

Historically we read this lesson on Trinity Sunday. When we developed a three year reading cycle in the 1970's, we relegated this reading to the "B" cycle. In our new three year cycle (2006) we added it to Lent Two of the "A" cycle of readings. Nicodemus had a secret meeting with Jesus. Jesus didn't deal with any of Nicodemus' questions instead, He turned the entire conversation to faith. Jesus explained the manner by which faith (the faithfulness of Jesus imputed to us) does the work of allowing us to recognize Jesus as the Christ, the Savior. Jesus also gave Nicodemus a direct prophecy of the manner of His death, which when it came true, Nicodemus used as an opportunity to worship Jesus (John 19:39-40.)

⑨ We praise You, Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. You are God who does not live in a temple made with our hands. We ask that as You created all things, both visible and invisible, by Your mighty Word, that You would grant us a true faith. We know that without faith it is impossible to please You, and that anyone who would come to You must believe that You are the Only and the living God.

Bring us to understand that You have the whole world in Your hand, and that none of us live only for ourselves, none of us die only to ourselves, for we are Yours as all of creation is Yours. Grant that we may see that our chief work is to believe in You and in the One You sent, even our Lord Jesus Christ.

As You have ordained that all should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, we ask that You would find among the members of Your church the men and women who will take the Gospel into every home in every land. Give to these people, so chosen by You, the heart and vision to pray, give, and labor, that all may have the Living Water welling up to eternal life.

We ask this day for all who are in authority over us; that they may have respect for Your Holy will. We ask for any who may live in danger because of the Gospel; preserve them from all harm. We ask for all who live with war in their land; send them peace, especially the knowledge of You that they may be made at peace with their own sinful desires. We ask for all who are ill, troubled in the spirit, or otherwise hurt or injured; send Your angels to be with them to comfort and lift them up. We ask for our homes; that they would be places of Christian love. We ask for this our church, that we would be a beacon of salvation to the people of our town, and the world.

Hear us as we bring to You our private petitions. **(Time of silent prayer.)**
 These things we ask in the name of Your Son Jesus who gave His life as
 a ransom for all.

LENT TWO

IX g: Aeolian

He remembers His covenant for —ever,*
the word that He commanded, for a
thousand gener —ations.

He is the | Lord our God;*
His judgments are in | all the Earth.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy — Spirit;
as it was in the be — ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. — Amen.

He remembers His covenant for — ever,*
the word that He commanded, for a
thousand gener — ations.

(Antiphon, Psalm 105:8;
Psalm 105:4-7)

O God, You see that of ourselves we have no strength. By Your mighty power defend us from all adversities that may happen to the body and from all evil thoughts that may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

[O come, let us fix our eyes on]—Jesus,*
the founder and perfecter | of our faith

Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame,*
and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

(Hebrews 12:2)

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son,*
that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

(John 3:16)

ENTRANCE PRAYER: We give glory to Your name, O Lord, for Your steadfast Love and faithfulness. Our trust in You has never been misplaced, for You have been our help and shield. You have been mindful of Your own, and we have experienced Your blessings. From this time forth and even forevermore we bless and praise You, O Lord. Send us Your Holy Spirit that He may strengthen our faith in our Savior. Help us trust in Him as the only way between Earth and Heaven, may we constantly rejoice in the certainty of our salvation. All this we ask in the name of Him who justified us in Your sight by His blood, Christ our Lord. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

IF YOU HAVE EVER BEEN AT THE BEACH WHEN THE FOG ROLLED IN, YOU HAVE SOME IDEA OF THE WAY OUR SEASON OF LENT BUILDS TOWARD THE DAYS OF MAUNDY THURSDAY AND GOOD FRIDAY. The Sundays of Lent are festival days. The members of the Early Church (who were in fast and denial for Lent) would wash their hands and faces for the Sunday worship. Even in this time of building toward His death on the cross, we are still aware that our Savior lives eternally for us. We thank everyone for coming to out to worship with us today. Worship is a social event in which we listen as God speaks and then we respond with the songs of His praise and glory for all He has so willingly done for us. All of His work is done out of purely Fatherly goodness and mercy.

THEME OF THE DAY:

Repent and Believe

INTROIT—(Antiphon: Psalm 105:8;) Psalm 105:4-7

Psalm 105 is a very long Psalm of which we have taken a tiny part. There is some indication that it was written by David and connects to 1 Chronicles chapter 16. It was written for the time the Ark was moved to its permanent place in the Temple. By connection to our other lessons we use it to celebrate the fulfillment of the covenant of the sending of a Savior.

COLLECT

Sin hurts, body and soul. We pray that God would keep us from the harms inflicted by sin.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON—Genesis 12:1-9

The call of Abraham began the separation of a people from whom the Savior of the world would be born. The single promise of a man, which was made to Eve was increased to the promise of Abraham's descendants becoming a great nation. The fact that Abraham followed God's command was credited to him. Abraham became a wandering nomad. He lived in the promise of a land that would be given to His descendants, a land Abraham did not enjoy. Through out his life, Abraham depended on the promises of God. God is completely faithful to His promises, the Savior was born in His lineage.

GRADUAL—Hebrews 12:2

Hebrews chapter 12 compares the greater wonder of Heaven to the lesser wonder of our place here on Earth, and encourages us to look to Jesus for patience and perseverance.

VERSE—John 3:16

From the Gospel Lesson we take the verse that we have all memorized from our childhood. Each of the Sundays of Lent walks us ever closer to the cross. Today our verse puts us at the foot of the cross. It speaks of our salvation in Jesus.

EPISTLE LESSON—Romans 4:1-8, 13-17

We use this pericope because of the connection to Abraham and his work of faith. According to the Jews at the time of Paul, Abraham's faith was the work of Abraham which deserved to be rewarded. Although faith can be viewed as the ultimate good work, that immediately means that faith is the good work that God does in and through us. Faith is connected to the Word, both in that faith comes through the reading of the Word of Scripture, and in that faith is the work of the Word (which is Jesus.) Abraham's faith was a gift worked in him by God and credited to him as righteousness. Your faith is viewed by God as righteousness!