



**DAILY BREAD
LECTIONARY DEVOTIONS
PENTECOST 19 —YEAR B**

INVOCATION

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

G: Amen

PSALM OF THE DAY: PSALM 51b

**A: Come, Holy Spirit,
renew our hearts and kindle in us
the fire of your love.**

L: O Lord, open my lips,

G: and my mouth will declare your praise.

L: You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it;

**G: you do not take pleasure in burnt
offerings.**

L: The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;

**G: a broken and contrite heart, O God, you
will not despise.**

L: Create in me a pure heart, O God,

G: and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

L: Do not cast me from your presence

G: or take your Holy Spirit from me.

L: Restore to me the joy of your salvation,

**G: and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain
me.**

L: Then I will teach transgressors your ways,

G: and sinners will turn back to you.

**A: Come, Holy Spirit,
renew our hearts and kindle in us
the fire of your love.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Mercifully grant, O God, that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts, for without your help we are unable to please you; 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: At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:10,11 cf. NIV)

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:

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost: The gifts of God are so rich and varied that the devil uses that very generosity in God to stir up jealousy and envy. Expect it in others; find it yourself as well! That weakness makes it crystal clear that our need for a Savior is a constant one. It makes it equally clear that our struggle against our own flesh gives us much more difficulty and anguish than the hostility or the persecution from the world.

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: MARK 9:38-50

Again we hear about ambition and Jesus teaches us the difference between God pleasing ambition and ambition that only looks God pleasing on the outside. But how hard that distinction is to learn and live! Everybody wants to be the boss. But Jesus shows us that the important thing is humble service. The great sin is anything in me that gets in the way of such humble service devoted to his glory alone and in accord with his Word. What a powerful preaching of the law there is in this text! Would it ever occur to us to amputate our limbs if they got in the way of our entrance into heaven or of our service to one another? Would we not finally have to cut out our hearts, the seat of desire, and then amputate the head, the throne of memory? After all, the limbs are but the instruments of the heart and the mind, that is, ultimately of the soul itself. How will we amputate those? All that is left to us is to cry: God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Pardon, cleanse, and restore me, that I may serve not self but you, not for my own gain, but for the benefit of those who bear the cross with me!

My takeaways:

FIRST LESSON: NUMBERS 11:16, 24-29

The point here is again the humility of Moses. He rejoiced in the gifts that God gave to his people and desired that those gifts be even more abundant to the glory of God and the benefit of God's children. Thus, as in the gospel lesson, service to the glory of God is our goal, be it the service of the greatest of the prophets, that of the seventy chosen by God to assist, or that of those in the assembly with still other gifts from the Lord. For not one of us has all of God's gifts to meet the needs of each one of those we serve. That should keep each one humble as each looks for opportunities to serve while giving thanks for the gifts that others have and use in service. So which is the dominant tendency in our hearts? Do we marvel and give thanks for the gifts that God has given to others and the opportunities he give us for service? Or do we grumble that no one properly marvels at how gifted I am or sufficiently appreciates the service that I render to those who don't really deserve it?

My takeaways:

SECOND LESSON: JAMES 4:7-12

Before we can serve in a God pleasing way we need to be cleansed from the heart, inside and out. So we draw near in humble confession that we have been too ambitious in self-service and thereby have hurt one another and hindered the course of the gospel. "Double minded" is a good description of us as our fallen nature still does battle against the Christian within. Instead of bewailing our own pains, it would be better to lament and cry over the crosses we have imposed on one another when our own jealousy and pride gave birth to strife and loveless faultfinding. The fruit of true repentance is humility that serves with a pure heart such a heart is purified by the gospel and looks for ways to selflessly serve.

My takeaways:

**SUPPLEMENTAL SECOND LESSON:
PHILIPPIANS 1:12-18A**

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

How might you re-write this reading? Might it go something like this: Nobody is fair, not even God! Look what I get for my faithfulness! Prison, chains, pain, isolation! And do the people I served sufficiently appreciate what I am going through? Not at all! Instead some even take advantage of my absence to recruit followers for themselves at my expense! It's not fair; I can't even defend myself, much less lash them with my tongue for their ungrateful self-seeking! But that's not Paul. He is not in the business of giving God advice on how things ought to be. He trusts that God is in charge, and that even those who are self-seeking in their preaching may serve a purpose. To the extent that they still preach the gospel, the Holy Spirit can work to create faith in spite of the motives of the preacher. Paul is not, of course, expressing indifference either to motives or to false doctrine. He is expressing confidence in God and in the power of the gospel. Again, we marvel at how deeply the love of Christ had penetrated the heart of the former persecutor and Pharisee. His is a profound love for Christ caused by the profound love of Christ.

My takeaways: