

13th August 2017

Trinity 9

Proper 14 Green



Collect

Almighty God, who sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your Church: open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in love and joy and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Romans 10:5-15 English Standard Version (ESV)

The Message of Salvation to All

⁵ For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. ⁶ But the righteousness based on faith says, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring Christ down) ⁷ “or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸ But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); ⁹ because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.” ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. ¹³ For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

¹⁴ How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?^[a] And how are they to hear without someone preaching? ¹⁵ And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”

Footnote: a. or him whom they have never heard.

COMMENT: We must remember that Paul's purpose as an apostle was to declare the saving action of God in Christ and to share the good news of faith in Jesus Christ. His own bitter experience as a Pharisee had led him to a dead end: total obedience to the Law of Moses, however rigorous and sincere, did not give a life of friendship with God. In fact, it did just the opposite, making him realise how far he had failed to achieve that goal. No one could put oneself in a relationship with God through obedience to the law. In Christ, God done for Paul and for all what could not be done by anyone else. By faith in Christ, right relationship with God is now available to all.

Matthew 14:22-33 English Standard Version (ESV)

Jesus Walks on the Water

²² Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. ²³ And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴ but the boat by this time was a long way^[a] from the land,^[b] beaten by the waves, for the wind was against them. ²⁵ And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. ²⁶ But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" and they cried out in fear. ²⁷ But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid." ²⁸ And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." ²⁹ He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. ³⁰ But when he saw the wind,^[c] he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." ³¹ Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" ³² And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³ And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Footnotes: a. Greek *many stadia*, a *stadion* was about 607 feet or 185 metres. b. some manuscripts *was out on the sea*. c. some manuscripts *strong wind*.

COMMENT: Shorter versions of this incident appear in Mark 6:47-52 and John 6:16-21. They both also link it to the feeding of the five thousand. The unique aspect of Matthew's version is Peter's doubt and daring attempt to prove his faith. Mark's version places the emphasis on the disciples' lack of understanding. Like so

many of us, they really had not got the message that faith can meet any need if correctly focused on the One who saves us to the uttermost.

Psalm 85

℟ Let us see, O Lord, your mercy, and give us your saving help.

⁹ I will hear what the Lord God has to say,
a voice that speaks of peace,
peace for his people and his friends
and those who turn to him in their hearts.

¹⁰ His help is near for those who fear him
and his glory will dwell in our land. **℟**

¹¹ Mercy and faithfulness have met;
justice and peace have embraced.

¹² Faithfulness shall spring from the earth
and justice look down from heaven. **℟**

¹³ The Lord will make us prosper
and our earth shall yield its fruit.

¹⁴ Justice shall march before him
and peace shall follow his steps. **℟**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

COMMENT: This Psalm was probably written during the same period when Israel's return from exile was imminent or has already occurred, and may have had a liturgical function at some national celebration. The psalm consists of three rather distinct parts. Verses 1-3 celebrates The LORD's initiative in Israel's history. Verses 4-7 plead for forgiveness based on the covenant relationship between the LORD and Israel. Verses 8-13, which are reproduced here, recite the blessings that come from the mutual faithfulness of the covenant – forgiveness, righteousness, peace and prosperity.

Scholars debate whether the Psalm is a lament or a liturgical prayer. The Book of Haggai suggests a pertinent time of economic and spiritual depression when it could have been appropriate. Yet there are no certain historical references. Moreover, the latter part of the poem can be just as easily interpreted eschatologically (pointing to the last things). On the whole, the psalm deals with divine initiatives which result in salvation, whether at a time of imminent danger or at the end of time.

Post Communion

Holy Father, who gathered us here around the table of your Son to share this meal with the whole household of God: in that new world where you reveal the fullness of your peace, gather people of every race and language to share in the eternal banquet of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Blessing

The God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ Jesus, establish, strengthen and settle you in the faith; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among *you*, and remain with *you* always. **Amen.**