

Lessons for Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost

October 16, 2016

Psalm 121 (*antiphon: vv. 1-2*) ~ *God's people find assurance of His watchful care in the majesty of creation.*

Genesis 32:22-30 ~ *Jacob wrestled with God and gained a blessing, represented in a new name: Israel.*

2 Timothy 3:14 – 4:5 ~ *The faithful use of God's Word yields blessings in life and relationships.*

Luke 18:1-8 ~ *Jesus taught that faithful prayer brings more blessings than persistent entreaties.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: Hold On to the Blessing

Our lessons today are a call to faithfulness. St. Paul reminded Timothy that God had promised salvation through Christ Jesus. God is faithful and trustworthy; with the certainty of God's promise we can endure all hardships. Jacob grasped hold of God's promise and expected a blessing of life, land, and lineage. Jesus' parable in the Gospel lesson underscores the faithfulness of God in hearing our prayers and providing for all our needs.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: Gracious God, You are more ready to hear my prayer than I am to pray! Help me rely on Your love, trust in Your mercy, and receive Your grace, that I may be blessed by Your gift of life eternal through Jesus Christ my Savior. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: Rich material blessings in our lives reflect God's great spiritual gifts to us. Our faithfulness in using those blessings for the benefit of others portrays God's faithfulness to them.

OFFERING PRAYER: Your gift, O Lord, so great and free,
Gives promise for eternity.
In word and deed let us confess
Your gracious love and faithfulness. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: Although God has given his sure promise to hear our prayers and grant us great blessings, we often disregard his invitation. When we forsake God's Word, which is the source of his blessing, we are left with only those things that we make up for ourselves. The magnitude of God's gift in Christ Jesus moves us to cling to God's promise faithfully.