

SEPTEMBER 10, 2023
FIFTEENTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST

taking 
faith
home

Love your neighbor as yourself.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 18:15-20	Seeking reconciliation
Monday	Ezekiel 33:7-11	God's judgment seeks repentance
Tuesday	Romans 13:8-14	Love for one another
Wednesday	Deuteronomy 4:5-14	Israel is favored by God
Thursday	Galatians 5:13-15	Christ gives freedom
Friday	Leviticus 19:9-18	Living a holy life
Saturday	Psalms 119:33-40	A prayer for understanding
Sunday	Matthew 18:21-35	A parable about forgiveness

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Romans 13:9 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

God of goodness and mercy, give us hearts to love and to care for others as you care for us through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, with this gift of food strengthen us to delight in your law of love for the sake of all you have created through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May you long for the ways of God that teach love and mercy through Jesus Christ.



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

Beloved, God's Chosen



WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What news have you seen or heard recently where laws have been broken?
- Jesus said, "love your neighbor as yourself." What makes it hard to love others as you love yourself?

DEVOTIONS



Read: Romans 13:8-14.

The law of God was—and is—intended as a gift from God that we may live in peace with one another. The commandments are plain and simple: we should not commit adultery, murder, steal, or covet what others have. The law mirrors the love of God that intends goodness and mercy for people. As Deuteronomy 4:8 states, "[W]hat other great nation has statutes and ordinances, as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today?" The law demands right action toward people that is merciful, especially for the less powerful who cannot otherwise protect themselves. Mercy is well summarized by saying, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Romans 13:9), a reference to Leviticus 19:18 that was quoted by Jesus, Paul, and others in the Bible. The gospel life offers mercy and acts of love for the sake of the health of individuals and communities alike.

Discuss: What do you think it means to show mercy through the love and care of others?

Pray: **Loving God, we thank you for the gift of your law and for freeing us to love others as you have loved us through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

SERVICE



Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how can you care for the daily needs of others?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Bible studies, Sunday school, and youth groups are wonderful opportunities to gather to read the Bible, have caring conversations, and learn together. Think or talk about where and how you learn God's word. Psalm 119 is a lovely text that promotes learning God's will and word.

Pray: **Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes, and I will observe it to the end. Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart. Amen.**

(Psalm 119:33-34)

