

DEVOTION for PENTECOST 17

PSALM 54

O God, save me, by your Name and vindicate me by your might.

O God, hear my prayer; give ear to the words of my mouth.

For strangers have risen against me; ruthless men seek my life; they do not set God before themselves.

Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life.

He will return the evil to my enemies; in your faithfulness put an end to them.

With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to you; I will give thanks to your Name, O Lord, for it is good.

For He has delivered me from every trouble, and my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies.

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen*

James 3:1-4:17

The Tongue and Warring against the devil and the world

What can we do to overcome temptation and sinful desires?

Why should we not speak evil of one another?

What is our confidence in the uncertainties of life?

Mark 9:30-37

Jesus teaches, but the disciples service and His sacrifice

Why do the disciples not understand Jesus' words about dying and rising?

What does the disciples' argument about personal greatness say about their spiritual maturity and understanding of Jesus' ministry?

Why does Jesus hold up children as examples of faith?

“CHILDREN and the KINGDOM of GOG”

Children were at the bottom of the social order. When people brought their children to Jesus for His blessing, the disciples tried to chase them away. Children were at the bottom of the social order, but they were loved dearly and valued most highly by Jesus. When the disciples tried to chase the children away, Jesus rebuked them and called the children to Himself, saying, “*Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such as these belongs the kingdom of God.*” Children are at the top of the social order in God's kingdom. There is nothing more blessed than being a child of God, which is what we are in Christ Jesus!

On a different occasion the disciples argued like children, as to which of them was the greatest. It was childish behaviour. Jesus rebuked them again, but in a different way. He gave the most honoured place to a child, placing him in their midst and saying, “*whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me, but Him who sent me.*” Service to a child may seem insignificant in the eyes of the world, but it is a great work in the Kingdom of God.

God's kingdom is a kingdom of service, in which the one who is greatest is the servant. Jesus is the greatest servant, He offered Himself on the cross for our forgiveness that in Him we would receive adoption as children. Whatever we do for a child of God, we do for Jesus; and not for Jesus only, but especially for the Father who sent Him.

“CHILDREN of THE HEAVENLY FATHER”

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**Children of the heav'nly Father, Safely in his bosom gather;
Nestling bird nor star in heaven, Such a refuge e'er was given;**

**God his own doth tend and nourish, In his holy courts they flourish.
From all evil things he spares them, In his mighty arms he bears them.**

**Neither life nor death shall ever, From the Lord his children sever,
Unto them his grace he showeth, And their sorrows all he knoweth.**

**Though he giveth or he taketh, God his children n'er forsaketh,
His the loving purpose solely, To preserve them pure and holy.**

PRAYER

Bless us heavenly Father to live as your children; putting away childish actions and attitudes and loving one another as sisters and brothers, serving one another from the heart of your love in Christ Jesus. In Jesus' Name. Amen

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, Forever and ever. Amen

THE CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

BENEDICTION

Psalm 67:1

“May God be gracious to us and bless us and make His face to shine upon us.”

Bible Knowledge Quiz

When Paul was caught up into the third heaven, what did he see?

What did Isaiah see in his vision of God?

What did John see in his revelation after the destruction of death and hades?

Answers to Last Week's Quiz

Bethesda (John 5:1-9).

A Rock (Numbers 20:10-11).

The Sea of Tiberius aka Galilee (John 21).