

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All: Lord God, we so often find ourselves conforming to the ways of the world. When we are hurt, we hurt others. When we are ignored, we ignore others. But you always faithfully sacrificed your needs to meet our needs. Forgive us, dear Lord, and strengthen our hope and confidence in you, so that others will be eager to know how we can live with such faith. Renew us and restore us to right relationship with you by grace. We ask in the powerful name of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen

Isaiah 8:11-14a, 17

The LORD spoke to me with his strong hand upon me, warning me not to follow the way of this people.

He said: "Do not call conspiracy everything that these people call conspiracy; do not fear what they fear, and do not dread it. The LORD Almighty is the one you are to regard as holy, he is the one you are to fear, he is the one you are to dread, and he will be a sanctuary; but for both houses of Israel he will be a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall."

I will wait for the LORD, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob. I will put my trust in him.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God!

1 Peter 3:8-22

Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. For, "Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech. He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened." But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. It is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God!

Luke 18:9-14

To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and

the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'

"But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'

"I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God!

Sermon Outline
"Living Stones!" • Part 4: "Be Prepared"
1 Peter 3:8-22

Introduction: "A good thing..?"

1. A lesson from the Olympics.

"Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing." v.8-9

• repay _____.

2. "Be Prepared"

"But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander." v. 15-16

• to _____ (Hebrews 11:1)

3. Focused, powerful submission is the way of Christ.

"For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God." v. 18

• Not what is being _____.

Answers to Sermon Outline: evil with blessing;
explain your hope; given up, but gained

Leader: The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

People: And the people took the blessing and held it in their hearts.

Leader: Go in peace, serve the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!