

Sunday, September 14, 2025 – Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

First Reading: Exodus 32:7-14

This passage is a mighty example of the power of intercessory prayer.

God will never act contrary to His nature, but because He is both righteous and holy – and merciful and gracious – sometimes He will do what otherwise He would not have done if His people pray, and sometimes He will not do what otherwise He would have done if His people pray.

Genesis 18: 32 – God to Abraham re Sodom – "For the sake of ten I will not destroy it."

James 5: 16 – The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.

7 - The LORD said to Moses, "Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely."

8-10 – "They 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!' I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. Now 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."

11 - But 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?"

Moses based his prayer upon two things – how God would look and asking God to remember His promises.

God is so connected with His people that how it goes for us affects how He looks.

What promises from God do you most want Him to remember?

12-13 – "Why 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. Remember 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.'"

14 - And the LORD changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

Psalm: Psalm 51:1-13

Because of David's great sin against Bathsheba and deliberately manipulating the death of her husband and his good friend Uriah, the only chance that David had to be spared was to call upon God for mercy. Justice said that he should die.

Justice – I get what I deserve / Mercy – I do not get what I deserve / Grace – I get what I do not deserve

And yet the tragedy is that even though David's life is spared, his child by Bathsheba dies, his daughter, Tamar, is raped by her brother, and two of his sons, Amnon and Absalom, die.

2 Samuel 12: 10 - Nathan to David – "The sword shall never depart from your house."

And yet there was also the greatest of grace - it was from David and Bathsheba that Solomon was born, the kings came, and Jesus was descended.

- 1 - Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love.
- 3 - I know my offenses, and my sin is ever before me.
- 4 - Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight;
so you are justified when you speak and right in your judgment.
- 5 - I was born steeped in wickedness, a sinner from my mother's womb.
- 7 - Remove my sins with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be purer than snow.
- 8 - Let me hear joy and gladness; that the body you have broken may rejoice.
- 9 - Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my wickedness.
- 10 - Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
- 11 - Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.
- 12 - Restore to me the joy of your salvation and sustain in me a willing spirit.
- 13 - Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

Second Reading: 1 Timothy 1:12-17

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

13-14 - But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

15-16 - Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. 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.

1 Corinthians 15: 8-10 – Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has not been in vain.

Gospel: Luke 15:1-10

In response to the grumbling of the Pharisees and the scribes Jesus tells three parables – about a lost sheep, a lost coin, and a lost son.

The three got lost in different ways.

In the case of the lost sheep and coin, the shepherd and the woman went searching.

In the case of the lost son, the father was waiting and then ran out to greet him.

But in each there is rejoicing when the lost has been found.

If heaven rejoices when the lost have been found, do we rejoice when someone who has been spiritually lost is found?

Has there been a time in your life when you were spiritually lost? Would you identify most with the lost sheep, the lost coin, or the lost son?

Sophie vs. videos of most dogs in shelters who are adopted

1-3 - Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to (Jesus). And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them." So he told them this parable.

5-6 - When he has found (the lost sheep), he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And 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."

9 - When she has found (the lost coin), she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, "Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost."