

Pentecost 5

July 13, 2025



If I am to have no other God, then I must surely possess the only true God with my heart, that is, I must in my heart be affectionate to him, evermore cleave to him, depend upon him, trust him, have my desire, love and joy in him, and always think of him.

—Martin Luther

Sermon on Luke 10, Church Postil

PROCLAMATION POINTS

The following are some thoughts and questions to be used for a text study on the weekly lessons, or for jump-starting the imagination of the preacher and hearer in preparing for the proclamation event.

Leviticus (18:1-5) 19:9-18

The words in this passage sound much like a loving father instructing his young children to follow the rules he set in place to protect them and their kin. The Lord said, “You shall not do as the Egyptians did while you were in their land, and you shall not do as the Canaanites do when you get to the Promised Land.” Instead, God gave Israel his own rules for them to follow as he reminded them that he alone is the Lord.

- *Skim the text of chapter 18 where some of the laws of the Lord are laid out. Why did God make so many rules about sexuality?*
- *How does sex become an idol? What is the ultimate result of sexual immorality for humanity? (See Lev. 18:27-30)*

The rules that God gave Israel were rules that protected relationships. We might look at 9:9-18 and think what is written there is just plain common sense, that everyone knows they should follow these statutes. There may be some aspect of “natural law” here, but in our day it doesn’t always seem like people are purposely conducting their lives according to God’s most excellent advice: keep some of your fields and vineyards unharvested for those in need, provide for the traveler this way so that as they come through they won’t go hungry, don’t steal or deal falsely with one another, don’t use God’s name in vain, don’t keep others down, pay your people their wages, take care of those with physical disabilities, show no partiality amongst people, do not hate another or exact vengeance upon someone who hurt you.

- *Imagine a world where everyone practiced these charitable tenets of the faith. What would be different? Who would be affected?*

Psalms 41

The psalmist sings about his misfortune and troubled life. Even his friends have turned away from him. His enemies have cursed him and brought him lower with their malice and empty words. But God has not forsaken him. In sickness and trial, the Lord has sustained and upheld his servant.

- *Have you ever experienced a time in your life when others simply gave up on you? Were you able to sense God’s presence in that time?*
- *In what ways do we, as believers, fail to consider the poor and ill? What has God called us to do in regard to those who are in need?*

Colossians 1:1-14

This lesson contains the expected beginning elements of a first century occasional letter: greeting, thanksgiving, and prayer. It is thought that Paul wrote this letter from prison and most likely had never met the Christians in Colossae personally. Even so, he gives a glowing assessment of their faith and mission. “We heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints,” he wrote (v.4)

It’s one thing for us as a church to say, “We are loving and welcoming,” and another to have witnesses who testify to our love in Christ. So many times, we think we are being loving and open to strangers and newcomers, when in fact we have huddled together in a tight knit group and left no room at all for anyone new to join.

- *Why do we have a hard time truly seeing ourselves the way others see us? Why is it important to listen to the impressions we make on others, rather than to trust our own view of our church or selves?*

Paul talks about the Gospel bearing fruit in the whole world, which is the same Gospel that brought them to faith. He encouraged believers to bear the fruits of faith and to trust that they have been qualified to share their gifts so that all they meet might know Christ.

Luke 10:25-37

Jesus is challenged by a lawyer who wants to know what it takes to inherit eternal life. Jesus responds to his question by asking his own question, “Well, what do you know about the subject?” The lawyer correctly cited the commandment to love God and neighbor. Jesus responded simply by saying, “Do this and live.”

- *Why would the lawyer ask Jesus this question if he thought he already knew the correct answer?*
- *Did the lawyer truly understand what Jesus meant by “live?” Was the man spiritually alive?*

In Matthew 22:40, Jesus further commented on these two commandments saying that on them, “depend all the Law and the Prophets.” Love is the basis of all relationships as well as the foundation of God’s Law. The lawyer failed to understand that Jesus’ actions were completely an extension of his loving ways. To live fully in this life is more than not erecting idols; it is to love to the best of our ability.