

Lessons for The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

July 8, 2018

Psalm 123 ~ *God's people raise their eyes in supplication for mercy from their God.*

Ezekiel 2:1-5 ~ *The Lord sent Ezekiel to carry a message calling for the repentance of a stubborn Israel.*

2 Corinthians 12:1-10 ~ *Paul was given a great message, but was kept dependent on God's grace.*

Mark 6:1-13 ~ *Jesus' hometown did not welcome His message, nor are His followers always welcomed today.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: : The Marks of a Prophet

How do you recognize a prophet? God sent Ezekiel to proclaim his Word to an obstinate and rebellious nation which might or might not listen to him. St. Paul faced the boasts of some "super apostles" who questioned his authority since he didn't have as many credentials as they had. Jesus wasn't recognized as a prophet in his home town because he didn't do as many miracles there as he had done in other places. But the marks of a prophet are the Word and the power of God.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: Holy Spirit, fill me with your power so that I may be a willing witness to the love of God in Christ Jesus, my Lord and Savior, who gave his life to free me from the power of sin and death, that I may be his own and serve him in everlasting righteousness. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: God supports us with His grace in Jesus Christ and charges us to spread that good news. We are sent out to announce the Kingdom by means of all our resources, whether we are welcomed or ridiculed, received or rejected.

OFFERING PRAYER: Gracious God, Your Word among us, welcomes us in Jesus' name.
As You send us out to witness, use our gifts to spread Your fame. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: Often we do not recognize God's message, whether we are the recipients or the messengers. God grant us the discernment to hear His word and the humility to accept it, for only then will we own our dependence on God's grace and proclaim His steadfast love in Christ our Savior.