

**BIBLE STUDY**  
**July 22, 2019**

**The Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Genesis 18: 20-32**

**Luke 11: 1-13**

**Colossians 2: 12-14**

**1. Genesis 18: 20-32**

- A continuation of the Abraham story. Abraham accompanied the guests to a spot where they could look down upon Sodom. God wonders whether he should tell Abraham about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah that he is planning. In ancient Middle East a servant of a king was also an advisor/confident. God says that since Abraham's descendants will become a great people, he will share with Abraham his plan in anticipation of the stature that Abraham will achieve.
- V. 20: Sodom and Gomorrah are notoriously corrupt and evil cities. The outcry is the cries of those who were victims of its injustice and violence. It is similar to the story of the call of Moses when the outcry of the Hebrews who were enslaved in Egypt rose up to God. Isaiah 1:9-10; 3:9 sees their sin as a lack of social justice; Ez 16: 46-51 as disregard for the poor; Jer 23: 14 as general immorality. In Genesis it is the violation of the sacred duty of hospitality by the threatened sexual violence.
- As the visitors head to Sodom, Abraham enters into negotiation with God. Abraham is not interceding for Sodom but through his bold questioning of God is learning that God is a just God distinguishing between the righteous and the evil ones.
- Abraham is aware of the difference in status between God and him but he dares to negotiate with God. He bargains with God until God agrees that if there are ten righteous persons in the city, he will save the city. God is revealed as a just judge.
- That God does not save the city suggests that there were not 10 righteous persons in the city.

**2. Luke 11: 1-13**

- Following Jesus' commendation of Mary for giving him her undivided attention, the disciples ask Jesus to teach them how to pray just as John taught his disciples how to pray. To have a particular way of prayer gave the group their own identity.
- Jesus teaches them the "Lord's prayer." Luke's form of the prayer has five petitions compared to the seven of Matthew's.
- Vv. 1-4: Father: Jesus invites the disciples to have the same intimate relationship with God as he does---as Father. "Abba"=Daddy, Papa

- The petitions come across as wishes but in the original Aramaic they appear more as commands. "Bring it about that your name is sanctified." "Make your kingdom come."
- The community needs from God sustenance, forgiveness, rescue from overwhelming tribulation.
- The community is on a journey. Therefore, it needs sustenance—daily bread, i.e. food that is regular, that they can depend on.
- The community has not yet arrived at its perfect fulfillment. Therefore, it needs forgiveness—from God and mutually from one another. To deny one another forgiveness is to impede the forgiveness of God within us.
- The world in which the community lives is full of trial, persecution and temptation. They pray that these troubles not be overwhelming causing them to fall away in fear.
- New translation in French: "Let us not enter into temptation" instead of "Lead us not into temptation"
- "The community that prays the Lord's Prayer is a community very conscious of its privileged closeness to God. But, it prays the prayer in the world, as part of the world, on behalf of the world, to which it testifies the breaking in of the kingdom. It is praying for food, for reconciliation, for deliverance from evil, not just for itself but for the entire human family, whose dignity and destiny as children of God it tries to model and proclaim. In short, it prays that the entire human race may enjoy the hospitality it has itself received from God." Byrne, *The Hospitality of God*, p 105.
- Vv. 5-13 Jesus follows up the lesson on what to pray with a parable that talks about the attitude with which they are to pray. They are to pray with perseverance and persistence.
- The parable builds on the obligation one had to provide hospitality regardless of the inconvenience. A friend knocks on the door at midnight requesting aid in providing hospitality for an unexpected visitor. The one who is within the neighboring house does not want to get up because his whole family is tucked into bed with him. It will disturb the whole household. He refuses but Jesus predicts that he will give in not because of friendship but because of the persistence of his friend. He will want to make him go away. If this man will do it for the wrong reason, how much more will God who is kind and merciful do it for the right reason.
- There may also be a lost strain in this parable of the shame that one would incur if he were not to get up and help for the sake of hospitality. Everyone would be talking about him the next day!
- How can we say that everyone who asks receives, who seeks finds, and knocks has the door opened? Because God is good, kind, and compassionate.
- If human beings—as evil as we are—know how to give good things to our children, how much more will God who is all good give the holy Spirit to those who ask him.

- It seems to say that God gives the Holy Spirit—not always what we ask for?

### **3. Colossians 2: 12-14**

- V. 12: “You were buried with him in baptism in which you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God who raised him from the dead.”  
The water of Baptism is sign of death and life. When we go down into the water of baptism, we are buried with Christ. When we come up out of the water, we are raised up with him. This happens through faith in the power of God—the same power that raised up Jesus.
- V. 13: Even when we were dead to sin, he brought us back to life by forgiving us our sins.
- V. 14: Paul amplifies on the image of Christ being nailed to the cross and imagines the legal document that contained our condemnation being nailed to the cross to wipe away our debt.