

**A reading from Isaiah chapter 55 verses 1 through 9. You can find the reading on page 615 in your pew Bible.**

“Come, everyone who thirsts,  
    come to the waters;  
and he who has no money,  
    come, buy and eat!  
Come, buy wine and milk  
    without money and without price.  
Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,  
    and your labor for that which does not satisfy?  
Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good,  
    and delight yourselves in rich food.  
Incline your ear, and come to me;  
    hear, that your soul may live;  
and I will make with you an everlasting covenant,  
    my steadfast, sure love for David.  
Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples,  
    a leader and commander for the peoples.  
Behold, you shall call a nation that you do not know,  
    and a nation that did not know you shall run to you,  
because of the LORD your God, and of the Holy One of Israel,  
    for he has glorified you.

“Seek the LORD while he may be found;  
    call upon him while he is near;  
let the wicked forsake his way,  
    and the unrighteous man his thoughts;  
let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him,  
    and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.  
For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
    neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.  
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
    so are my ways higher than your ways  
    and my thoughts than your thoughts.

**The Word of the Lord.  
*Thanks be to God.***

Please join me in praying Psalm 51.

Leader: Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your steadfast love;

**People: according to your abundant mercy  
blot out my transgressions.**

Leader: Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
and cleanse me from my sin!

**People: For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is ever before me.**

Leader: Against you, you only, have I sinned  
and done what is evil in your sight,

**People: so that you may be justified in your words  
and blameless in your judgment.**

Leader: Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,  
and in sin did my mother conceive me.

**People: Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being,  
and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.**

Leader: Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;  
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

**People: Let me hear joy and gladness;  
let the bones that you have broken rejoice.**

Leader: Hide your face from my sins,  
and blot out all my iniquities.

**People: Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and renew a right spirit within me.**

Leader: Cast me not away from your presence,  
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

**People: Restore to me the joy of your salvation,  
and uphold me with a willing spirit.**

Leader: Then I will teach transgressors your ways,  
and sinners will return to you.

**People: Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God,  
O God of my salvation,**

Leader: and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.

**People: O Lord, open my lips,  
and my mouth will declare your praise.**

Leader: For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it;  
you will not be pleased with a burnt offering.

**People: The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;  
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.**

Leader: Do good to Zion in your good pleasure;  
build up the walls of Jerusalem;

**People: then will you delight in right sacrifices,  
in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings;  
then bulls will be offered on your altar.**

**All: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit: as it  
was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

**Leader: Please stand for the reading of the Gospel.**

*(allow them time to stand)*

**The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ  
according to Matthew.**

***People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.***

In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said,

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness:  
'Prepare the way of the Lord;  
make his paths straight.'"

Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

**Leader: The Gospel of the Lord**

***People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.***