

THEME FOR THE TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST NOVEMBER 15, 2009

“WHATEVER – FOR YOU, LORD!”

JOSHUA 24: 14 – 18

NOVEMBER 15, 2009

Do you find, at times, that your enthusiastic commitment to the Lord – and behavior that would match that commitment – begin to lose steam? Our patient Lord recognizes that, at times, we need to pause and assess our commitment to Him.

Our Lord reaches out through His Word to help refocus our commitment as He shares the narrative of His love in action through the lives of His people who lived in Joshua’s time. This morning we have an opportunity to reflect on the depth of our faith commitment – and our daily living out of that commitment – as we hear Joshua’s bold declaration of his commitment to the Lord. We will see Joshua lead the people of God to pause and recommit themselves to Him. May our reflection on this morning’s Old Testament lesson move us to hold nothing back and say to God, “It’s all for You, Lord!”

Introit

Selected Verses from Psalm 22

- L: I will tell of Your name to my brothers;
C: **In the midst of the congregation I will praise You:**
L: You who fear the LORD, praise Him!
C: **All you offspring of Jacob, glorify Him, and stand in awe of Him, all you offspring of Israel!**
L: From You comes my praise in the great congregation;
C: **My vows I will perform before those who fear Him.**
L: All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD,
C: **And all the families of the nations shall worship before You.**
L: For kingship belongs to the LORD,
C: **And He rules over the nations.**
L: Posterity shall serve Him;
C: **It shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation;**
L: They shall come and proclaim His righteousness
C: **To a people yet unborn, that He has done it.**

Old Testament Lesson

Joshua 24: 14 – 18

(Joshua, in his final work as the Lord’s servant, challenged God’s people to renew their commitment with their covenant Lord. After he told them, once again, of God’s faithfulness in carrying out his promises, Joshua challenges the children of Israel to follow his own promise to serve the Lord and no other gods.)

(Joshua said,) ¹⁴“Now therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. ¹⁵And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

¹⁶Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods, ¹⁷for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight and preserved us in all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed. ¹⁸And the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.”

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Epistle Lesson

1 Peter 2: 4 – 10

(Peter reminds us that God has called His children together and given them a new identity as His people through Jesus Christ. As God's people we are challenged to live out our new identity for Him.)

⁴As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, ⁵you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." ⁷So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone," ⁸and "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

⁹But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Gospel Lesson

John 6: 35 – 40

(Jesus shares His commitment to carry out the will of God the Father as the servant Savior, entrusted with the eternal welfare of all those who would come to faith in Him.)

³⁵Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. ³⁶But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. ³⁷All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. ³⁸For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. ³⁹And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. ⁴⁰For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."