

About the Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Theme: The Cross, God's Sign of Love
+ *highlighting the Scriptures for the week* +

The LORD's prophet faced persecution at the hands of His enemies. (Jeremiah) He did not retaliate, but entrusted himself to the Righteous Judge of all. So it is in every age; wherever there is envy and selfish ambition, there is every kind of disorder and evil. (James) Yet those who know the LORD's Christ by faith have the Wisdom come down from heaven: they find peace and mercy in His saving Love. Such love is then extended within the Christian fellowship; they are friends of God, not of the world. Though Jesus was betrayed by the enemies of God, He promised victory in the end. (Mark) So also the cross marks relationships among His disciples; the greatest among them show their greatness in serving all the rest – thus the cross marks the life of all the baptized children of God.

WEEKLY BIBLE READING SCHEDULE

Use the schedule below in your personal devotion. The first three readings are the lessons read today; the last three will be read next Sunday. The Wednesday reading is the psalmody for the week. Each day you may want to pray that psalm or the prayer printed in our service folder today, followed by the suggested reading and your personal requests and thanksgivings to our heavenly Father.

- Sunday** Jeremiah 11:18-20 What were the enemies of Jeremiah plotting? What was their plan? What did Jeremiah pray for in the face of this plot? How did our Savior respond in a parallel way to His enemies? What does this mean?
- Monday** James 3:13-4:10 What is the cause of disorder and evil practices? What characterizes the wisdom coming down from heaven? Who is it that brought such wisdom down to earth? What causes of fights and quarrels among Christians? What is our core problem? What gets in the way of proper prayer? Why is friendship with the world enmity against God? Where and how does the world pull you away from God? Whom does God oppose? To whom does He give His undeserved love (grace)? What does this mean?
- Tuesday** Mark 9:30-37 What did the disciples not understand? Why is this hard to understand? What were the disciples arguing about? What did Jesus teach them about leadership in the church? Who is the greatest in the kingdom? How is Jesus welcomed among the baptized faithful? What does this mean?
- Wednesday** Psalm 54 How was this psalm to be sung (see the heading)? Why (i.e., what is the historical context of this psalm)? In what way(s) was God the "helper" of David? In what way(s) is God your "helper"? How might you, therefore, give thanks to God?
- Thursday** Numbers 11:4-6, 10-16, 24-29 What were the people of Israel complaining about? How did Moses respond? What was the LORD's solution? Why did the LORD share His Spirit with the elders? For what purpose? Why do we have pastors? How does the LORD carry out His ministry among us?
- Friday** James 5:(1-12) 13-20 What does this section in James teach us about prayer? Is there power in prayer? . . . or in something else? What is the "something else"? What does this mean?
- Saturday** Mark 9:38-50 Who is "against" the Kingdom of God? Who therefore are "for" the Kingdom? What is the motivation for all works of Christian love? Why must sin be dealt with radically? How is this done? What is the preservative ("salt") in every Christian? What is the effect of this salt within the Christian community? What does this mean?