

GOSPEL LESSON—Mark 12:28-37

First of all, how pathetic is it that the Scribes and the Pharisees thought that they should debate with Jesus over the meaning of Scripture. Here they had the author in their midst and they considered themselves to be smarter than the One Who wrote the book. So the challenge is given, "which Commandment is the most important?" It is very likely the man wanted to be able to launch into a debate with Jesus over which of the 10 is the most important. The answer from Jesus, (as we see from the Old Testament Lesson,) speaks to the must more involved message of the Commandments. There is only One God and you are to love God with all your heart and soul. That is the "most important" commandment because that speaks to knowledge and faith.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

© O Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we Your unworthy servants give You humble thanks for all Your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom You have made.

We bless You for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for Your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ. Grant us, Lord, not to be anxious about earthly things, but to love things heavenly; and even now, as we live among things that are passing away, to hold fast to those that shall endure; the means of grace, and our assurance of glory.

Give us, we pray, such an awareness of Your mercies, that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth Your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up our selves to Your service, and by walking before You in holiness and righteousness all our days

We ask You to bless all who trust in the merits of Jesus Christ for salvation. Have mercy on all who call on Your name this day. Bless our charitable efforts that Christ's name would be glorified. Forgive us our trespasses, support the weak, correct the disobedient and grant Your healing for all illness.

Show us Your mercy, O Lord; And grant us Your salvation. Clothe Your ministers with righteousness; Let Your people sing with joy. Give peace, O Lord, in all the world; For only in You can we live in safety. Lord, keep this nation under Your care; and guide us in the way of justice and truth. Let Your way be known on the Earth; Your saving health among all nations. Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten. Create in us clean hearts, O God; and Sustain us with Your Holy Spirit.

Hear us as we bring to You our private petitions. **(Time of silent prayer.)**
May we realize Your presence among us as Your Love draws us ever closer to our heavenly home.

© Amen.

PROPER TWENTY-SIX

Chant Tone



Introit

I will give thanks to the Lord with my
— whole heart; *
I will recount all of Your won | derful
deeds.

I will sing of the steadfast love of the
Lord, for — ever; *
with my mouth I will make known
Your faithfulness to all gener — ations.
For I said, "Steadfast love will be built
up for — ever; *
in the heavens You will establish
Your | faithfulness."

You have said, "I have made a
covenant with my | chosen one; *
I have sworn to David my — servant:
'I will establish your offspring for — ever; *
and build your throne for all
gener — ations.'"

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.

I will give thanks to the Lord with my
— whole heart; *
I will recount all of Your won | derful
deeds. *

*(Antiphon, Psalm 9:1;
Psalm 89:1-4)*

Collect of the Day

Lord Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, cleanse us by the power of Your redeeming blood that in purity and peace we may worship and adore Your holy name; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

Gradual

These are the ones coming out of the great tribu — lation. *

They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood | of the Lamb.
Blessèd are those whose strength is — in You, *
in whose heart are the highways to — Zion.

(Revelation 7:14b; Psalm 84:5)

ENTRANCE PRAYER: O Eternal God, You have given to Your Church many precious gifts, brought us into Your kingdom by the "Means of Grace," and blessed our work through the power of the Holy Spirit. We thank You for the opportunities to serve as helpers in Jesus Christ. May we serve You with a humble and quiet spirit, that our labors may be blessed to the glory of Your name. May we never grow weary in doing well, but continue to treasure every opportunity to be kind to the poor, hospitable to Your saints, and generous in our giving, until that great day when our worship and service will be done before Your eternal throne. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

TODAY IS A TRANSITION DAY IN OUR CHURCH CALENDAR.

We are wrapping up the general lessons from the non-festival half of the church year, and getting ready for our end-times lessons for the final three Sundays and into Advent. The truth is that we are always end time Christians because Jesus fulfilled all the prophecies concerning the end of the world. Now we are simply living out the end times waiting for Jesus to return. The best news is that God is patiently waiting for the end. In that way, all of those whom He has chosen for salvation will be born and received through the water and Word of Baptism.

THEME OF THE DAY:

Love God

INTROIT—(Antiphon, Psalm 9:1;) Psalm 89:1-4

In Psalm 9 David was praising God for his personal victories and for the victories God allowed the nation to achieve. The title of Psalm 89 states that it is a "miskel of Ethan," who was alive during the time of Solomon, that may only mean that it is set to chords of music he had previously written. The events in this Psalm accord better to the time of Jeremiah. Verses 1-2 are a general opening line of praise to God. Verses 3-4 speak of the promise of Christ as son of David.

COLLECT

We are looking to Jesus. As our High Priest He made the perfect sacrifice for our sin with His shed blood. We ask to worship Him in purity and truth.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON—Deuteronomy 6:1-9

Many commentators place verses 1-3 as the end of the presentation of the 10 Commandments and consider verses 4-9 as an exposition of the First Commandment. Deuteronomy 6 goes quite nicely with the Gospel Lesson and gives us the setting for the answer from Jesus. Today we are getting ready for the last three Sundays of the Church year. We do this mainly by reminding ourselves of Whom we worship and what it is we are expecting through our faith. We worship the One God in Three persons of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and we anticipate salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, the Son, our Lord.

GRADUAL—Revelation 7:14b; Psalm 84:5

Those who have come out of the tribulation of this world are those who have been given faith. These people praise God for all they have been given. Revelation 7 tells us the number of the saved. As such it is of great encouragement. Psalm 84, by the Sons of Korah was written for worship. Our faith is the highway that has been laid out in our heart to take us to Heaven.

EPISTLE LESSON—Hebrews 9:11-22

Hebrews 9 is at least as complex as it seems. When Jesus appeared at the Jordan River He established Himself as the place we would find God (taking the place of the Temple.) Jesus used His body as the place to make a sacrifice for sins and He used His body as the sacrifice (because bulls and goats were only symbols of the blood He would shed.) Our faith, granted to us by the Holy Spirit, gives us the work of Christ as our own and we are raised from the dead (and the works of the dead, that is sin) and established as those who are made worthy to serve God (that is, we have Heaven and eternal life guaranteed to us in the wonder of our faith.)