

Sunday, October 23, 2022 – Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

Second Reading: 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18

3: 10-11 – You have observed my teaching, conduct, aim in life, faith, patience, love, steadfastness, persecutions and suffering the things that happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. What persecutions I endured! Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them.

What would it take – what changes would you need to make – for you to be able to say what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 11: 1 – “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ”?

Acts 14: 19 – But Jews came (to Lystra) from Antioch and Iconium and won over the crowds. They stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead.

3: 14-15 - Continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it. From childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

2 Timothy 1: 5 – I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you.

3: 16-17 - All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness (to teach us what is true, to make us realize what is wrong in our lives, to straighten us out, and to teach us to do what is right) so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

What Scripture passages are most helpful for you in those four ways?

4: 2 - Proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching.

When have you needed to be persistent even when times were unfavorable?

4: 5 - Endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

2 Timothy 2: 3 – Share in suffering like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

John 17: 4 – Jesus: I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do.

4: 6-8 - I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

At the end of your life will you be able to say those words?

Will you be able to end your life with no regrets?

If not, what do you need to change? What can you change? Will you make that change?

4: 9-11 – Do your best to come to me soon. Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me. Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful in my ministry.

Acts 15: 37-39 – Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark. But Paul decided not to take with them one who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not accompanied them in the work. The disagreement became so sharp that they parted company.

4: 13 – When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments.

What books would you most want to keep and have with you at the end of your life?

4: 14-15 – Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will pay him back for his deeds. You also must beware of him, for he strongly opposed our message.

1 Timothy 1: 19-20 – By rejecting conscience, certain persons have suffered shipwreck in their faith; among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have turned over to Satan.

4: 16-18 - At my first defense no one came to my support, but all deserted me. May it not be counted against them! But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Is there a time in your life when you felt most deserted?

Is there a time when you especially remember the Lord's standing by you, giving you strength, and rescuing you from the lion's mouth?

4: 19-22 – Greet Prisca and Aquila. Erastus remained in Corinth. Do your best to come before winter. The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

Priscilla and Aquila were natives of Pontus; when we first meet them they had recently come from Italy to Corinth (Acts 18: 1-2); a few verses later they were in Ephesus (Acts 18: 24-26). Romans 16: 23 – Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, greet you.

Gospel: Luke 18:9-14

Jesus tells a parable in which the one who humbles himself is exalted and the one who exalts his own righteousness is humbled.

This is a common theme in the Gospel of Luke, beginning with the Magnificat in Luke 1.

9-10 - [Jesus] also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

11-12 - The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.'

13 - But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!'

14 - I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."

Philippians 3: 4-9 - If anyone has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more. Yet, whatever gains I had I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. Not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith.