

**Lessons for Pentecost**

**May 15, 2016**

Psalm 143 (*Antiphon: Psalm 143:10*) ~ *A prayer for God's guidance based on his love and faithfulness.*

Genesis 11:1–9 ~ *God confounded the pride of the earth by confusing the language of its people.*

Acts 2:1–21 ~ *The Holy Spirit overcame the confusion of languages to proclaim the wonders of God.*

John 14:23–31 ~ *The Holy Spirit brings peace to Jesus' followers and unites them in obedience to the Father.*

**GATHERING THE TEXTS:** Making a Name and Building an Empire

Today's lessons make the clear distinction between the way of the world and the Lord's way. The way of the world is to make a name for oneself in God's face, but God turns His face from our confused efforts at empire building. On the first Christian Pentecost, by the power of the Holy Spirit, people from various nations under heaven heard in their own languages that God's kingdom has been established in the name of the Lord Jesus, the Messiah. Jesus promised to send us the Holy Spirit to lead us in the knowledge of peace and the empire of His love.

**PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE:** Holy Spirit, ever loving, calling all of us as one, fill my heart with trust and mercy; keep me faithful to the Son. Make me strong to face life's trials. Bring me comfort in my grief. You have turned my heart to Jesus, and in Him I find relief. Amen

**STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT:** When we use material goods to build our own power and influence, we add to the confusion of this shattered world. God calls us to use the gifts of His creation through the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim His wonders, fulfilled in the obedience of His own Son, who has brought us peace by overcoming the prince of this world.

**OFFERING PRAYER:** When the bricks begin to tumble from the turrets that we build,  
to Your service, Lord, recall us, in obedience to Your word.  
Grant us grace to use these offerings for the purposes You willed;  
in our giving may we share the gracious peace that we have heard. Amen.

**CONVICTION AND COMFORT:** The wonder of God's good creation is disturbed by the strident voices of dissension and discord. Our own attempts to bring agreement through influence and persuasion only cause greater strife. But God has worked peace and unity through Jesus' obedience to the Father in His humble death and glorious resurrection, proving that the prince of this world has no hold on Him! Jesus gives us that peace in the forgiveness of our sins. By the power of the Spirit, He sends us out to proclaim God's mighty work and share His reconciling peace.

**BONUS HYMN:                   When our Voices of Dissension**

*Genesis 11:1-9*

When our voices of dissension strike a selfish, strident chord;  
when our monuments to glory take a toll we can't afford,  
only You, Lord, can restore us by the sacrifice You made.  
With one voice we preach the message that our ransom has been paid!

When the bricks begin to tumble from the turrets that we build,  
grant us grace to use our treasures for the purposes You willed.  
To Your service, Lord, recall us, in obedience to Your word;  
make us witnesses who share the gracious peace that we have heard.

Holy Spirit, ever loving, calling many to be one,  
fill our hearts with trust and mercy; keep us faithful to the Son.  
Give us strength to face life's trials. Bring us comfort in our grief.  
You have turned our hearts to Jesus; now in Him we have relief.

– Gilbert A. Franke, 7/9//2014

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may be sung to Hymn to Joy, LSB 477