

Lessons for The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

July 30, 2017

Psalm 125 ~ *A song of trust in the Lord who surrounds his people with love, protecting them from evildoers.*

Deuteronomy 7:6-9 ~ *Israel became special because God chose them as His very own!*

Romans 8:28-39 ~ *To know God's love we must look beyond our troubles to the cross of Christ.*

Matthew 13:44-52 ~ *In the kingdom of heaven, value is determined by God's love.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: How High the Cost?

Love doesn't count the cost! Moses told the Children of Israel that out of His love for them, God had chosen them in spite of the fact that they were a liability! St. Paul gave us God's assurance that nothing can separate us from His love in Jesus Christ! Jesus' parable of the treasure in the field tells of the value of the kingdom, but it also reflects how much Jesus was ready to sacrifice to win our salvation.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: Gracious God, you have chosen me with a love I cannot comprehend! Even though your Kingdom grace is a free gift to me, help me always appreciate how precious your redeeming love is! Make me ready to sacrifice great things to bring that gift to others. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: We do not practice faithful stewardship in order to reap the rewards, but God certainly does bless us in our faithfulness!

OFFERING PRAYER: The grace of Your kingdom, Lord, is worth so much more
Than all of the treasures in our precious store,
And yet You have shown that more valuable still
Is the soul of each sinner redeemed by Your will. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: We measure the worth of others by their benefit to us: Are they for us or against us? We evaluate ourselves by our circumstances in life: are we wealthy, happy, and free of suffering? Jesus turns our eyes away from ourselves and toward God's great love for us. His grace gathers us in like fish in a net and purchases us for Himself at great cost, because our worth is determined by His love for us.