

**Lessons for Fifth Sunday after Pentecost**

**June 19, 2016**

Psalm 3 (*Antiphon: Psalm 3:6*) ~ *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 some to Jerusalem.*

Galatians 3:23 – 4:7 ~ *Now that we have been set free from the curse of the law, we share our faith in Christ.*

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

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

Even though Israel would not call out to God and 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 worth less in God's sight than 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.