***Introit (Psalm 145)***

P: Jesus said, a little while and you will not see Me.

C: Then a little while and you will see Me again.

P: My God and King, I will praise You.

**C: I will bless Your name forever.**

P: Every day I will bless You

**C: And praise Your name forever.**

P: The Lord is full of grace and mercy.

**C: He is slow to become angry. He is rich in love.**

P: Lord, everything You made will thank You.

**C: Your holy people will bless You.**

P: I will announce praise for the Lord.

**C: Let every living thing bless His holy name forever.**

**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: O God, through Christ Jesus, You make our hearts and minds all agree. Please make us love Your commands and want Your promises. Then no-matter how much this world changes, our hearts are always with You. You are our true joy. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Jesus lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: (copy) Amen.

The First Lesson is from Acts chapter 8.

 An angel of the Lord spoke to PHILIP. The angel said, “Stand-up and go south on the road from JERUSALEM to GAZA.” That is a road through the desert.

 PHILIP stood-up and went. On the road he saw a man from the country ETHIOPIA and he was an important officer for the queen CANDACE. He was the treasurer. He went to JERUSALEM to worship. Now he was-going home sitting in his chariot and reading from the Bible book named ISAIAH, the prophet.

 The Holy Spirit told PHILIP, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.”

 PHILIP ran to the chariot. He heard the man reading the book of ISAIAH. PHILIP asked, “Do you understand your reading?”

 The man said, “I can’t understand. I need someone to explain that to me!” Then he invited PHILIP to come and sit with him.

 This is the verse from ISAIAH he read: “Same-as people lead a sheep to die, they led Him to die. And same-as a lamb is silent in-front-of the person cutting WOOL; the same He continued quiet. People made Him suffer and didn’t judge Him fairly. His life on earth ended. He has no children to continue His family.”

 The man said to PHILIP, “Please, tell me, the prophet talks about who? Himself or someone else?”

 PHILIP used this verse from ISAIAH to begin telling him the good news about Jesus.

 While they traveled on the road, they passed some water. The man said, “Look! Here is water! Why not baptize me?” Then the man commanded the chariot to stop, and both he and PHILIP went into the water, and PHILIP baptized him. When they came out-of the water, the Holy Spirit took-away PHILIP, and the officer never saw him again. The officer went home very happy.

 Then PHILIP appeared in the city AZOTUS on the road to the city CAESAREA. He preached the good news of Jesus in all the towns on that road.

This is the word of the Lord.

C: (copy) Thanks give to God.

*You have two choices for the second lesson; a short reading from 1 John 4 and a longer reading from 1 John 4. Choose one.*

*Shorter reading.*

The Second Lesson is from 1 John chapter 4.

 Dear friends, don’t believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see if they are from God. Many false prophets are in the world. This is how you can know God’s Spirit: every spirit that says Jesus came in true human flesh, that spirit is from God. And any spirit not speaking the truth about Jesus, that spirit is not from God. That spirit is against Christ and you heard that wicked spirit is coming into the world. I tell you he is here now.

 Children, you are from God, and you have victory defeating those spirits, because God is with you and God is stronger than the world. These false teachers are from the world. They speak what the world thinks, and the people in the world listen to them.

 We are from God. Anyone that knows God listens to us. Anyone not from God will not listen to us. That is how we know which-one is the spirit of truth and which-one is the spirit of false teaching.

 Dear friends, let us love one-another because love comes from God, and everyone showing love is born from God and knows God. Anyone not showing love doesn’t-yet know God, because God is love.

 This is how God put His love in us. God sent His only Son into the world for us to live through Him. This is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to pay for our sins. Dear friends, if God loves us this way, then we should love one-another.

This is the word of the Lord.

C: (copy) Thanks give to God.

*Longer reading.*

The Second Lesson is from 1 John chapter 4.

 Dear friends, don’t believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see if they are from God. Many false prophets are in the world. This is how you can know God’s Spirit: every spirit that says Jesus came in true human flesh, that spirit is from God. And any spirit not speaking the truth about Jesus, that spirit is not from God. That spirit is against Christ and you heard that wicked spirit is coming into the world. I tell you he is here now.

 Children, you are from God, and you have victory defeating those spirits, because God is with you and God is stronger than the world. These false teachers are from the world. They speak what the world thinks, and the people in the world listen to them.

 We are from God. Anyone that knows God listens to us. Anyone not from God will not listen to us. That is how we know which-one is the spirit of truth and which-one is the spirit of false teaching.

 Dear friends, let us love one-another because love comes from God, and everyone showing love is born from God and knows God. Anyone not showing love doesn’t-yet know God, because God is love.

 This is how God put His love in us. God sent His only Son into the world for us to live through Him. This is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to pay for our sins. Dear friends, if God loves us this way, then we should love one-another. No person has seen God. If we love one-another, then God lives in us and His love is perfect in us.

 This is how we know we live in God and He lives in us, because He gave us His Spirit. We saw and announce that the Father sent His Son as the Savior for the world. Anyone that says Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in that person, and that person lives in God.

 God loves us, and we know and believe that. God is love. The person living in love also lives in God, and God lives in him. That makes love perfect in us. Then we will be brave on judgment day, because we are the same-as God in this world. People fear punishment. The person who fears, that person is not perfect in love.

 We love because God first loved us. If someone says, “I love God,” but he hates another Christian, that person is a liar. If he sees another Christian and doesn’t love him, then he will not love God, who he doesn’t see. God gave us this commandment. Anyone that loves God, he must also love other Christians.

This is the word of the Lord.

C: (copy) Thanks give to God.

The Gospel lesson is from John chapter 15.

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

 Jesus said, “I am the true VINE. My Father is the farmer. If one of My branches grows no fruit, My Father cuts-off that branch. Every branch growing fruit, My Father prunes (cuts) to make the branch grow more fruit. You are already clean because I spoke My word for you. Stay joined to Me, and I will stay joined to you. A branch can’t grow fruit by itself. The branch must continue joined to the vine. The same, you can’t grow fruit without Me.

 I am the VINE. You are the branches. If a person stays with Me and I stay with him, he will grow much fruit. Without Me, you can’t do anything. Suppose someone doesn’t stay with Me. That person is same-as a dry and dead branch. The farmer gathers together those dead branches and throws them in the fire. Suppose you stay with Me and My word stays in you. Then you can ask anything you want, and God will give it to you. Because that gives glory to My Father when you grow much fruit and show that you are My disciples.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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