

Lessons for The Third Sunday in Lent

March 4, 2018

Psalm 19 ~ *David finds the glory of God in the creation of the heavens and the giving of his law.*

Exodus 20:1-17 ~ *At Sinai, God gave His commandments to mark His people by the life they would live.*

1 Corinthians 1:18-31 ~ *The cross of Christ is an offense to the world, but the boast of those who are saved.*

John 2:13-22 (23-25) ~ *Jesus cleared distractions from the Temple and declared His body the new place of worship.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: The Law of the Lord Revives the Soul.

When God gave the Commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai it was in the context of His love and care for His people: through their obedience to God's will thousands would know His love. God's Law does a thorough cleansing of our lives, the way Jesus cleared out His Father's house when it could no longer be used as a house of prayer because of the noisy distractions. When the Law, like a scouring pad, has scrubbed up all the sin from our lives, it must be rinsed out in the blood of Christ. His death on the cross is the power of God for the salvation of our souls.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: O Lord, my God; You have claimed me more than I have sought You.

Throw out the sin from my life by the cleansing power of Jesus' crucifixion so that I may acknowledge the wisdom of Your Law in the way I live. Help me share Your love in the cross of Christ with those who need to know Your victory over sin in Jesus' resurrection. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: All the things of this world lose their worth when we use them for our own purposes, but when we demonstrate God's love to the poor and the lost, our possessions become precious with the value of Jesus' sacrifice for reclaiming sinful humanity.

OFFERING PRAYER:

Lord, when we let the cluttered wealth of many things
distract our hearts and lives from worship in your name,
recall us to Your cross and blessings that it brings.
Lord, use these gifts to gather those your love would claim. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: God intends to be among the nations of this world through the witness of His people by the lives we live. When we don't live according to all the commands of the Lord, we distract others from God's present power to bless them. The merchants in the Temple distracted those who came to worship in that house of prayer. We become stumbling blocks in our neighbors' journey of faith. Only the cross of Christ can clear away the distractions of our sins and provide the power for redemption from sin. In His resurrection we see the sign of God's presence in Christ Jesus.