

Sermon – August 31, 2025 – 12th Pentecost – Year C

Psalms 19:14 “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.”
Please be seated.

Last Sunday we continued our walk with Jesus to Jerusalem. We considered a more correct attitude of the Ten Commandments seen through the eyes of Jesus. Our attitudes of kindness and love can bring us a more complete obedience of these guidelines to loving God.

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself? I will with God’s help.

Once upon a time you and I are invited to a banquet by a common friend. When we arrive, there is an open seating arrangement. Sit where you would like, we are told. Without much consideration we might look around and see if there is someone we know, or would like to know better, and we move in that direction. OR our ego leads us to the front of the room so we may be noticed.

Our plans go awry as the host, a person we both admire and enjoy being with, tells us His close friends needs our chairs. We look around and no seats are available except in the very far back. We apologize and scurry away to our new seats, hoping no one notices.

Today, as on every worship Sunday, we celebrate new life at the banquet Christ offers us at the altar. We also have a coffee hour banquet. Occasionally we find a visitor among us. Some of us sit with our friends who we really like to be with. Some of us make it a point to say hello and sit with this visitor. We really do not know what to do, for we might want to be in both places. I remember the scripture which says we are all travelers and have to be somewhere. Being with the visitor may remind us we were new in this place once upon a time, and how we felt when no one came to our table to say hello, or we were warmly greeted by

someone who has become a good friend as we made our way to join this church.

Our call today is to re-think some habits and re-establish the love of neighbor in our lives. Love God with all our heart, mind, body and soul, Love our neighbor as ourselves. Instead of 10 commandments, or the 613 commandments Pete reminded us, we have TWO NEW commandments given us by Jesus. Simple. Concise. We are challenged not to limit our understanding of the four-letter word L O V E. Do as we want done unto us. Be generous beyond measure. Go the extra mile.

Several weeks ago we looked at Prayer. We are encouraged to pray constantly, without ceasing, moment by moment. We want to be in close touch with God throughout each day. Just do it.

Two weeks ago we looked at Faith. Live AS IF the good we want, we seek, we hope for, is possible, and act AS IF we can get it done, or live as we believe we are to live. All things are possible with God.

So life goes on and on. Jesus loves us this we know, for the Bible tells us so. Back to the banquet. What if we were to be the special guest of the host, and led to the front of the room, to sit in a place of honor. Isn't that one of our deepest hopes, to have our life, our efforts, celebrated and appreciated. We want to be the best and recognized as such.

How much more satisfying to be blessed by God, in the quiet of the Kingdom of God on this earth, knowing we have done our best and God celebrates us in a way far beyond anything – ANYTHING – we could ask or imagine. We are told time and again how wonderful our life will be in heaven. We are told there will be no more tears, or sorrow or pain. How amazing life would be if we chose to live this heavenly life today, without worry, giving all our efforts to loving without condition, forgiving without strings attached, and cherishing the love of God in each of us. Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound.

God bless us everyone. Shalom.

Let us pray. Thank you, God, for today, a brand-new day in our life with You. Thank you for this place, where we come today to share in Your banquet of LOVE. Keep us humble as we share Your love with each other and the world. We pray in the Holy Name of Jesus. Amen. God bless you. Shalom. Amen.

Ray Rosch 8-31-2025