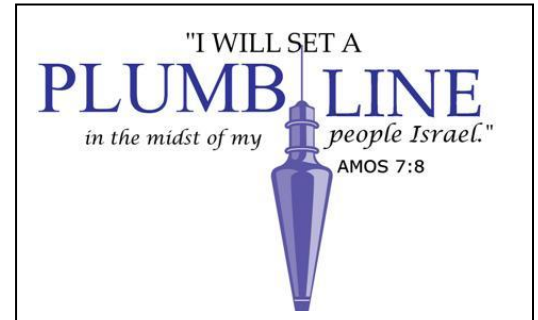


Perley Parish
Time after Pentecost – Lectionary 15
July 11, 2021

Gathering Hymn: Just a Closer Walk with Thee
Just a closer walk with Thee. Grant it, Jesus, is my plea
Daily walking close to Thee. Let it be, dear Lord, let it be

I am weak but Thou art strong. Jesus keep me from all wrong
I'll be satisfied as long. As I walk, let me walk close to Thee

Just a closer walk with Thee. Grant it, Jesus, is my plea
Daily walking close to Thee. Let it be, dear Lord, let it be



Welcome and Announcements

- Michele is away with her family
- Where's Michele
- Food Shelf – new day!! Monday's 5:30-7:30

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, the God of manna, the God of miracles, the God of mercy.
Amen.

God, our provider,

Help us. It is hard to believe there is enough to share. We question your ways when they differ from the ways of the world in which we live. We turn to our own understanding rather than trusting in you. We take offense at your teachings and your ways. Turn us again to you. Where else can we turn? Share with us the words of eternal life and feed us for life in the world.
Amen.

Beloved people of God: in Jesus, the manna from heaven, you are fed and nourished. By Jesus, the worker of miracles, there is always more than enough. Through Jesus, +the bread of life, you are shown God's mercy: you are forgiven and loved into abundant life. **Amen**

Prayer of the Day

O God, from you come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works. Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey your commandments, and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

Psalm 85:8-13 (Read Responsively)

Let me hear what God the LORD will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts. **Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land.** Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other. **Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky.** The LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase. **Righteousness will go before him, and will make a path for his steps.**

First Reading Amos 7:7-15 (Jare-ah-bow-um) (Am-ah-zie-ah)

This is what he showed me: the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand. ⁸ And the LORD said to me, “Amos, what do you see?” And I said, “A plumb line.” Then the Lord said,

“See, I am setting a plumb line
in the midst of my people Israel;
I will never again pass them by;
⁹ the high places of Isaac shall be made desolate,
and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste,
and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.”

¹⁰ Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, “Amos has conspired against you in the very center of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words. ¹¹ For thus Amos has said,

‘Jeroboam shall die by the sword,
and Israel must go into exile
away from his land.’”

¹² And Amaziah said to Amos, “O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; ¹³ but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king’s sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom.”

¹⁴ Then Amos answered Amaziah, “I am^[a] no prophet, nor a prophet’s son; but I am^[b] a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, ¹⁵ and the LORD took me from following the flock, and the LORD said to me, ‘Go, prophesy to my people Israel.’”

Holy Gospel according to Mark 6:14-29, **Glory to you O Lord** (Her-owe-dee-us)

¹⁴ King Herod heard of it, for Jesus’^[a] name had become known. Some were^[b] saying, “John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are at work in him.” ¹⁵ But others said, “It is Elijah.” And others said, “It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old.” ¹⁶ But when Herod heard of it, he said, “John, whom I beheaded, has been raised.”

¹⁷ For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, because Herod^[c] had married her. ¹⁸ For John had been telling Herod, “It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.” ¹⁹ And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, ²⁰ for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed;^[d] and yet he liked to listen to him. ²¹ But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. ²² When his daughter Herodias^[e] came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, “Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it.” ²³ And he solemnly swore to her, “Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom.” ²⁴ She went out and said to her mother, “What should I ask for?” She replied, “The head of John the baptizer.” ²⁵ Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, “I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.” ²⁶ The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her. ²⁷ Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders to bring John’s^[f] head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, ²⁸ brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother. ²⁹ When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

The Gospel of our Lord, **Praise to you, O Christ**

Children's Message

Let's talk about what it means to be famous. A famous person is one who is known by a large number of people. Famous people usually become known because they have a special talent or have done something remarkable that other people admire.

Let's look at pictures of famous people.

- George Washington was the first American president, a good leader and a brave, heroic man.
- This is a picture of a famous modern day man, Bill Gates, who developed software programs which allow us to use and enjoy computers in our homes.
- You may not recognize this person's face, but you may have seen his art. This is Vincent Van Gogh and this is a print of one of his many beautiful paintings.
- Yes, this is a picture of Bugs Bunny and he is famous because he makes us laugh.

We could list many other people who are talented musicians, inventors, writers, ministers, or doctors.

The Bible tells us that when Jesus lived on earth he was famous. King Herod and others heard about his miracles; they heard that he cured people who had been sick. They knew about Jesus because he developed a reputation for helping people. In the Bible we read that "his name had become known" (6:14).

All these years later we still know about Jesus and he still has a reputation for helping people. We could say he is the most famous person of all time. He is famous for what he did to teach us about God's love.]

Let's Pray: Thank you Lord for sending us the most famous person of all times, Jesus, and help us to continue to spread the word of how wonderful life is with Him in it. Amen.

Message

Grace and peace to you from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen

When you look at today's Gospel and the story of the beheading of John the Baptist it isn't really a story that a pastor would want to hand off to a lay person to preach on. So thankfully Pastor Michele is going to give me a message this morning on our text from Amos instead.

Take any day and look at our headlines on the news and in the newspapers. You will find stories of deceit, greed, self-righteousness, oppression, materialism, heart filled stories and heartless stories. Stories where we see God at work and stories where we see evil at work. That is our world today isn't it? Guess what though, that's essentially the same type of information, storylines and mayhem that Amos wrote about over 2,700 years ago when he penned the book of Amos and it's all still relevant all these years later.

People in Amos' time would say they had life pretty good – the rich were getting richer, the powerful getting more powerful, prestige and power were expanding and life and success was a great thing. The problem was that those that had it all allowed their success to let them become lazy and trouble bound. People began to be greedy, they were conceited, they oppressed others and all of the other bad things we listed from our headlines earlier. And of course, this did not make God happy.

The greedy and powerful began to worship other gods – some worshipped themselves even and all that they were in their own minds and some worshipped things and idols. Instead of worshipping God – who provided them with all that they had – they were worshipping others so God sends a prophet to proclaim judgement on them. Now this prophet wasn't a "professional," wasn't

from royal courts or anything. In fact Amos says he is just “a guy making a living in the fields” and God says to him ‘Go, prophesy to my people Israel.’ There becomes a lot of Law and Judgement in the rest of the book of Amos and Amos pleads to God to not really carry out all that he is saying.

True, the people don’t really deserve mercy – they are doing this to themselves remember – but Amos pleads and says “Lord God, I beg you, stop!” And God does at first – in fact he does twice – and then He gets to a point where he doesn’t and that is where we get our lesson. There is indeed a message of wrath in this passage. A matter of this is what you get for what you have done. This is the beginning of the inevitable judgement of God administered to those in order to turn them back to Him. *“This is what he showed me: the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand.”*

We know what a plumb line is – a simple construction tool to guide us in a straight line, to help us do things straight and square. I imagine God used this analogy because the plumb lines help one to deal with what’s real, they don’t mess around with “almost” or “close” results when the plumb line is made. That’s how God’s law is too. It makes no attempt to soften a hit to one’s pride, accept one’s excuses or both when we try to explain away our sinful hearts, minds and voices. It’s black and white, straight or crooked, right or wrong, acceptable or unacceptable.... you get the idea. We can argue and plea all we want to justify our sins as much as we want but we can’t change the reality. God didn’t pass by the people in Amos’ day and he isn’t going to ignore that plumb line for us either. *“See, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel; I will never again pass them by;”*

The plumb line is still around for you and me. It’s still making judgements about our sins, still speaking truth about us and to us and that truth really isn’t pretty. It’s not easy to think about because it’s hard to grasp that there is one supreme authority and that judgement doesn’t come from you and me. What is good and bad, right and wrong, just and unjust in your life is decided by God – He has real high standards for us and sometimes that can find us running from what we know isn’t good and looking for other means of measurement instead of God’s. Ones that aren’t quite so tough, allow us a bit of breathing room or find us not feeling quite so accountable when we do not follow as we should.

Sometimes we can even find ourselves tempted to change the measure all together. Try to use other things than the Word of God to tell us how we are doing and what we can do moving forward. Or what about comparing ourselves to others – “hey I know I did this but it’s not nearly as bad as the actions of so and so. If we find ourselves thinking that way you can find yourself in a place without the love and grace that God provides in our lives.

So what’s next? How do I use this passage? Well this teaches us that we will respond in 1 of 2 ways when we are confronted with our sins and it WILL depend on how we understand who God is. What the purpose – the plumb line – is to us. We can run away, try and push God away like Amaziah. He was called out for his sins, how he and others had sinned against God, and he tries to go somewhere to be rescued. In a way it’s like when you and I do something wrong and instead of brining the wrong to God we call a friend and help them be on “our side” to justify what we did. Or maybe we could try to push God away and isolate ourselves from Him and his influence in our lives. There are parts of our lives where we want God and the Word involved but other areas – not so much. Both of these two responses have one thing in common and that is that they DO understand God’ Law, his judgement as a burden and obligation. But that’s not why God gives us law.

God’s Law, for as much as it hurts at times, challenges us at times, and makes us uncomfortable at times, is a great gift from a Loving Father. God makes us aware of our sins for one reason – one reason – and that is so we go to the only one who holds that plumb line and the only one who can make us right. We can go as our messy selves to Jesus – the one who lived a perfect life and died on the cross for us. We can trade all of our sinful selves, our unholy and avoiding ways and receive the perfection of Jesus to us.

God gives us Law in order to make us turn to the Word, to repent and return to his grace and forgiveness. He doesn’t call us out for being sinful to separate himself from us but rather to make us aware of our distress, our messiness in order to turn us to Him for a lifeline. He loves us all that much – so much so that there is never a point at which you can’t turn back to him. No matter what you do, he’ll be right there waiting to welcome you home.

I encourage you today to remember who God is and what he has done for you. I want you to know and be confident that God is working in your life – even when you feel the tug of Law on your hearts and minds. We have the blessing as Brothers and Sisters in Christ that we can't run from the truth of the plumb line. We also can't thankfully outrun the grace of God because Christ died for our sins. No matter how wrong we have been, as forgiven sinners, we have the gift of being made right to God. Amen

Hymn of the Day: Faith of our Fathers

Faith of our fathers, living still,
In spite of dungeon, fire, and sword;
Oh, how our hearts beat high with joy
Whene'er we hear that glorious word.

Refrain:

Faith of our fathers, holy faith,
We will be true to thee till death!

Faith of our fathers, we will love
Both friend and foe in all our strife,
And preach thee, too, as love knows how,
By kindly words and virtuous life. (Refrain)

Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian/catholic Church, the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen

Prayers of the people: (Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**)

Let us come before the triune God in prayer.

Holy parent, you welcome your people into one family and gather all things to yourself. Bestow your grace upon our beloved church, lavish your wisdom upon us, and redeem us from our faults, that by our witness all might praise your glory. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Awesome Creator, you steadfastly tend to the smallest of seeds and the mightiest of trees. Spring up green growth from the earth, nourish the growth of fruit, grain and other crops, and bless the work of farmers and laborers. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

God of strength and healing, you are near to those who endure difficulty. Comfort all who are survivors of violence and disease. Embrace those who are sick, today we especially lift up Marlis and Kirk, Sonya and Roger, Terry and Jeff, Evonne and Byron, Whitney and all of those that we now name silently in our own hearts.....Surround them with your unwavering presence. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

God of love, we pray for this holy house and all those who worship here and with us from a far. We thank you for the relationship that we have with each other and with you. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your abiding grace and thank you for teaching us this prayer that we say together now.

Our father who art in heaven hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen

Blessing

The blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, +be upon you now and forever. In the Name of the Father, and the +Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen

Sending Song: Praise and Thanksgiving

Praise and thanksgiving, Father we offer
For all things living you have made good
Harvest of sown fields, fruits of the orchard
Hay from the mown fields, blossom and wood

Then will Your blessing reach every people
Each one confessing your gracious hand
When You are reigning no one will hunger
Your love sustaining, fruitful the land

Dismissal – Go in peace. You are the body of Christ. **Thanks be to God.**



I want to follow Jesus. He is God's Son.

The Perfect Role Model

Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ.
Ephesians 5:2a (NLT)

Based on Ephesians 4:25-5:2



W E K Q A S C E G D D P W P E
P W C G K Q R X O R T P E V C
E O T H I E F A O Q Q R I J U
X R X O G K Q M D C A S U K W
Y D Y N K S Z P K O U Y R T L
F S A O T V Z L Z B J F E U H
O P G W T J O E A B U S F E E
R W S T E A L I N G O P G G L
G O L I E S J F O U L A A I E
I R K L U X R M J E R U V T T
V K T O X Q T N H U G E A M M
I P B V K I N D O N D T U Y N
N T R E S V H C A I I M V G V
G E P U I B N L X M D A Z V U
M V Y U N E M T I P W K R V K

STEALING
IMITATE
TRUTH
LANGUAGE

ENCOURAGE
FORGIVING
LIES
FOUL

DEVIL
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ABUSIVE
EXAMPLE

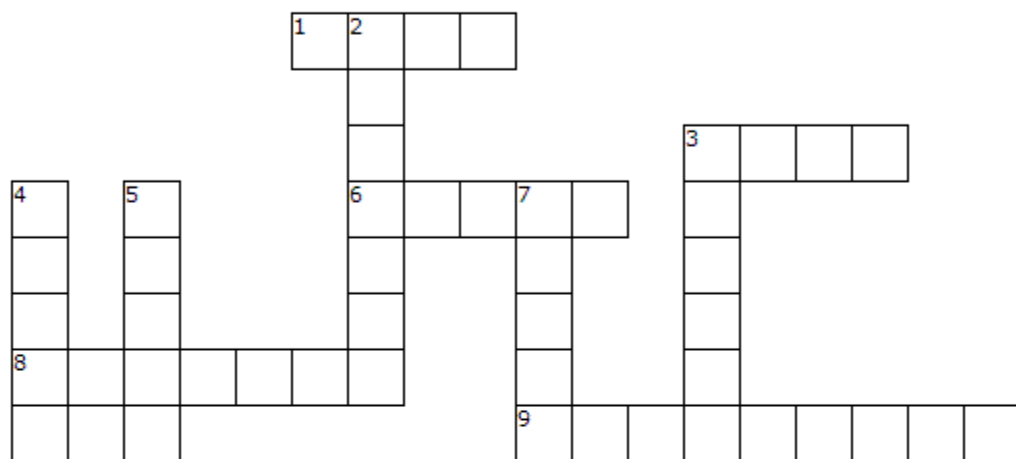
WORDS
KIND
HELPFUL
ANGER

LOVE
WORK
GOOD
SIN

The Perfect Role Model

Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ.
Ephesians 5:2a (NLT)

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ACROSS

1. To be friendly, generous, or caring toward others
3. False statements presented as being true
6. A statement proven to be correct
8. One who serves as a pattern to be copied
9. Willing to overlook faults in others; to be merciful

DOWN

2. To copy the actions, appearance, or speech of another person
3. Feeling or showing affection for others
4. A feeling of extreme displeasure
5. To take something without permission
7. A person who takes something without permission

IMITATE
LOVING

STEAL
EXAMPLE

KIND
ANGER

THIEF
LIES

TRUTH
FORGIVING