

Lessons for The Fifth Sunday in Lent

March 18, 2018

Psalm 119:9-16 ~ *A young man will find joy in following the Lord's statutes which keep one's way pure.*

Jeremiah 31:31-34 ~ *God's new covenant with His people means He no longer remembers our sins.*

Hebrews 5:1-10 ~ *Jesus, our High Priest, won eternal salvation for us through His obedience in suffering.*

Mark 10:(32-34) 35-45 ~ *In the face of Jesus' death, the disciples sought power and glory instead of service.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: Jesus Came to Serve

Two of Jesus' disciples requested positions of power and prestige. Jesus answered "even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve." The writer to the Hebrews tells us about Jesus' service in "reverent submission" to God the Father, as He won the gift of eternal salvation through His death for all who obey Him. His great act of service was to establish God's new covenant with His people of faith, not like the old covenant with God's people of the exodus, but one through which He remembers our sins no more. Lord, teach us to serve!

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: Dear Jesus, you suffered death, obedient to the will of your Father, in order to win forgiveness for my sins. Help me see the glory of your love in the gift of your life, so that I may live joyfully in the renewed covenant of your grace. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: Jesus gave Himself in obedience to the Father's will and suffered even death to bind us to God in His new covenant of grace. We give ourselves and all our goods in service to the Father's love so all may know God through His forgiveness of their sins.

OFFERING PRAYER: Lord, bless these gifts for service in Your name;
And let these hands that bring them serve You, too!
It was to serve, not be served that you came,
To win new life for all who trust in You . Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: Once again, Jesus' prediction of His death elicits a response from the disciples that shows they are not thinking God's way. Like James and John, we would often be satisfied if God would do for us whatever we ask. This attitude makes us lords and puts Jesus at our feet as a menial servant. Jesus did indeed come to serve, but He has done so at His Father's request, not ours! Through His obedient suffering, He has done much more for us than we would ever think to ask; He has made us perfect in the Father's sight. In God's forgiving grace, He is known to us, just as He has called us to join Him in service as we make Him known to our neighbors.