray with others on the banks of a Bay, God also hears us.

It's quite exciting, isn't it. As it was for our friend, Jacob, who was exhausted wrestling with the Devil, but relieved, given new life, when God said to Jacob, "Okay, from now on you are Israel. You have a new name. You are saved. That's what your new name means. No more wrestling. No more wondering if there is a God. Not only am I real, but I care about you, as my very own child." (**Genesis 32:30**)

You and I have our own version of this exchange, but with a common outcome. We are loved by the Lord. He, she, it – pick your pronoun – cares for us, not only as a member of the human race, but as an individual with a name and a separate identity and a separate combination of gifts, which the Lord expects us to employ in thanksgiving. If you and I meet that expectation, the result will be what today's Gospel describes as "faith on earth." **(Luke 18:8)** Imagine that.

Now, not "Get to work #2," but "Get to work, Charles!"

Amen.