

DEVOTION FOR FRIDAY AFTER PENTECOST

PSALM 119:73-80

Your hands have made and fashioned me; give me understanding that I may learn your commandments.

Those who fear you shall see me and rejoice, because I have hoped in your word.

I know, O Lord, that your rules are righteous, and that in faithfulness you have afflicted me.

Let your steadfast love comfort me, according to your promise to your servant.

Let your mercy come to me, that I may live; for your law is my delight.

Let the insolent be put to shame, because they have wronged me with falsehood; as for me I will meditate on your precepts.

Let those who fear you turn to me, that they may know your testimonies.

May my heart be blameless in your statutes, that I may not be put to shame!

*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*

Old Testament Reading: Numbers 27:1-23 *Joshua commissioned to succeed Moses*

New Testament Reading: Acts 6:1-15 *Deacons chosen to serve the church*

“CHOSEN TO SERVE”

People sometimes speak of the Jerusalem Church in the book of Acts, in idyllic terms. It certainly had some attractive features. The believers were one in mind and in Spirit. They gathered together daily for worship and fellowship. They cared for each other's physical needs, even to the point of selling their possessions and giving the proceeds to the church. It seemed like the ideal church. In succeeding ages, people have sought to reconstruct the community described in the book of Acts, in terms of communal living and sharing.

But as the saying goes, “Wherever God plants a church, the devil builds a chapel.” The foundation of the devil's chapel was laid when Ananias and Sapphira attempted to deceive the Holy Spirit and the church, with a donation. The walls went up when some suspected bias on the part of the apostles. The roof went on when suspicions turned into open conflict, as the Jews who had come from various parts of the Roman Empire, accused the Jews native to Galilee and Judea of neglecting their widows in the daily distribution of food. As long as there is sin in the human heart there will be no perfect church on earth.

St. Paul writes, “*In all things we know that God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.*” God worked His good in the life of the Jerusalem Church, by leading it to select seven men who would ensure the food was distributed, in such a way that there would be no suspicions. Even as Moses had seventy men to assist him, so the apostles would have seven men to assist them. In fact, one of the seven would serve even to the point of giving his life. God uses our conflicts to provide us the opportunity to put His grace in action by serving one another; with our hearts in forgiveness, our hands in helping and our mouths by proclaiming the good news of His love in Christ Jesus. We are all chosen to serve!

“LET US BREAK BREAD TOGETHER” CCLI #453681

**Let us break bread together on our knees. Let us break bread together on our knees.
When I fall down on my knees with my face to the rising sun, O Lord, have mercy on me.**

**Let us bow round the altar on our knees. Let us bow round the altar on our knees.
When I fall down on my knees with my face to the rising sun, O Lord, have mercy on me.**

**Let us praise God together on our knees. Let us praise God together on our knees.
When I fall down on my knees with my face to the rising sun, O Lord, have mercy on me.**

**Let us bless one another on our knees. Let us bless one another on our knees.
When I fall down on my knees with my face to the rising sun, O Lord, have mercy on me...
When I fall down on my knees with my face to the rising sun, O Lord, have mercy on me.**

PRAYER

Thank you Lord Jesus for the service you rendered to us through your sinless life and sacrificial death. You came not to be served, but to serve and to give your life as a ransom for many. Thank you for the service you give us to do in your church. As members of your body, you call and enable us to serve one another in good works, which St. Paul says were prepared in advance for us to walk in. Continue to bless us with your Spirit that we may receive the service of your love and serve one another in love, for your sake. In your Name we pray. 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 117

“Praise the Lord all nations! Extol Him all peoples! For great is His steadfast love toward us and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever. Praise the Lord!”