

**Daily Office Devotional, May 5, 2021**  
**Wednesday of the Fifth Week of Easter**  
**The Rev. David W. Perkins, Th.D.**

Today we celebrate the Feast of the Martyrs of the Reformation era. (See below.)

Daily Office Lectionary Readings

AM Psalm 72; PM Psalm 119:73-96

Wisdom 13:1-9; Rom 13:1-14; Luke 8:16-25

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 8:16-25

16'No one after lighting a lamp hides it under a jar, or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a lampstand, so that those who enter may see the light. 17For nothing is hidden that will not be disclosed, nor is anything secret that will not become known and come to light. 18Then pay attention to how you listen; for to those who have, more will be given; and from those who do not have, even what they seem to have will be taken away.' 19Then his mother and his brothers came to him, but they could not reach him because of the crowd. 20And he was told, 'Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you.' 21But he said to them, 'My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it.'

22 One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, 'Let us go across to the other side of the lake.' So they put out, 23and while they were sailing he fell asleep. A windstorm swept down on the lake, and the boat was filling with water, and they were in danger. 24They went to him and woke him up, shouting, 'Master, Master, we are perishing!' And he woke up and rebuked the wind and the raging waves; they ceased, and there was a calm. 25He said to them, 'Where is your faith?' They were afraid and amazed, and said to one another, 'Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him?'

David's Reflections

Luke has arranged the sayings of Jesus in verses 16-21 and placed them immediately after the parable of the sower to flesh out the ideas in that parable (yesterdays' reading). In those verses, we are cautioned to be careful how we listen to

God's message. If the sower sows the message of God's kingdom, the soil must receive the seed. We must be attentive to the message of Jesus and allow it to interrogate us, our values, our commitments, our faith, and to shape and transform our lives. As the last verse of yesterday's reading says about the good soil that received the seed, "But as for that in the good soil, these are the ones who, when they hear the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patient endurance."

The references to a lamp and lampstand, in Luke's context, seem to refer to the believing community bearing witness to the message of Jesus in the world. Can you think of at least one friend, coworker, relative, or neighbor who seems to be in the dark about faith, either a lapsed Christian or someone who has never been part of the church? Think of what you have experienced from God and the Christian community in terms of love and forgiveness. Think of all the ways the message of Jesus has encouraged, comforted, and shaped you. Then, remember that this person lives without those gifts of God's grace.

Can you begin to pray for that person and to connect with them in relationship? In the context of prayer and a genuine relationship, sharing with that person about your faith would have integrity. You can look for an opening, a moment when they initiate conversation about religious topics. You want them to know something of that love of God that has found you. To hide that from them would be a denial of your own identity as a Christian, a breach of integrity, like hiding a lamp in a dark room from people who need the light. (For a delightful alternative to traditional ways of witnessing see the work by Ben Campbell Johnson, *Speaking of God: Evangelism as Initial Spiritual Guidance* [Westminster/John Knox, 1993])

Jesus' family appears as an example of people who have been close to Jesus but who have not heard. We know from Mark's version of this episode (Mark 3) that Jesus' family thought him insane and had come to take him home. Jesus refused their inquiry, saying that his disciples were his true family.

What a poignant reminder that our most genuine friends and family may be found, not among our relatives but, among fellow believers. Heeding the Christian message and sharing with those we love actually can isolate us from some people who are living in resistance to God's love. Jesus had that experience. But, like him, we will find true companionship and community among fellow believers.

*Collect of the Day, Fifth Sunday of Easter*

Almighty God, whom truly to know is everlasting life: Grant us so perfectly to know your Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life, that we may steadfastly follow his steps in the way that leads to eternal life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.* (BCP, 225)

*Collect of the Weekdays of Easter*

Almighty God, you show the light of your truth to those who are in error, to the intent that they may return to the way of righteousness: Grant to those who are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion that they may avoid those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to it; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Today we celebrate the Feast the martyrs of the Reformation.

[http://www.satucket.com/lectionary/martyrs\\_reformation.html](http://www.satucket.com/lectionary/martyrs_reformation.html)

*Collect of the Feast of the Martyrs of the Reformation*

Almighty and Most Merciful God, give to your Church that peace which the world cannot give, and grant that those who have been divided on earth may be reconciled in heaven, and share together in the vision of your glory; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

*A Collect for Grace*

Lord God, almighty and everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day: Preserve us with your mighty power, that we may not fall into sin, nor be overcome by adversity; and in all we do, direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* (BCP, 100)

*All the Good I Can*

Dear God, guide me to  
Do all the good I can  
By all means I can  
In all ways I can  
In all places I can  
To all people I can  
As long as I can.

*Bill Pittman and Lisa D., The 12 Step Prayer Book Volume 2: More Twelve Step Prayers and Inspirational Readings Prayers (Center City, MN: Hazelden, 2007.)*

*A Prayer for Light*

O Lord God Almighty, as you have taught us to call the evening, the morning, and the noonday one day; and have made the sun to know its going down: Dispel the darkness of our hearts, that by your brightness we may know you to be the true God and eternal light, living and reigning for ever and ever. *Amen.* (BCP, 110)

*A Collect for Mission*

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. *Amen.* (BCP, 101)