

Lessons for Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

October 2, 2016

Psalm 62 (*antiphon: v.1*) ~ *A simple and sincere expression of trust in our trustworthy God.*

Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4 ~ *The person who trusts God to right injustice will live through it by faith.*

2 Timothy 1:1-14 ~ *Timothy could trust God, who overcame death with life, to strengthen him in suffering.*

Luke 17:1-10 ~ *The disciples needed a stronger faith to see God's grace active in overcoming sin.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: Where Has All God's Power Gone?

Habakkuk asked why the Lord God stood idly by while violence ruled. God answered Habakkuk that the righteous live as they exercise their trust in God by waiting patiently for his promise through all the destruction. St. Paul urged Timothy in the midst of suffering to continue trusting God, who brought life and immortality to light through the apparent defeat of Jesus in His death. Jesus, Himself taught the disciples humble duty in service and patience in forgiveness. The disciples realized they needed to trust God's grace more to see that forgiveness has power to overcome the repeated injustice of sin.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: All powerful God, and all-wise, I cannot understand why you don't just straighten out all the crooked things in this world. Give me patience to trust your wisdom, endurance to wait for your judgment, and forgiveness to overcome injustice. Even more, give me your grace that I may live a righteous life through Jesus Christ, your Son, my Savior. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: Just as God has redeemed our lives from the destruction of our own sin, He rescues our material resources from careless waste and puts them to profitable use in carrying His promise to those who are trapped in the delusions of life without faith in Christ.

OFFERING PRAYER: Lord, give us faith enough to see Your power
In darkest times when peace is killed by strife.
And make our vision clear to live each hour
Embracing justice over death in life. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: We are impatient with the injustice we see all around us; we cannot see beyond the destruction and contention in our lives. We are ready to give up on God! But Jesus endured through the agony and defeat of death, and exposed life and immortality in the light of His resurrection. Just so, God promises to overcome the injustice of sin in the lives of those to whom we can offer God's grace of forgiveness by the power of Christ. We can live by God's promise!