

Sunday, September 5, 2010
Lectionary 23
Proper 18
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Holy Communion

Worship Assistants

FIRST READING: Deuteronomy 30:15–20

A reading from _____.

Moses speaks to the Israelites, who are about to enter the land promised to their ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In this passage, he lays out the stark choice before them: choose life by loving and obeying the Lord; or choose death by following other gods.

¹⁵See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. ¹⁶If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the LORD your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. ¹⁷But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, ¹⁸I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. ¹⁹I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, ²⁰loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the LORD swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 1

Refrain: They are like trees planted by streams of water. (Ps. 1:3)

¹Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel ¹ of the wicked,
nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats ¹ of the scornful!

²**Their delight is in the law ¹ of the LORD,
and they meditate on God's teaching ¹ day and night. R**

³They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that ¹ do not wither;

everything they¹ do shall prosper.

**⁴It is not so¹ with the wicked;
they are like chaff which the wind¹ blows away.**

⁵Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when¹ judgment comes,
nor the sinner in the council¹ of the righteous.

**⁶For the LORD knows the way¹ of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked shall¹ be destroyed. R**

SECOND READING: Philemon 1:1–21

A reading from _____.

While Paul was in prison, he was aided by a runaway slave named Onesimus. The slave's master, Philemon, was a Christian friend of Paul. Paul told Onesimus to return to his master and encouraged Philemon to receive Onesimus back as a Christian brother.

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,

To Philemon our dear friend and co-worker, ²to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴When I remember you in my prayers, I always thank my God ⁵because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith toward the Lord Jesus. ⁶I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective when you perceive all the good that we may do for Christ. ⁷I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.

⁸For this reason, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do your duty, ⁹yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love — and I, Paul, do this as an old man, and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. ¹⁰I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. ¹¹Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful both to you and to me. ¹²I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. ¹³I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might be of service to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel; ¹⁴but I preferred to do nothing without your consent, in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. ¹⁵Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back forever, ¹⁶no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother — especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

¹⁷So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. ¹⁸If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. ¹⁹I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. ²⁰Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. ²¹Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.

Word of God, word of life.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Luke 14:25–33

The holy gospel according to _____.
Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus speaks frankly about the fearsome costs of discipleship. Those who follow him should know from the outset that completing the course of discipleship will finally mean renouncing all other allegiances.

²⁵Now large crowds were traveling with him; and he turned and said to them, ²⁶"Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. ²⁷Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, ³⁰saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' ³¹Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³²If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. ³³So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

God hears the cry of the poor and is near to all in need. Let us pray for our neighbors, our world, and ourselves, trusting in God's mercy and love.

God, you gather your church from the ends of the earth, planting us beside your life-giving stream. We pray for all who lead your people in prayer and service. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God, you have set before us life and death, entrusting to us the care of your creation. We pray for the health of the land from which we live and for the well-being of every living creature. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God, your family extends to each land and race. We pray for the leaders of nations, that they may

walk in the ways of your mercy and justice. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God, your gospel means freedom for all who are oppressed. We pray for the liberation of all who are held captive to poverty, prejudice, and fear. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God, your Spirit is alive in this place. We pray for new energy in our ministries of education and formation. Inspire all who will serve as teachers and mentors this year to share their faith with boldness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God, we thank you each time we remember those we love. We praise you especially for (*names/s, and*) all whose lives of faith have borne witness to the wideness of your embrace. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

All this we ask, gracious God, together with all that is known to you alone, in the name of your risen and anointed Son, through the power of your life-giving Spirit.

Amen.

From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2010 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.
Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #21774.

New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.