

Daily Office Devotional, Friday, October 2, 2020
Proper 21, the week of the seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost
The Rev. David W. Perkins, Th.D.

Daily Office Lectionary Readings

AM Psalm 102; PM Psalm 107:1-32

Hosea 10:1-15; Acts 21:37-22:16; Luke 6:12-26

Morning Prayer, Rite 2, page 75, Book of Common Prayer

Evening Prayer, Rite 2, page 115, Book of Common Prayer

Compline (Night Prayer), Page 127, Book of Common Prayer

Daily Office Gospel, Luke 6:12-26

12 Now during those days he went out to the mountain to pray; and he spent the night in prayer to God. 13 And when day came, he called his disciples and chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles: 14 Simon, whom he named Peter, and his brother Andrew, and James, and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew, 15 and Matthew, and Thomas, and James son of Alphaeus, and Simon, who was called the Zealot, 16 and Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor. 17 He came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. 18 They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. 19 And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

20 Then he looked up at his disciples and said: 'Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. 21 'Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. 'Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. 22 'Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. 23 Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets. 24 'But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. 25 'Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry. 'Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep. 26 'Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

David's Reflections

Reading today's Gospel opened a new window for me about what it means to be a follower of Jesus. First, it means to be called. Jesus chose his followers after a night of prayer. You and I come to faith in Christ only in response to Christ's call. That call may have come through the faith of parents that they passed to us. For me, that happened at a very early age. It may come through the witness of another follower of Jesus who cared enough to share with us. It might come through a chance encounter with Christianity in a television program, a Gideon Bible in a hotel room, or a piece of literature we might have come across. Our faith in Christ comes about because his call awakens in us the capacity to trust and to risk.

To be a follower of Jesus also means involvement with others he is calling. Here, A huge crowd had gathered, which brought the disciples into contact with people they otherwise would not have encountered. They were present and, no doubt, assisting as Jesus healed the many who came to hear him. They were present and involved in his teaching, here what we know as the Sermon on the Plain (See Matthew 5-7 for a longer version that we call The Sermon on the Mount.). We cannot know what role they played as Jesus taught. They obviously were hearers themselves, but we can imagine them assisting Jesus with such a large crowd.

Our baptism anoints us with the Holy Spirit, unites us with Christ in his death and resurrection, and ordains us to follow Christ, witness to our faith, and serve Christ in others. If we are committed to and trusting in Jesus, that commitment will pull us into contact with others Jesus is calling. Some actually will be drawn to us because they hunger for God's love and they sense it coming through us. We will come in contact with others through our involvement in the church and its ministries.

Our biggest challenge seems to be that of remaining sensitive to and in touch with what goes on around us, to take fuller and deeper notice of the people we encounter in our daily life and at church. What might their hungers and desires be? How might they be trying to respond to God's love, even if unaware of the dynamics and of God's presence? And, how can best we live into our baptismal vows and witness to and serve Christ? How can we reach out to them and to the Christ who works in their lives? As Prayer C in *The Book of Common Prayer* puts it, "Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us."

Collect of the Day, Proper 21, the eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

O God, you declare your almighty power chiefly in showing mercy and pity: Grant us

the fullness of your grace, that we, running to obtain your promises, may become partakers of your heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.* (BCP, 235)

A Collect for Fridays

Lord Jesus Christ, by your death you took away the sting of death: Grant to us your servants so to follow in faith where you have led the way, that we may at length fall asleep peacefully in you and wake up in your likeness; for your tender mercies' sake. *Amen.* (BCP, 123)

For those in the Armed Forces of our Country

Almighty God, we commend to your gracious care and keeping all the men and women of our armed forces at home and abroad. Defend them day by day with your heavenly grace; strengthen them in their trials and temptations; give them courage to face the perils which beset them; and grant them a sense of your abiding presence wherever they may be; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* (BCP, 823)

In the Evening

O Lord, support us all the day long, until the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then in thy mercy, grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last. *Amen.* (BCP, 833)

A Collect for Mission

O God of all the nations of the earth: Remember the multitudes who have been created in your image but have not known the redeeming work of our Savior Jesus Christ; and grant that, by the prayers and labors of your holy Church, they may be brought to know and worship you as you have been revealed in your Son; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.* (BCP, 257)