



**DAILY BREAD
LECTIONARY DEVOTIONS
PENTECOST 10 —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 119b

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

L: Teach me, O LORD, to follow your decrees;

G: then I will keep them to the end.

L: Give me understanding, and I will keep your law

G: and obey it with all my heart.

L: Direct me in the path of your commands,

G: for there I find delight.

L: Turn my eyes away from worthless things;

G: preserve my life according to your Word.

L: Fulfill your promise to your servant,

G: so that you may be feared.

L: How I long for your precepts!

G: Preserve my life in your righteousness.

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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: O Lord, your ears are always open to the prayers of your humble servants, who come to you in Jesus' name. Teach us always to ask according to your will that we may never fail to obtain the blessings you have promised; through Jesus Christ, your Son, 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: Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. (John 6:68)

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:

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost: The Christian seeks spiritual wealth. This Sunday's readings are centered around the very ancient Prayer of the Day. For nearly 1600 years God's people on this day have prayed that God might give them true spiritual wealth. "Teach us always to ask according to your will that we may never fail to obtain the blessings you have promised." What a magnificent prayer for the materialist world in which we live! Our lessons today show people who have come into great wealth, but yet this earthly wealth only serves to illustrate where true treasure lies. Today we see that true, spiritual wealth can only be found in God and his eternal blessings for us in Christ.

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 13:44-52

Jesus' parables teach us to seek spiritual wealth. Both of the men in the parables found great treasure. For one it was a complete surprise, as unexpected as it was valuable. For the other it came from an expert search by a discerning man. Before they found these new treasures, both men no doubt valued what they previously owned. But once they saw this new treasure, see how little they valued all else they had! The spiritual wealth of Christ and his Gospel puts everything else into perspective; in fact it marginalizes all else. The importance of this truth comes to light in the parable of the net. All people, rich and poor, will be caught up. Only those who found true spiritual wealth are spared the furnace. Jesus concludes with an encouragement for the preacher of the Gospel: you have found true wealth in Christ; you have been given a storeroom full of treasures new and old. Bring them out to God's people with joy and delight.

My takeaways:

FIRST LESSON: 1 KINGS 3:5-12

What would you have asked for? If anything in the world could be yours, what would be your request? God only gave one man the choice between unlimited riches and spiritual wealth. Can you imagine facing his dilemma? What should I pick, temporal blessings or eternal ones? What should I value, the things of this world or the things of God? How well Solomon expressed the words of our Prayer for today, to ask according to God's will. We marvel at his faith in choosing great wisdom over great riches—especially since we so often fail in the pitifully small choices we make! It's not for all the riches in the world that we turn down spiritual wealth, but for paltry over-time hours, or a little extra in the check book that we shaved off our offering. For such small things we are willing to trade away opportunities for true spiritual wealth. Look at Solomon and see an example of what God means by spiritual wealth. He doesn't mean we need to live as mendicant monks; he doesn't ask us to forgo all earthly treasure. He just doesn't want us to value them more than the pearl of great price. After choosing spiritual treasure, God blessed Solomon in unbelievable ways. (Do the math on the twenty-five tons worth of gold that was part of Solomon's annual income.) Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be given you as well.

My takeaways:

SECOND LESSON: ROMANS 8:28-30

This is the ninth in a series of sixteen lessons that run through Pentecost 17. Paul explains the spiritual wealth that belongs to every Christian. Like the man who found treasure buried in the field, we brought no merit or worth to our calling. Rather, we were chosen. The surprising grace of God found us and gave us the ultimate treasure: predestined, called, justified, and glorified.

My takeaways:

SUPPLEMENTAL SECOND LESSON:

1 TIMOTHY 6:17-21

Could Paul's words be more timely or appropriate for this generation? He instructs preachers everywhere to warn the rich about the two pet sins of the wealthy: arrogance and false hope. Mankind so easily falls in the error of thinking that earthly treasures can provide security or a sense of worth. In our affluent society both of those sins run rampant in many a Christian heart. God commands us not to trust in earthly treasure because he wants us to have a firm foundation on which to stand, a certainty on which to place our hope. That can only be found in spiritual wealth. God richly provides for us, and then we give thanks by being rich in good deeds. Spiritual wealth is certain and secure, for it is treasure laid up in heaven. How can we possibly carry out this command? Teach us to ask according to your will that we may never fail to obtain the blessings you have promised.

My takeaways:

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