

DEVOTION FOR THURSDAY AFTER PENTECOST

PSALM 119:65-72

Do good to your servant according to your word, O Lord.

Teach me knowledge and good judgement, for I believe your commands.

Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I obey your word.

You are good, and what you do is good; teach me your decrees.

Though the arrogant have smeared me with lies, I keep your precepts with all my heart.

Their hearts are callous and unfeeling, but I delight in your law.

It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees.

The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;

As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen

Old Testament Reading: Numbers 25:1-19 *Israel forsakes the Lord to worship Baal*

New Testament Reading: Acts 5:1-42 *Lying to the Spirit and testifying to Jesus*

“SPEAK ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LIFE!”

The apostles were in prison, because of their testimony that Jesus is the Christ. They said God offers forgiveness, peace and eternal life in His presence, for all who receive Him through faith and believe in His name. God had given His testimony, by raising Jesus from the dead. The council was at a loss as to what to do. The apostles wouldn't stop testifying and everyday more people became believers. A leading Pharisee advised them to take a wait and see attitude. He warned them against opposing God. If this were from God, nothing could stop its progress, or thwart its success.

It was good advice! They should have taken it to heart. Time has rendered its verdict! They couldn't stand against the words of the apostles! The apostles spoke the words of God. The words the apostle's spoke were spiritual dynamite. The words the apostle's spoke, destroyed doubt and dispelled unbelief. They opened people's eyes to their true spiritual condition in the sight of God. They cut them to the heart, so that they despaired of their own righteousness. They gave them faith to cling to Jesus and His righteousness. They are words of life!

Throughout the ages human authorities have sought to control, contain and stop the words of God. But as Martin Luther said, “Thy word they must let remain.” The words of God have power to overcome every obstacle set in their path, create spiritual life and nurture spiritual growth. The angel who released the apostles from prison commanded them to return to the temple and “*speak to the people all the words of this life.*” The church continues to speak the words of life, by testifying to Jesus. Jesus is the source and fountain of life. He has the words of eternal life. His words are never without effect in the lives of those who have ears to hear.

“LISTEN, GOD IS CALLING” CCLI #453681

Refrain

**Listen, listen, God is calling, through the word inviting,
Offering forgiveness, comfort and joy.**

**Jesus gave His mandate: Share the good news
That He came to save us and set us free. Refrain**

**Let none be forgotten, throughout the world.
In the triune name of God, go and baptize. Refrain**

**Help us to be faithful, standing steadfast,
Walking in your precepts, led by your Word. Refrain**

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, bless us with your Spirit that we may be bold and testify to the life we have in you. Bless the church on earth to carry out the mandate you gave; to make disciples of all nations through the proclamation of the gospel and baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Grant your word success in the ears of those who hear and in the hearts of all who believe. In your Name. Amen

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

THE CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

BENEDICTION

Jeremiah 10:10

“But the Lord is the true God: He is the living God and the everlasting King.”