

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost Sunday, September 02, 2018

The Collect: Lord of all power and might, the author and giver of all good things: Graft in our hearts the love of your Name; increase in us true religion; nourish us with all goodness; and bring forth in us the fruit of good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Old Testament: Song of Solomon 2:8-13 Read from the New International Version Bible

8 Listen! My beloved! Look! Here he comes, leaping across the mountains, bounding over the hills.

9 My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Look! There he stands behind our wall, gazing through the windows, peering through the lattice.

10 My beloved spoke and said to me, "Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, come with me.

11 See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone.

12 Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come, the cooing of doves is heard in our land.

13 The fig tree forms its early fruit; the blossoming vines spread their fragrance. Arise, come, my darling; my beautiful one, come with me."

The Word of the Lord

Psalm 45:1-2, 7-10 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

1 My heart is stirring with a noble song; let me recite what I have fashioned for the king; * my tongue shall be the pen of a skilled writer.

2 You are the fairest of men; * grace flows from your lips, because God has blessed you for ever.

7 Your throne, O God, endures for ever and ever, * a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your kingdom; you love righteousness and hate iniquity.

8 Therefore God, your God, has anointed you * with the oil of gladness above your fellows.

9 All your garments are fragrant with myrrh, aloes, and cassia, * and the music of strings from ivory palaces makes you glad.

10 Kings' daughters stand among the ladies of the court; * on your right hand is the queen, adorned with the gold of Ophir. **(Oh-fer)**

Epistle: James 1:17-27 read from the New Living Translation

Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow. He chose to give birth to us by giving us his true word. And we, out of all creation, became his prized possession.

Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires. So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls.

But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.

If you claim to be religious but don't control your tongue, you are fooling yourself, and your religion is worthless. Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you.

The Word of the Lord

Gospel: Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23 read from the New Revised Standard Version Bible

Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from

the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles. So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?” He said to them, “Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

‘This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.’ You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.”

Then he called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.”

For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

The Gospel of the Lord

Closing Prayer: On September 7th we remember Elie Naud also known as Elias Neau, Huguenot Witness to the Faith, read from *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*

Elie Naud was a French Huguenot (also called French Reformed) born in 1661. It was an era when French Roman Catholicism was increasingly dominant and the persecution of Protestants was becoming more violent. Naud fled France and landed in England, where he sojourned briefly before settling permanently in New York City. During his early years in New York, he traveled frequently to Europe to raise money for Huguenot causes, having to take passage in steerage because he was not a Roman Catholic. His unwillingness to renounce his French Reformed faith resulted in his imprisonment for nearly two years in the infamous Chateau d'If.

In New York City, Naud became a member of L'Eglise du Saint-Esprit, a French-speaking parish which eventually joined The Episcopal Church, and later Trinity Church, Wall Street,

where he served fifteen years as a catechist among slaves and Native Americans, preparing them for baptism.

Naud founded a school for the children of the poor and for the children of slaves. Upon the recommendation of the Rector of Trinity Church, the Bishop of London, acting for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG), licensed Naud as a missionary “to slaves and ragged people in the New World.” Naud also worked to influence Parliament for the passage of British laws that would demand Christian instruction for the children of slaves and Native Americans and schools for their education. Only through these means, he believed, could an equal and free society be created. During the New York City slave riot of 1712, Naud remained faithful to his vision despite threats of death from those who believed education of slaves fueled such uprisings.

Naud continued to write hymns and poetry in his native French throughout his life. He died on September 7th, 1722, and was buried in the church yard at Trinity Church, Wall Street.

Let us pray: Blessed God, whose Son Jesus knelt to serve his disciples: We honor you for the witness of your servant Elie Naud; and pray that we, with him, may proclaim Christ in service to those deemed by the world to be littlest and least, following Jesus, who came not to be ministered to but to minister; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, to whom be honor and glory for ever and ever. **Amen.**