***Introit (Psalm 143)***

P: Lord, hear my prayer! Listen to me beg for mercy.

C: You are faithful. Answer me because You are good.

P: Don’t judge Your servant.

**C: No one is right and holy.**

P: I remember the days long ago. I think about all You did.

C: I think about Your hands working.

P: I lift my hands to you.

**C: My soul thirsts for You same-as dry ground thirsts for water.**

P: Teach me to do Your wants, because You are my God.

**C: Let Your good Spirit lead me on straight paths.**

P: O Lord, for Your honor, protect my life.

**C: Because You are righteous, save me from trouble.**

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

***Prayer for God’s Word***

P: Almighty and eternal God, for Your people who believe in You, You give wonderful precious promises. Throw-away our dark sinful works. Give us true life in Your Son, Jesus Christ. Then our faith in You will always be full. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Jesus lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: (copy) Amen.

The Old Testament lesson is from Zephaniah chapter 1.

 Be quiet in-front-of the Lord God. The Day of the Lord is near. The Lord prepared a sacrifice. He made His guests holy. On the day the Lord makes His sacrifice, He will punish the leaders, princes, and everyone who wears foreign clothes. On that day, He will punish everyone who worships idols and fills their master’s house with fighting and lies.

 The Lord announces, “On that day, at the gate named the Fish Gate, people will shout. From another gate, people will cry. You will hear noise from the hills. You people who live in JERUSALEM, cry! All the sellers are gone, and all the buyers will get destroyed.

 “At that time, I will use lamps to search through JERUSALEM. I will punish people who drink much wine. Those people say the Lord will not do good or bad.”

 “The enemy nation will steal their wealth. The enemy will destroy their houses. People will build houses, but not live there. They will plant grape VINES, but not drink the wine.”

 The Day of the Lord is near; near and coming quickly. The Day of the Lord will be bitter. On that day, the soldier will cry much. That is a day of anger and trouble and grief. A day of destruction and loneliness. A day of darkness and sadness. A day of clouds and deep darkness. A day of trumpet and war shouts against the strong cities and the high towers.

This is the word of the Lord.

C: (copy) Thanks give to God.

The New Testament lesson is from 1 Thessalonians chapter 5.

 Dear Christians, I don’t need to write to you about times and seasons. You know the Day of the Lord will come the same-as a thief comes at night. People will say, “Peace and safety!” Then destruction will happen quickly, the same-as labor happens quickly for a pregnant woman. They will not escape.

 But you are not in darkness. That day will not surprise you same-as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of day. We don’t belong to night or darkness.

 Let us not sleep. Other people sleep. We should be awake and pay-attention. People sleep at night. People get drunk at night. We belong to the day, so we will be awake and not drunk. We wear faith and love the same-as a breastplate. We wear hope for salvation the same-as a helmet.

 God did not prepare us for His anger. He prepared us to have salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus died for us. Then no-matter we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. Encourage each other and build-up each other, the same as you are doing now.

This is the word of the Lord.

C: (copy) Thanks give to God.

The Gospel lesson is from Matthew chapter 25.

C: (copy) Glory to You, O Lord.

 Jesus said, I will tell you again about the Kingdom of Heaven. A man prepared for a long trip. Before he left, he called his servants to come. He trusted the servants to take-care of his things. To one servant, the master gave 350 lbs. of silver. To another servant, the master gave 140 lbs of silver, and to another servant he gave 70 lbs. of silver. He gave to each servant agreeing with their abilities. Then the master went away on his travels.

 The servant who received 350 lbs. of silver quickly went out and did business. He used the money to buy and sell things. This servant got 350 lbs. more silver; he doubled his money. The same, the servant who received 140 lbs. silver went out quickly. He also used the money to buy and sell things. This servant got 140 lbs. more silver; he doubled his money.

 But the servant who received 70 lbs. of silver went outside and he dug a hole in the ground. He buried the money his master gave him.

 After a long time, the master came home. He told the servants to come to him. He wanted to know what they did with the money. The servant who received 350 lbs. of silver said, “Master, you gave me 350 lbs. of silver. I earned 350 lbs. more silver.”

The master said to his servant, “You did good, you good and faithful servant. You were faithful with a few things. I will give you responsibility for many things. Come and be happy with your master.”

The servant who received 140 lbs. of silver said, “Master, you gave me 140 lbs. of silver. I earned 140 lbs. more silver.”

The master said to his servant, “You did good, you good and faithful servant. You were faithful with a few things. I will give you responsibility for many things. Come and be happy with your master.”

The servant who received 70 lbs. of silver said, “Master, I know you are strict. You ask people to do things all the time. You harvest where you did not plant. You gather where you didn’t throw-out SEED. I was afraid of you, so I buried your money in the ground. See, here is your money. I give it back to you.”

 The master said to him, “You are a bad and lazy servant. You know I harvest where I didn’t plant. I gather where I didn’t throw-out SEED. And you know all that. You should have put the money in the bank. Then, when I came home, I could get my money back from the bank with interest.”

 Then the master said to his other servants, “Take the 70 lbs. of silver from this man. Give the money to the first man who now has 700 lbs. of silver.” Then the master said, “For every person who has something, I will give him more, and he will have much. But for the person who has nothing, even the small amount he has, I will take-away that. Throw-out this worthless servant into the darkness outside. Out there, people will cry and grind their teeth.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: (copy) Praise to You, O Christ.