



**DAILY BREAD
LECTIONARY DEVOTIONS
PENTECOST 16—YEAR C**

INVOCATION

L: In the name of the Father
and of the Son +
and of the Holy Spirit.

G: Amen

PSALM OF THE DAY: PSALM 19

A: Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.

L: The heavens declare the glory of God;

G: the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

L: Their voice goes out into all the earth,

G: their words to the ends of the world.

L: The law of the LORD is perfect,

G: giving joy to the heart.

L: The commands of the LORD are radiant,

G: giving light to the eyes.

L: They are more precious than gold;

G: they are sweeter than honey.

L: By them is your servant taught;

G: in keeping them there is great reward.

L: May the words of my mouth and the meditation
of my heart

G: be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Redeemer.

A: Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Let your continual mercy, O Lord, cleanse and defend your Church; and because it cannot continue in safety without your help, protect and govern it always by your goodness; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

READING & MEDITATION *see next page*

PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER

**A: 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.**

VERSE OF THE DAY

A: Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. (Philippians 4:4 RSV)

BENEDICTION

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

A: Amen

READING AND MEDITATION:

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost: For the past three Sundays we have seen that the narrow path to heaven is marked by division and humility. Yet another warning is heard this week: the life of faith may come at great personal expense. Counting the cost of discipleship leads to true wisdom.

As you study this week, seek to find the connecting theme in all the lessons by using Luther's Four Big Barber Questions to ponder and discuss each individual reading:

1. *What is God saying to me in this lesson?*
2. *For what does this lesson lead me to give thanks?*
3. *What sins does this lesson lead me to confess?*
4. *For what does this lesson lead me to pray?*

THE GOSPEL: LUKE 14:25-33

Jesus warns all those who would come after him to count the cost of discipleship. Jesus' statement may seem hyperbolic to those who have been blessed with doctrinal unity within the family. But the weight of each one's cross is different. Those whose families have been ripped apart by religious differences know how heavy our Savior's cross can be. Know this; know well; know now what it takes to follow our Savior. The life of faith is certainly not for the faint of heart. Remember, however, whom we follow. We follow a Savior who carried the cross for us and for our salvation. Remembering his love leads us to follow him at any cost.

My takeaways:

FIRST LESSON: PROVERBS 9:8-12

A righteous man may be mocked by society. But "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." The heart of faith desires to grow ever more rooted in the Word of Lord and Savior, regardless of worldly wisdom and its self-destructive priorities. The righteous will live eternally while the mockers suffer eternal death. Wisdom knows both the cost of discipleship and the value of God's promised rewards.

My takeaways:

SECOND LESSON: PHILEMON 1:1,10-21

Philemon had every societal right to demand the return of his slave, Onesimus. Yet Paul, who had already lost everything for the sake of Christ, asks Philemon to live his faith and receive Onesimus in a different way. At great personal sacrifice and financial loss to Philemon, Onesimus was to be received as a brother in Christ. Only a man who feared the Lord could see the wisdom in bearing this cost of discipleship. Yet Paul was confident not only of Philemon's obedience, but of his even greater acts of devotion.

My takeaways:

SUPPLEMENTAL FIRST LESSON: GENESIS 12:1-8

Leaving his homeland behind, Abram believed the Lord's promise and moved a second time to the Promised Land of Canaan. Abram left safety, home, and even family behind to take possession of his inheritance. There he lived in communion with his Lord and heard the Lord's promises again and again. So great is our Promised Land that we will willingly carry our crosses and bear any cost to follow Jesus into eternity.

My takeaways:

SUPPLEMENTAL SECOND LESSON: PHILIPPIANS 3:4b-11

When Paul lists his qualifications as a son of Israel, many might have thought it was too much to leave behind and follow the Way. Paul, however, views everything differently in Christ. The NIV uses the polite term of "rubbish" to reflect Paul's analysis of his former way of life and earthly possessions. A closer look at the Greek reveals just how little value Paul placed on such things in comparison to the "surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus *as his+ Lord." Chasing after worldly gain will only result in the loss of the soul. Rather, with faith firmly rooted in him, follow Jesus and share in his sufferings. Suffering for his sake will miraculously result in a share of his resurrection and eternal inheritance. Paul counted the cost of discipleship and God gave him both the fear of the Lord and true wisdom.

My takeaways:

What major theme(s) connect(s) all the lessons?