

Lessons for Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

not used in 2016

Psalm 1 (*Antiphon: v. 2*) ~ *The Word of the Lord sustains and blesses those who delight in it.*

Jeremiah 17:5-8 ~ *Those who trust in God rather than men are blessed with an abundant life.*

1 Corinthians 15:(1-11) 12-20 ~ *Because Christ is risen from the dead, we have an eternal hope in Him.*

Luke 6:17-26 ~ *Jesus gave the sick hope for healing, but He has given all who trust in Him an eternal hope.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: Only by the Grace of a Faithful Lord

Jeremiah reminded the people of Judah that only those who trust completely in the Lord are truly blessed. Jesus made it very clear that even when we are comfortable, well fed, and "pursuing happiness" unhindered, we must rely on God's grace in Christ for blessing. It is our faithful God who raised Christ from the dead and promised us blessings far beyond this life. Those who have hope in Christ for life eternal are of all people most blessed! Only by the grace of a faithful Lord, are we truly blessed.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: O Lord, most gracious God, you have provided the blessings of life to me; do not let the comforts of this world distract me from the sure promise of your word, but help me be rooted in the stream of living water that comes from Christ my Savior. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: When we count our blessings we often consider the material goods in our lives, but when we recognize that our greatest blessing is the eternal hope we have in Christ, our risen Lord, we are free to use the goods God has placed in our hands to bring blessings to others.

OFFERING PRAYER: Lord, keep us trusting in Your word, Your promised gift of life,
And let us see Your love for us supporting us in strife.
Now use these gifts to bless the lives of those who cannot cope,
And use our lives to touch their hearts with Your eternal hope. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: If we can avoid the troubles of life and be healed of our diseases, we think we are truly blessed in life. We reach for riches, satisfaction, and happiness and try to avoid poverty, hunger, and sorrow. We settle for what we can see, but God has prepared so much more for us that lies beyond our sight. Trust in the One who died gives us a sure and eternal hope in the One who rose again. Christ has overcome the sufferings of this life by living through them. To those who trust in Him He has promised by His death to bring them through the condemnation of sin to life and eternal blessings as well.