

**A reading from Acts chapter 9 verses 19 through 31. You can find the reading on page 917 in your pew Bible.**

For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus. And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God." And all who heard him were amazed and said, "Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem of those who called upon this name? And has he not come here for this purpose, to bring them bound before the chief priests?" But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.

When many days had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him, but their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night in order to kill him, but his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket.

And when he had come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples. And they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles and declared to them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who spoke to him, and how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus. So he went in and out among them at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord. And he spoke and disputed against the Hellenists. But they were seeking to kill him. And when the brothers learned this, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.

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

Please join me in praying Psalm 97.

Leader: The LORD reigns, let the earth rejoice;  
let the many coastlands be glad!

**People: Clouds and thick darkness are all around him;  
righteousness and justice are the foundation  
of his throne.**

Leader: Fire goes before him  
and burns up his adversaries all around.

**People: His lightnings light up the world;  
the earth sees and trembles.**

Leader: The mountains melt like wax before the LORD,  
before the Lord of all the earth.

**People: The heavens proclaim his righteousness,  
and all the peoples see his glory.**

Leader: All worshipers of images are put to shame,  
who make their boast in worthless idols;  
worship him, all you gods!

**People: Zion hears and is glad,  
and the daughters of Judah rejoice,  
because of your judgments, O LORD.**

May 8, 2016

Leader: For you, O LORD, are most high over all the earth;  
you are exalted far above all gods.

**People: O you who love the LORD, hate evil!  
He preserves the lives of his saints;  
he delivers them from the hand of the wicked.**

Leader; Light is sown for the righteous,  
and joy for the upright in heart.

**People: Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous,  
and give thanks to his holy name!**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it  
was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. *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 John.**

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

“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

**Leader: The Gospel of the Lord**

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