

Lessons for Second Sunday after Pentecost

June 22, 2025

Psalm 3 ~ *David's confident trust in God, sleeping and waking, day and night.*

Isaiah 65:1-9 ~ *Although the people of Judah forsook the Lord, God promised to restore Jerusalem.*

Galatians 3:23 - 4:7 ~ *We have been set free from the curse of the law to share our faith in Christ.*

Luke 8:26-39 ~ *After a man was freed from many demons, he told everyone what Jesus had done.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: God Brings Good out of Bad Things.

Even though Israel did not call out to God but defied Him by their idolatry, God rescued them from their own deception and made them heirs of the promise. That promise made to Abraham was fulfilled in Jesus even though it took the cruel curse of the law to turn us to God's grace. Jesus manifested God's saving grace to the man who was possessed by Legion, rescuing him from the demons' power and redeeming his life for the proclamation of God's grace.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: Lord my God, even when I don't look for You, You keep Your eye on me; even when I don't cry out to You, You hear the fears of my heart. For Jesus' sake, redeem me, restore me, and renew me that I may serve You by proclaiming how much You have done for me. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: God rescues sinners from the clutches of the law as one might pull a cluster of grapes from the compost. Instead of fine wine, God produces heirs of eternal life. Even a herd of pigs is not worth as much in God's sight as a child of His in the clutches of Satan! How much is it worth to you to rescue those who do not yet know of God's grace in Christ?

OFFERING PRAYER:

Oh Lord, You know that we would work great wonders if we could,
But You alone can take these gifts and make them something good.
Turn dying slaves to kingdom heirs through faith in Christ Your Son,
And use our lives in loving deeds to tell what You have done. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: Under the law, we are enslaved to our sin. Even when we break ourselves free from the shackles of morality, we still find ourselves living among the tombs in a spiritual death. What we envision as success turns out to be failure. But God turns loss into gain. He rescues a cluster of grapes from the compost and produces fine wine from its juice. In Christ we are no longer slaves, but heirs of God's grace, children of Kingdom-life, set free from our demons to declare to all the world what God has done for us.

Questions to Consider: What is it that binds you?

- What did it take for God to say about Israel, "I will not destroy them, but bring forth offspring for Jacob?"
- How can God consider us, "no longer a slave, but an heir?"
- Why were the people of the surrounding countryside filled with great fear?
- Why did Jesus not let the man set free from the demons go with him to Galilee?

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

Getting Free

Look at that vindictive man
struggling out as best he can
but he cannot quite break free
from his own recriminy.

Pushing, pulling grief from shame
still he's trapped there all the same
underneath that messy pile
blaming others all the while.

If he sought a righteous rule
he would surely play the fool
for his grievances are less
than he himself has to confess.

Only One can set him free
from these burdens' tyranny
rescued by the Father's grace
in the Savior's loving face.

- Gilbert A Franke, 12/31/08