

Readings for September 5, 2010

FIRST LESSON: Deuteronomy 30:15–20

¹⁵See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. ¹⁶If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the LORD your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. ¹⁷But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, ¹⁸I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. ¹⁹I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, ²⁰loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the LORD swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

PSALM: Psalm 1

Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked,
nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of the scornful!

**²Their delight is in the law of the LORD,
and they meditate on his law day and night.**

³They are like trees planted by streams of water,
bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that do not wither;
everything they do shall prosper.

**⁴It is not so with the wicked;
they are like chaff which the wind blows away.**

⁵Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment comes,
nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.

**⁶For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked is doomed.**

SECOND LESSON: Philemon 1:1–21

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,

To Philemon our dear friend and co-worker, ²to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴When I remember you in my prayers, I always thank my God ⁵because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith toward the Lord Jesus. ⁶I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective when you perceive all the good that we may do for Christ. ⁷I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been

refreshed through you, my brother.

⁸For this reason, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do your duty, ⁹yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love — and I, Paul, do this as an old man, and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. ¹⁰I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. ¹¹Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful both to you and to me. ¹²I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. ¹³I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might be of service to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel; ¹⁴but I preferred to do nothing without your consent, in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. ¹⁵Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back forever, ¹⁶no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother — especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

¹⁷So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. ¹⁸If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. ¹⁹I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. ²⁰Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. ²¹Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.

GOSPEL: Luke 14:25–33

²⁵Now large crowds were traveling with him; and he turned and said to them, ²⁶"Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. ²⁷Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, ³⁰saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' ³¹Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³²If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. ³³So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

Readings for September 12, 2010

FIRST LESSON: Exodus 32:7–14

⁷The LORD said to Moses, "Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; ⁸they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf, and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and

said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!'" ⁹The LORD said to Moses, "I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. ¹⁰Now let me alone, so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them; and of you I will make a great nation."

¹¹But Moses implored the LORD his God, and said, "O LORD, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? ¹²Why should the Egyptians say, 'It was with evil intent that he brought them out to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people. ¹³Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, 'I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.'" ¹⁴And the LORD changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

PSALM: Psalm 51:1–11

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your lovingkindness;
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

**²Wash me through and through from my wickedness,
and cleanse me from my sin.**

³For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.

**⁴Against you only have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight.**

⁵And so you are justified when you speak
and upright in your judgment.

**⁶Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth,
a sinner from my mother's womb.**

⁷For behold, you look for truth deep within me,
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.

**⁸Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure;
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.**

⁹Make me hear of joy and gladness,
that the body you have broken may rejoice.

**¹⁰Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.**

¹¹Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.

SECOND LESSON: 1 Timothy 1:12–17

¹²I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he judged me faithful and appointed me to his service, ¹³even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence. But I received

mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, ¹⁴and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners — of whom I am the foremost. ¹⁶But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience, making me an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. ¹⁷To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

GOSPEL: Luke 15:1–10

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. ²And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

³So he told them this parable: ⁴"Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? ⁵When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. ⁶And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' ⁷Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

⁸Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' ¹⁰Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

Readings for September 19, 2010

FIRST LESSON: Amos 8:4–7

⁴Hear this, you that trample on the needy,
and bring to ruin the poor of the land,
⁵saying, "When will the new moon be over
so that we may sell grain;
and the sabbath,
so that we may offer wheat for sale?
We will make the ephah small and the shekel great,
and practice deceit with false balances,
⁶buying the poor for silver
and the needy for a pair of sandals,
and selling the sweepings of the wheat."
⁷The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob:
Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.

PSALM: Psalm 113

Hallelujah! Give praise, you servants of the LORD;
praise the name of the LORD.

**²Let the name of the LORD be blessed,
from this time forth forevermore.**

³From the rising of the sun to its going down
let the name of the LORD be praised.

**⁴The LORD is high above all nations,
and his glory above the heavens.**

⁵Who is like the LORD our God, who sits enthroned on high,
but stoops to behold the heavens and the earth?

**⁶He takes up the weak out of the dust
and lifts up the poor from the ashes.**

⁷He sets them with the princes,
with the princes of his people.

**⁸He makes the woman of a childless house
to be a joyful mother of children.**

SECOND LESSON: 1 Timothy 2:1–7

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, ²for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. ³This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵For

there is one God;

there is also one mediator between God and humankind,

Christ Jesus, himself human,

⁶who gave himself a ransom for all —

this was attested at the right time. ⁷For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

GOSPEL: Luke 16:1–13

Then Jesus said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. ²So he summoned him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management, because you cannot be my manager any longer.' ³Then the manager said to himself, 'What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. ⁴I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.' ⁵So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he asked the first, 'How much do

you owe my master?' ⁶He answered, 'A hundred jugs of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.' ⁷Then he asked another, 'And how much do you owe?' He replied, 'A hundred containers of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill and make it eighty.' ⁸And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. ⁹And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

¹⁰Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. ¹¹If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? ¹²And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? ¹³No slave can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

Readings for September 26, 2010

FIRST LESSON: Amos 6:1a, 4–7

^aAlas for those who are at ease in Zion,
and for those who feel secure on Mount Samaria, ⁴Alas for those who lie
on beds of ivory,
and lounge on their couches,
and eat lambs from the flock,
and calves from the stall;
⁵who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp,
and like David improvise on instruments of music;
⁶who drink wine from bowls,
and anoint themselves with the finest oils,
but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph!
⁷Therefore they shall now be the first to go into exile,
and the revelry of the loungers shall pass away.

PSALM: Psalm 146

Hallelujah! Praise the LORD, O my soul!
I will praise the LORD as long as I live;
I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.
**²Put not your trust in rulers, nor in any child of earth,
for there is no help in them.**
³When they breathe their last, they return to earth,
and in that day their thoughts perish.
**⁴Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help,
whose hope is in the LORD their God;**

⁵who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them;
who keeps his promise forever;

**⁶who gives justice to those who are oppressed,
and food to those who hunger.**

⁷The LORD sets the prisoners free; the LORD opens the eyes of the blind;
the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;

**⁸the LORD loves the righteous; the LORD cares for the stranger;
he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the
wicked.**

⁹The LORD shall reign forever,
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!

SECOND LESSON: 1 Timothy 6:6–19

⁶Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment;
⁷for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; ⁸but
if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. ⁹But those who want
to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful
desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰For the love of money is a
root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered
away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.

¹¹But as for you, man of God, shun all this; pursue righteousness,
godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. ¹²Fight the good fight of the faith;
take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called and for which you made the
good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³In the presence of God,
who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before
Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you ¹⁴to keep the
commandment without spot or blame until the manifestation of our Lord Jesus
Christ, ¹⁵which he will bring about at the right time — he who is the blessed and
only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords. ¹⁶It is he alone who has
immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or
can see; to him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

¹⁷As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be
haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who
richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. ¹⁸They are to do good, to be
rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, ¹⁹thus storing up for
themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may
take hold of the life that really is life.

GOSPEL: Luke 16:19–31

¹⁹There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who
feasted sumptuously every day. ²⁰And at his gate lay a poor man named
Lazarus, covered with sores, ²¹who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell
from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. ²²The
poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich

man also died and was buried. ²³In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴He called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames.' ²⁵But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. ²⁶Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.' ²⁷He said, 'Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father's house — ²⁸for I have five brothers — that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.' ²⁹Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.' ³⁰He said, 'No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' ³¹He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"