

**Daily Office Devotional, Monday, October 5, 2020**  
**Proper 22, the week of the eighteenth week after Pentecost**  
**The Rev. David W. Perkins, Th.D.**

Daily Office Lectionary Readings

AM Psalm 106:1-18; PM Psalm 106:19-48  
Hosea 14:1-9; Acts 22:30-23:11; Luke 6:39-49

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 6:39-49

39He also told them a parable: 'Can a blind person guide a blind person? Will not both fall into a pit? 40A disciple is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully qualified will be like the teacher. 41Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? 42Or how can you say to your neighbor, "Friend, let me take out the speck in your eye," when you yourself do not see the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor's eye. 43'No good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit; 44for each tree is known by its own fruit. Figs are not gathered from thorns, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. 45The good person out of the good treasure of the heart produces good, and the evil person out of evil treasure produces evil; for it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks. 46'Why do you call me "Lord, Lord," and do not do what I tell you? 47I will show you what someone is like who comes to me, hears my words, and acts on them. 48That one is like a man building a house, who dug deeply and laid the foundation on rock; when a flood arose, the river burst against that house but could not shake it, because it had been well built. 49But the one who hears and does not act is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the river burst against it, immediately it fell, and great was the ruin of that house.'

David's Reflections

Daniel T. Niles was a profound preacher and leader in worldwide ecumenical affairs. In a discussion about Jesus being the ultimate revelation of God's nature, he once wrote: "The crux of the finality issue is whether or not in Jesus Christ (people) men confront and are confronted by the transcendent God whose will they cannot

manipulate, by whose judgment they are bound, and with whose intractable presence on their midst they must reckon." \*

Jesus' self-awareness comes through in the words of verse 47 above. The one who hears Jesus words and acts on them resembles the person building on a solid foundation. Were Jesus not aware at least that his teaching was inspired by God and had prophetic authority, he could not have uttered these words.

My problem has to do not with intellectual assent to the finality of Jesus as God's Word most fully spoken. My problem comes a step farther down the line. It comes in acting on that conviction. If I do believe that Jesus reveals God most fully and if I have committed my life to him in trust and loyalty, how am I expressing that loyalty?

For each of us, there will always be places of lingering noncompliance with Jesus' teaching and example. Can you and I say that we are aware of those places in our lives? Can we also say that we know why they are there? At least in those areas, our vision is captive to an inferior faith. Somehow, we secretly believe that a better way must exist, an easier one, a less risky one than Jesus demands. At least in those areas our will is captive to a lesser spirit than the presence of Jesus. In those areas, we are bowing the knee to a fear, an anxiety, an addiction, or a relational loyalty at odds with our loyalty to Christ. As the confession of sin in *Enriching Our Worship* reads, "We confess that we have sinned against you, opposing your will in our lives."

The words of Jesus in so many areas ring in my ears, and that ringing sounds out the defective notes of noncompliance, resistance, and unbelief. Thank God that forgiveness spares us an overload of guilt and shame. Thank God that God's embracing love binds us to Christ and prevents wandering. Thank God that the gentleness of Christ touches us in insistent, transforming ways. Thank God that today promises greater freedom and more full obedience and compliance than yesterday. Thank God that the faith thus far exercised places us on a rock of certainty.

Methodist New Testament scholar, Walter Wink, expresses this so lucidly. "My deepest interest in encountering Jesus is not to confirm my own prejudices (though I certainly do that) but to be delivered from a stunted soul, a limited mind, and an unjust social order. No doubt a part of me wants to whittle Jesus down to my size so that I can avoid painful, even costly change. But another part of me is exhilarated by the possibility of becoming more human. So I listen in order to be

transformed. . . . I respond though I must change. And in my better moments, I respond in order to change.

“Truth is, had Jesus never lived, we could not have invented him.”#

\* D. T. Niles, *Who Is This Jesus?* (Nashville: Abingon, 1968), p. 89.

#Walter Wink, " A Personal and Social Transformation through Scripture," [http://www.bibleinterp.com/articles/Wink\\_Transformation.shtml](http://www.bibleinterp.com/articles/Wink_Transformation.shtml)

*Collect of the Day: Proper 22, the eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray, and to give more than we either desire or deserve: Pour upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things for which we are not worthy to ask, except through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ our Savior; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.* (BCP, 234)

*A Collect for the Renewal of Life*

O God, the King eternal, whose light divides the day from the night and turns the shadow of death into the morning: Drive far from us all wrong desires, incline our hearts to keep your law, and guide our feet into the way of peace; that, having done your will with cheerfulness while it was day, we may, when night comes, rejoice to give you thanks; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* (BCP, 99)

*Of the Holy Spirit*

Almighty and most merciful God, grant that by the indwelling of your Holy Spirit we may be enlightened and strengthened for your service; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.* (BCP, 251)

*A Collect for the Presence of Christ*

Lord Jesus, stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past; be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts, and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. *Amen.* (BCP, 124)

*A Collect for Mission*

O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you; bring the nations into

your fold; pour out your Spirit upon all flesh; and hasten the coming of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* (BCP, 100, 257)