

Lessons for First Sunday in Lent

February 14, 2016

Psalm 91:1-13 (*Antiphon vs. 1*) ~ *A word of trust and assurance in God's protective care.*

Deuteronomy 26:1-11 ~ *The people were to bring their first fruits and their thanks into the Lord's presence.*

Romans 10:8b-13 ~ *God's Word of promise has come close to us in the flesh of Jesus Christ our Savior.*

Luke 4:1-13 ~ *The account of Jesus' temptation hits close to home, for He was faithful in our stead.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: The Faithful Son of God

When Jesus was tempted by the devil in the Judean desert, He would not use a power that was rightfully His as the Son of God. Instead He remained faithful to His mission for our redemption. The children of Abraham, led from slavery in Egypt, through the desert, and into a land of milk and honey, were blessed by God although they were not always faithful. We have been called to be children of a faithful God. By the power of His promise we are able to confess that Jesus is our Lord. In the power of that promise we trust in God's grace for salvation.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: Lord Jesus, it must have been a really tough struggle, but You appeared so strong when You faced the devil in the desert. When I face his trickery, help me know that You are my strength. Where I have fallen, help me to know Your grace. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: Our lives depend less on our daily bread and more on the Word of God, yet our gracious Father provides more than we need of both! His Word has drawn near to us in the person of Christ our Savior, who was faithful to the Father's will in our place. God asks that we bring Him the first fruits of our lives in worship and in trust, and in service to one another.

OFFERING PRAYER: Here, Lord, we bring our first-fruits, and seek Your blessing now.
We trust Your Word of promise, and in Your presence bow.
With mighty hand You rescue Your children facing harm,
And through these gifts You beckon with loving, outstretched arm. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: In worship, trust, and dependence we wander far from God, our refuge and our strength. We are more like the Israelites in the wilderness than we are like Jesus in the desert. Yet Jesus is the faithful Son of God in our stead, and by His obedience has come near to us in our wanderings. He is the Word of God, near by, the place where God's name dwells. He is close to us so we can call to Him. He draws us to Himself so we can hear Him whisper, "Everyone who calls on Me will be saved!"