The Word of God

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost September 6, 2026

Prayer of the Day

O Lord, always lead and follow us with your grace, that we may be still more intent on doing good. Grant this, we pray, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Reading: Ezekiel 33:7-9

7"So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. 8If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. 9But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul."

Psalm 32:1-8*

1Happy are they whose transgressions | are forgiven,*
and whose sin is | put away!
2Happy are they to whom the LORD im- | putes no guilt,*
and in whose spirit there | is no guile!
3While I held my tongue, my bones with- | ered away,*
because of my groaning | all day long.
4For your hand was heavy upon me | day and night;*
my moisture was dried up as in the | heat of summer.
5Then I acknowledged my | sin to you,*
and did not con- | ceal my guilt.
6I said, "I will confess my transgressions | to the LORD."*
Then you forgave me the guilt | of my sin.
7Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in | time of trouble;*
when the great waters overflow, they | shall not reach them.
8You are my hiding place; you preserve | me from trouble;*
you surround me with shouts | of deliverance.

Second Reading: Romans 13:1-10

1Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. 2Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. 3For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, 4for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. 5Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. 6For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. 7Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed. 8Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9For 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: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 10Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Gospel: Matthew 18:1-20

1At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" 2And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them 3and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 4Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, 6but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea. 7Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! 8And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. 9And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire. 10See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven. 12What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? 13And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. 14So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish. 15If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. 16But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. 17If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. 18Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. 19Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. 20For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."

Lessons for Next Week: Genesis 50:15-21; Psalm 103:1-12; Romans 14:1-12; Matthew 18:21-35

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