

KJW40 to Oct. 7

October 1 Su Reading 274 — Acts 5:27-32 — Before the Sanhedrin

²⁷ And when they had brought them, they stood them ^[fn]before the Sanhedrin. And the high priest questioned them, ²⁸ saying, "We strictly commanded you not to continue teaching in this name, and ^[fn]yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." ²⁹ But Peter and the apostles answered and said, "We must obey God rather than men. ³⁰ The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, ^[fn]whom you put to death by hanging Him on a tree. ³¹ This One God exalted ^[fn]to His right hand as ^[fn]a Leader and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. ³² And we are witnesses ^[fn]of these things, and [so is] the Holy Spirit, whom God gave to those who obey Him."

LSB Footnotes

(5:27) Lit *in*

(5:28) Lit *behold*

(5:30) Or *on whom you had laid violent hands*

(5:31) Or *by*

(5:31) Or *an Author*

(5:32) One early ms adds *in Him*

Exalted Leader and Savior — This short, powerful response by Peter is packed with information about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The actions of the Father include raising and exalting Jesus, and giving the Holy Spirit to those who obey. Two titles are given to Jesus here. First, He is the exalted "Leader" (or Prince) at the Father's right hand. As His namesake, Joshua, led the people of God into the Promised Land, so Jesus leads God's chosen followers into the kingdom of God. The second title is "Savior." Jesus' joint saving work with the Father grants repentance and forgiveness (v. 31). Being granted *forgiveness* by God or Jesus is easily understood and accepted, but that *repentance* is also granted may come as a surprise. It suggests that, without divine help, we cannot repent, or turn from our sins, to follow Jesus. Our Savior leads in helping us to feel conviction for our sins and to have a desire to turn to Him in faith. He leads us to salvation.

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us - YouTube

Savior, like a shepherd lead us,
Much we need Thy tender care;
In Thy pleasant pastures feed us,
For our use Thy folds prepare.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
Thou hast bought us, Thine we are.

— Dorothy Thrupp (1836)

October 2 M Reading 275 — Acts 7:51-60 — Stoning of Stephen

⁵¹ "You men—stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears—are always resisting the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. ⁵² And which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed those who had previously announced the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become; ⁵³ you who received the Law as ordained by angels, and [yet] did not observe it."

⁵⁴ Now when they heard this, they became furious in their hearts, and they [began] gnashing their teeth at him. ⁵⁵ But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; ⁵⁶ and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." ⁵⁷ But crying out with a loud voice, they covered their ears and rushed at him with one accord. ⁵⁸ And when they had driven him out of the city, they [began] stoning [him]; and the witnesses laid aside their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ They went on stoning Stephen as he was calling out and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" ⁶⁰ Then falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" And having said this, he ^[fn]fell asleep.

LSB Footnote

(7:60) Died

Standing in Applause — Stephen was brought to be examined by the Sanhedrin. He stood before them bravely and boldly, accusing them of being "*betrayers and murderers*" for killing Jesus, "*the Righteous One*" (v. 52). Jesus had stood before these same men about two months earlier. When the high priest asked Jesus, "*Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?*" ... *Jesus said, I am; and you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the power ...*" (Mark 14:61-62). Whereas the high priest would see Jesus "*sitting*" at God's right hand, Stephen saw Him "*standing at the right hand of God*" (Acts 7:56). The former is a picture of the authority of the Judge, while the latter portrays the acceptance of the Savior. Jesus will serve as both Judge and Savior, sentencing those who refused God's will, and receiving those who yielded to Jesus. Stephen paid with his life for his boldness and willingness to stand for the truth and proclaim it. Like in Jesus' death, Stephen forgave his killers and dismissed his spirit to Yahweh.

[Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus - YouTube](#)

Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
Stand in His strength alone;
The arm of flesh will fail you,
Ye dare not trust your own.
Put on the gospel armor,
Each piece put on with prayer;
Where duty calls or danger,
Be never wanting there.

— George Duffield (1858)

October 3 Tu Reading 276 — Acts 9:1-9 — Saul's Damascus Road Encounter

¹ Now ^[fn]Saul, still breathing ^[fn]threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, ² and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. ³ And as he was traveling, it happened that when he was approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him; ⁴ and falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" ⁵ And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He [said], "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, ⁶ but rise up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do." ⁷ And the men who traveled with him stood speechless, hearing the ^[fn]voice but seeing no one. ⁸ And Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he ^[fn]could see nothing. Leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus. ⁹ And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

LSB Footnotes

(9:1) Later called Paul

(9:1) Lit *threat*

(9:7) Or *sound*

(9:8) Lit *was seeing nothing*

From Mister to Master — This basic story is told three times in Acts, which provides some details not related in this passage. The “*light from heaven*” came at midday and was brighter than the sun (26:13). Like Saul, his companions also saw the light and fell to the ground (26:14), but they “*did not understand the voice*” (22:9). Barnabas informs us that Saul literally “*had seen the Lord on the road*” (9:27). Jesus asked this rhetorical question: “*Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?*” (9:4). It showed how closely Jesus is intimately identified with those who follow Him; to persecute a believer is to persecute Jesus. We also learn later that a second statement followed Jesus’ question: “*It is hard for you to kick against the goads*” (26:14). Jesus was showing His concern for the wellbeing of Saul, reminding us that fighting against God only hurts ourselves. Then, Saul asked to whom he was speaking, and Jesus identified Himself. It seems to me that, at this point, Saul was converted. Saul’s question, “*Who are you, Lord?*,” could be translated, “Who are you, Sir?” Saul’s follow-up question, however, used the same Greek word (*kúrios*), but with a very submissive attitude: “*What should I do, Lord?*” (22:10). The human-level “Sir” had changed to the divine-level “Lord,” meaning “master.” In Paul’s later testimony to King Agrippa, he more fully revealed Jesus’ answer about what Saul should do: “*But rise up and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a servant and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you; rescuing you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me*” (26:16-18). The mysterious “Sir” was the masterful “Lord” who had a lifelong plan mapped out for this apostle.

[O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee - YouTube](#)

O Master, let me walk with Thee
In lowly paths of service free;
Tell me Thy secret, help me bear
The strain of toil, the fret of care.

— Washington Gladden (1879)

October 4 W Reading 277 — Acts 10:34-43 — Peter Preaches to Cornelius

³⁴ *And opening his mouth, Peter said: "I most truly comprehend [now] that God is not one to show partiality,* ³⁵ *but in every nation the one who* ^[fn] *fears Him and does righteousness is welcome to Him.*

³⁶ *As for the word which He sent to the sons of Israel, proclaiming the good news of peace through Jesus Christ—He is Lord of all—* ³⁷ *you yourselves know the thing which happened throughout all Judea, starting from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed.* ³⁸ ^[fn] *[You know of] Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power,* ^[fn] *and [how] He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.* ³⁹ *And we are witnesses of all the things He did both in the* ^[fn] *land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a tree.* ⁴⁰ *God raised Him up on the third day and granted that He appear,* ⁴¹ *not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, [that is], to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead.* ⁴² *And He commanded us to* ^[fn] *preach to the people, and solemnly to bear witness that this is the One who has been designated by God as Judge*

of the living and the dead. ⁴³ Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."

LSB Footnotes

(10:35) Or *reverences*

(10:38) Or *How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth*

(10:38) Lit *who went*

(10:39) Or *countryside*

(10:42) Or *proclaim*

Proclaiming the Gospel — Peter was miraculously led to the house of the Roman centurion, Cornelius, who had become a follower of the Jewish God. It took a vision from God to show Peter that the door of salvation was open to both Jews and Gentiles, and his message was a great summary of the gospel. He told Cornelius and his household that God's message came first to Israel, "*proclaiming the good news of peace through Jesus Christ—He is Lord of all*" (v. 36). The *content* of Jesus' message was good news, the gospel, and its *purpose* was to bring peace. Being made "*Lord of all*" means that Jesus was the Master in position, power, and authority. A summary of Jesus' ministry was that He was "*doing good and healing all*" (v. 38), which was detailed in our earlier journey through the Gospel accounts. Peter then revealed that, after Jesus' resurrection, he and the other disciples witnessed the fact that He was alive, eating and drinking with the risen Lord. God designated Jesus as Judge, but He is also Savior, so that "*everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins*" (v. 43). That is the gospel story, and we are commanded to proclaim it as well.

[I Love to Tell the Story - YouTube](#)

I love to tell the story
of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and his glory,
of Jesus and his love.
I love to tell the story
because I know it's true;
It satisfies my longings
as nothing else can do.

— Kate Hankey (1866)

October 5 Th Reading 278 — Acts 13:26-41 — Paul at Pisidian Antioch

²⁶ "Brothers, sons of Abraham's family, and those among you who fear God, to us the word of this salvation was sent. ²⁷ For those who live in Jerusalem, and their rulers, recognizing neither Him nor the ^[fn]utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled [them] by condemning [Him]. ²⁸ And though they found no ground for death, they asked Pilate that He be ^[fn]executed. ²⁹ And when they had finished all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb. ³⁰ But God raised Him from the dead; ³¹ and for many days He appeared to those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, the very ones who are now His witnesses to the people. ³² And we proclaim to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers, ³³ that God has fulfilled this [promise] ^[fn]to our children in that He raised up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, 'YOU ARE MY SON; TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU.' ³⁴ [But] that He raised Him up from the dead, no longer to return to corruption, He has spoken in this way: 'I WILL GIVE YOU THE HOLY [and] ^[fn]FAITHFUL [lovingkindnesses] OF DAVID.' ³⁵ Therefore He also says in another [Psalm], 'YOU WILL NOT GIVE YOUR ^[fn]HOLY ONE OVER TO SEE CORRUPTION.' ³⁶ For David, after he had ^[fn]served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep and was laid among his fathers and saw corruption; ³⁷ but He whom God raised did not see corruption. ³⁸ Therefore let it be known to you, brothers, that

through ^[fn]Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, ³⁹ and [that] in Him, everyone who believes is justified from all things which you could not be justified from ^[fn]through the Law of Moses. ⁴⁰ Therefore watch out, so that the thing spoken of in the Prophets may not come upon [you]:

⁴¹ *'LOOK, YOU SCOFFERS, AND MARVEL, AND ^[fn]PERISH;*

FOR I AM ACCOMPLISHING A WORK IN YOUR DAYS,

A WORK WHICH YOU WILL NEVER BELIEVE, THOUGH SOMEONE SHOULD RECOUNT IT TO YOU.'"

LSB Footnotes

(13:27) Lit *voices*

(13:28) Lit *destroyed*

(13:33) Late mss *to us their children*

(13:34) Lit *trustworthy*

(13:35) Or *Devout, Pious*

(13:36) Or *served his own generation by the purpose of God*

(13:38) Lit *this One*

(13:39) Lit *by*

(13:41) Lit *disappear*

Forgiven and Justified — Paul began this passage by showing the mistake the Jewish leaders made in Jerusalem when they neither recognized Jesus as the Messiah nor what the prophets said about Him (v. 27). He ended his message by warning these Jews and proselytes in Antioch (in Pisidia) that they should not make a similar mistake by not recognizing what the Scriptures said about the Messiah being resurrected instead of His body experiencing corruption after death. Paul pointed out two important provisions that Jesus brings: forgiveness and justification. First, it was that *"through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you"* (v. 38). Forgiveness comes only through Jesus, as we read about last week: *"And there is salvation in no one else..."* (4:12). When friends let the paralytic man down through the roof, Jesus said, *"son, your sins are forgiven"* (Matt. 9:2). When the immoral woman wet Jesus' feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, and anointed them with perfume, He said to her, *"Your sins have been forgiven"* (Luke 7:48). While it is *"through Him"* that sins are forgiven, Paul preached that, *"in Him, everyone who believes is justified"* (Acts 13:39). After one comes to Jesus in faith, receiving forgiveness, one's sin record is wiped clean. Justification means being declared innocent, or as someone cleverly defined it: "just as if I'd never sinned." Because Jesus paid the penalty for our sins and we accept Him as our Savior, the Father sees in us the righteousness of His Son.

[Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness - YouTube](#)

Lord, I believe Thy precious blood,
which at the mercy seat of God,
Forever doth for sinners plead,
for me, e'en for my soul, was shed.

Jesus, be endless praise to Thee,
whose boundless mercy hath for me,
For me a full atonement made,
an everlasting ransom paid.

— words: Nicolaus von Zinzendorf (b. 1700)
translated: John Wesley (b. 1707)

¹ Some men came down from Judea and [began] teaching the brothers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." ² And when Paul and Barnabas had not a little dissension and debate with them, [the brothers] determined that Paul and Barnabas and some others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue. ³ Therefore, being sent on their way by the church, they were passing through both Phoenicia and Samaria, recounting in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and were bringing great joy to all the brothers. ⁴ When they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them. ⁵ But some of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed stood up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to command them to keep the Law of Moses."

⁶ Both the apostles and the elders came together to ^[fn]look into this ^[fn]matter. ⁷ And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brothers, you know that ^[fn]in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe. ⁸ And God, who knows the heart, testified to them giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us; ⁹ and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. ¹⁰ Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? ¹¹ But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are."

LSB Footnotes

(15:6) Lit see about

(15:6) Lit word

(15:7) Lit from days of old

Saved By Faith Through Grace — The Early Church was struggling with the essentials of salvation. What is the bottom line? The Pharisaic Christians in this story were hanging on to the requirements of the Old Covenant, which required male circumcision as a member of the family of God (Gen. 17:14). Peter's convincing argument was that God obviously gave the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles at Cornelius' house, "*cleansing their hearts by faith*" (v. 9), without requiring circumcision. The resulting decision was a major turning point in the history of the Early Church, which was this: "*we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus*" (v. 11). Grace is an undeserved favor, getting something good that we don't deserve. Jesus is the giver of grace. When Cornelius and his household heard the good news announced by Peter, they believed, and the Spirit was poured out on them in grace. That is the way everyone has been saved since the Day of Pentecost: Jesus gives grace to those who hear and believe.

[Amazing Grace - YouTube](#)

Amazing grace (how sweet the sound)
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
was blind, but now I see.

— John Newton (1779)

²⁵ But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶ And suddenly there came a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the jailhouse were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. ²⁷ And when the jailer awoke and saw the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸ But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!" ²⁹ And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, ³⁰ and after he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹ And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your house." ³² And they spoke the word of ^[fn]the Lord to him together with all who were in his household. ³³ And he took them that [very] hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his [household]. ³⁴ And he brought them into his house and set ^[fn]food before them, and rejoiced ^[fn]greatly with his whole household, because he had believed in God.

LSB Footnotes

(16:32) Two early mss God

(16:34) Lit a table

(16:34) Or greatly with his whole household, having believed in God

Joy Begets Joy — Jesus' indwelling presence changes hearts. Most people, having been beaten and placed in prison with their feet in stocks, would have been moaning and complaining. Not Paul and Silas. They were full of joy, "*praying and singing hymns of praise to God and the prisoners were listening*" (v. 25). The jailer must have been listening, too, before he went to bed. He knew that these two prisoners were different because of their connection to God. After experiencing the earthquake that miraculously opened the doors without the prisoners leaving, he wanted to have that relationship, too, asking, "*what must I do to be saved?*" (v. 30). Only one thing was required: "*Believe in the Lord Jesus*" (v. 31). After gathering his whole household together in the middle of the night, they heard the word and believed. The result was that they all "*rejoiced greatly ... because he had believed in God*" (v. 34). Joy begets joy. People today are watching our reaction to disappointment, hardship, and suffering, too. Do they see joy? Joy is deeper than suffering. Earlier, when Jesus' eleven disciples were arrested and beaten for preaching in the name of Jesus, they were "*rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name*" (5:41). Joy can come even because of suffering.

[Joy Unspeakable - YouTube](#)

I have found the joy no tongue can tell,
How its waves of glory roll!
It is like a great o'erflowing well,
Springing up within my soul.

It is joy unspeakable and full of glory,
Full of glory, full of glory.
It is joy unspeakable and full of glory;
O, the half has never yet been told!

— Barney Elliott Warner (1900)