



DAILY BREAD
LECTIONARY DEVOTIONS
LENT 4 — YEAR A

INVOCATION

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

G: Amen

PSALM OF THE DAY: PSALM 42-43

**A: Blessed are they who hope,
who hope in the Lord.**

L: As the deer pants for streams of water,

G: so my souls pants for you, O God.

L: My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.

G: Where can I go and meet with God?

L: Why are you downcast, O my soul?

G: Why so disturbed within me?

L: Put your hope in God,

**G: for I will yet praise him,
my Savior and my God.**

L: Send forth your light and your truth,
let them guide me;

**G: let them bring me to the place
where you dwell.**

L: Then I will go to the altar of God,
my joy and my delight.

**G: I will praise you with the harp,
O God, my God.**

**A: Blessed are they who hope,
who hope in the Lord.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Almighty God, we confess that we deserve to be punished for our evil deeds. But we ask you graciously to cleanse us from all sin and to comfort us with your salvation; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you 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: For God so loved the world that he gave his
one and only Son, that whoever believes in
him shall not perish but have eternal life.
(John 3:16)**

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:

Fourth Sunday in Lent: Jesus calls us from sinful selfishness to selfless service. We can view the world from the perspective of selfishness or selflessness. Selfishness puts self before all and leads to favoritism, pride and envy. Repentance, however, means despairing of self, trusting in Christ's substitutionary sacrifice and leading lives of selfless service modeled after our Savior who came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for us.

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: MATTHEW 20:17-28

Jesus revealed the plan of the Father to his disciples: the Son of God would leave his heavenly throne and selflessly give his freedom to his enemies, his body to the torturer, his life to the executioner in order that he might be our Savior. Rather than marveling at the depth of his love and self-sacrifice, the disciples argued about places of greatness in glory. The sons of Zebedee wanted to sit at the right and left of Jesus, but were only promised that they would join in drinking his cup. The other disciples were indignant, but not righteously so. Jesus corrected them, too. Followers of Jesus drink his cup and find greatness in selflessly serving others. For our motivation and our model, Christ points back to God's plan for the Son of Man who came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

My takeaways:

FIRST LESSON: HOSEA 5:15—6:3

Let the preacher consider the context of this lesson carefully. True repentance and selfless service are about more than saying the right words. On their face, this confession of Israel is beautiful, but at its heart it is empty. This is unrepentant Israel's kind of "repentance." The words sound nice, but there is no

confession of guilt, God doesn't receive it, and fruits don't follow. This is a selfish "repentance" that is, in fact, merely made out of self-interest. True repentance leads to confession, trust, and fruits of selfless service that were absent in Israel (see 6:4-6).

My takeaways:

SECOND LESSON: ROMANS 8:1-10

One of Scripture's greatest chapters begins with one of its sweetest verses: Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Christ's life ransomed mankind because it met God's demands and set us free from the Law of sin. Now we are free to live according to the Spirit. The sinful nature wants us to live in selfishness; the Spirit sets us free to live lives of selfless service to God and neighbor. Sinners that we are, the requirements of the Law could never be fully met *by* us, but now they are fully met *in* us through the indwelling of the Spirit and Christ.

My takeaways:

SUPPLEMENTAL FIRST LESSON: GENESIS 37:1-11

The life of Joseph illustrates Jesus' message that whoever wants to be first must be your slave. Selfishness led to Jacob's favoritism and his sons' jealousy. Selfishness led Jacob and his sons to such pride that they could not imagine God's prophecy about Joseph coming true. Their selfishness forced Joseph into the role of slave and servant, yet God in his grace would save many people in spite of their sin. Sold into slavery, and jailed unjustly, Joseph would trust in God and selflessly serve his fellow man. Ultimately, God brought the prideful low and raised up humble Joseph. In doing so, He both fulfilled his prophecy and also saved the family of God and countless others.

My takeaways:

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