

**Lessons for The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost August 13, 2023**

Psalm 18:1-6 (7-16) ~ *David's dramatic psalm of praise to God for delivering him from his enemies.*

Job 38:4-18 ~ *When Job questioned God's justice, God challenged Job with impenetrable questions.*

Romans 10:5-17 ~ *Faith that clings to the promise of Christ's righteousness comes from God's Word.*

Matthew 14:22-33 ~ *Even in Peter's doubt, Jesus was there to save him from the threatening waves.*

**GATHERING THE TEXTS:** God's Word Strengthens Us in Our Doubts.

Job had asked some hard questions of God when he struggled with his disease, but God challenged him with harder questions and a stronger Word. God's Word calls us to trust in His promise and be saved from spiritual disaster. The disciple Peter learned in a dramatic way that his fear would overcome him if it weren't for the strong, saving arm of his loving Lord who pulled him from the stormy waves. God helps us stand through the power of His Word.

**PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE:** Lord, when I have questions, you speak to me; when I have doubts, you strengthen me. Pick me up in your love and set me in the palm of your hand for eternity. Amen.

**STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT:** When we receive mercies from God's hand we are obligated to inquire how He wants us to use them.

**OFFERING PRAYER:** We see, O Lord, Your gifts of love  
hidden in Your vast creation.  
Now fill our lives with acts of love  
telling of Your great salvation. Amen.

**CONVICTION AND COMFORT:** Our questions often come from hearts that presume we have all the answers, but we hear God's rebuke as well as Peter: "You of little faith," for we doubt in our hearts and often show that doubt in our actions. It is not our cry, but God's strong arm and the ever constant love of our merciful Savior that reaches out to rescue us from the storms of life. We are eager to proclaim the Word we have heard, "Whoever believes in Him will never be put to shame," so all may hear and believe.

**Questions to consider:** What does it often take to make you open your eyes?

- What makes you sure that you can trust God to rescue you from the storms of life and save you from spiritual disaster?
- Will God do the same for others, even those who don't know they can trust him?
- Would it be helpful in living their lives if they knew they can trust God?
- What question does this beg?

**Bonus on next page:** When our burdens become unbearable . . .

## **Juggling Griefs**

Look at him, poor wretched man  
juggling griefs from hand to hand  
never letting any fall  
just like some magician's ball!

Holding grudges close to chest  
thinks he knows reprisal best  
always seeking eye for eye  
gives his oath to justify!

If some court would rule for him  
each injustice to condemn  
still he would not find a peace  
could not let his grieving cease.

Finally one more sad despair  
adds a burden he can't bear  
'til the sorry, spinning lot  
all come crashing down on top.

*- Gilbert A Franke, 10/12/08*