

Thursday June 11, 2020

Opening

Selected verses from Psalm 86

Leader: Turn your ear, O LORD.

Family: **Answer me, for I am poor and needy.**

Indeed, you, Lord, are good and forgiving

And abounding in mercy to all who call to you.

In the day of my distress I will call to you,

Because you will answer me.

Teach me your way, O LORD. I will walk in your truth.

Give me wholehearted commitment to fear your name.

I will thank you, O Lord my God, with all my heart,

And I will glorify your name forever.

For great is your mercy toward me,

And you have delivered my soul from “the lowest hell.” Amen.

Bible Reading - Acts 6:1-15

In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. ² So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. ³ Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them ⁴ and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.”

⁵ This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. ⁶ They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

⁷ So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

⁸ Now Stephen, a man full of God’s grace and power, performed great wonders and signs among the people. ⁹ Opposition arose, however, from members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called)—Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria as well as the provinces of Cilicia and Asia—who began to argue with Stephen. ¹⁰ But they could not stand up against the wisdom the Spirit gave him as he spoke.

¹¹ Then they secretly persuaded some men to say, “We have heard Stephen speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God.”

¹² So they stirred up the people and the elders and the teachers of the law. They seized Stephen and brought him before the Sanhedrin. ¹³ They produced false witnesses, who testified, "This fellow never stops speaking against this holy place and against the law. ¹⁴ For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down to us."

¹⁵ All who were sitting in the Sanhedrin looked intently at Stephen, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

Questions for Discussion

Take whatever time is necessary or possible to discuss these questions. Discussion does not have to be lengthy.

For the kids: *What did the believers choose seven men to do?*

For the grownups: *At first it might seem like the apostles thought they were above the task of making sure the food was distributed fairly. Looking at the type of candidates they wanted, it is obvious that they didn't think it was a lowly task. Why did they delegate this important duty?*

Prayer

Luther's Morning Prayer:

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have kept me this night from all harm and danger. Keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please you. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

or

Luther's Evening Prayer:

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have graciously kept me this day. Forgive me all my sins, and graciously keep me this night. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

The head of the household may lead other prayers and petitions. The members of the family may also take turns with their own prayers and petitions. The head of the household closes the prayer in Jesus' name.

Blessing

Leader: The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve us.

Amen.

Hymn

Read or sing the hymn verse as a family.

***Make us the channels of your love,
Your endless mercy, pow'r, and peace.
So build your Church in ev'ry place,
And day by day its strength increase.
May we hold high the cross of Christ,
Who rose and lives eternally,
That all in him their Savior see
And sing the hymn of jubilee.
(CW 535:3)***

A Recording of this hymn can be found on [YouTube](#).

Large Catechism Study

Optional: Briefly discuss and apply this portion of Luther's Large Catechism.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT (Continued)

For by nature we all have within us this beautiful virtue, to wit, that whoever has committed a wrong would like to cover up and adorn his disgrace, so that no one may see it or know it; and no one is so bold as to boast to all the world of the wickedness he has perpetrated; all wish to act by stealth and without any one being aware of what they do. Then, if any one be arraigned, the name of God is dragged into the affair and must make the villainy look like godliness, and the shame like honor. This is the common course of the world, which, like a great deluge, has flooded all lands. Hence we have also as our reward what we seek and deserve: pestilences, wars, famines, conflagrations, floods, wayward wives, children, servants, and all sorts of defilement. Whence else should so much misery come? It is still a great mercy that the earth bears and supports us.

Therefore, above all things, our young people should have this commandment earnestly enforced upon them, and they should be trained to hold this and the First Commandment in high regard; and whenever they transgress, we must at once be after them with the rod, and hold the commandment before them, and constantly inculcate it, so as to bring them up not only with punishment, but also in the reverence and fear of God.

Thus you now understand what it is to take God's name in vain, that is (to recapitulate briefly), either simply for purposes of falsehood, and to allege God's name for something that is not so, or to curse, swear, conjure, and, in short, to practise whatever wickedness one may.