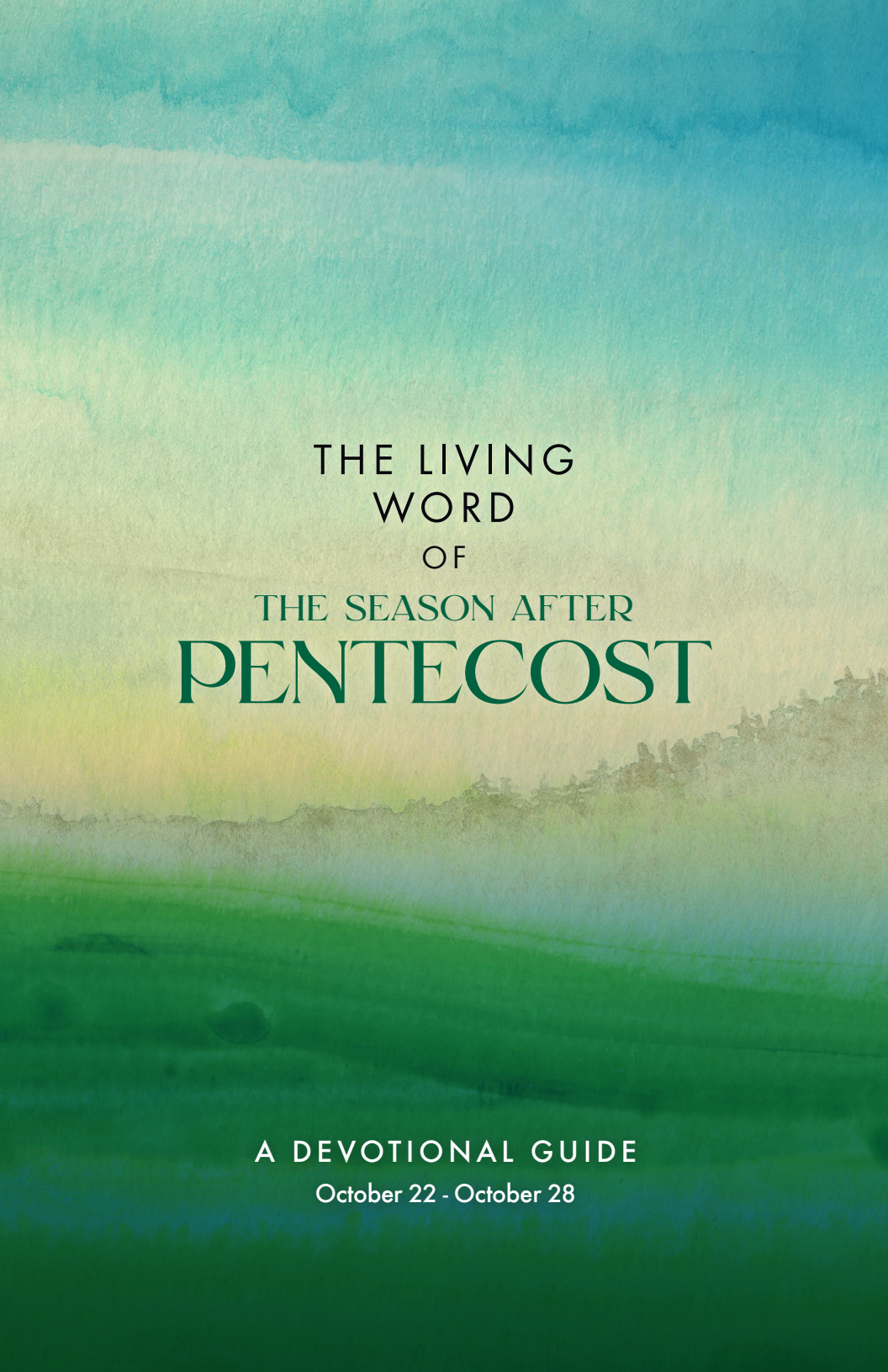

THE LIVING
WORD
OF
THE SEASON AFTER
PENTECOST
A DEVOTIONAL GUIDE
October 22 - October 28

SEASON AFTER

PENTECOST

Proper 25

It was the last week of Jesus' life, and he had spent the day in the Temple while men tried to trap him. The priests, the politicians, and the Sadducees all tried. Each one went away with nothing. Then the Pharisees got together and sent their best legal mind with one more question: Which commandment is the greatest?

It was a trap, but Jesus gave it a plain answer: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind.” Every man in that courtyard had said those words since he was a boy. They said them in the morning and they said them at night. Jesus didn't bring anything new, he just wouldn't let the old words go soft. All your heart means all of it. There is no back room where a person can shut the door and say, “This one is mine.”

Most of us are tired, and not from work. We are tired from serving too many small gods. One wants our good name, one wants our money, and another wants everybody to like us. They all take a piece of us, and none of them are ever satisfied. But the Lord is one, and that changes things. A heart can rest when it has only one master.

Then Jesus said there was a second commandment just like the first: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” A person doesn't get to pick their neighbor. And you don't get to love God in a corner and keep your hands shut when somebody needs them. The two loves are one love, and all the Law and the Prophets hang on it.

Then Jesus asked them a question: “Whose son is the Messiah?” “David's,” they said, and that was right. But David himself called the Messiah "my Lord." How could a man call his own son that? Nobody could answer him. He was David's son all right, and he was a good deal more than that.



The Pharisees went away angry. Within the week they would have him on a cross. ***But Jesus does more than teach the Great Commandment. He is its answer. He is the Son who loves the Father with all his heart, soul, and mind, and who loves even his killers to the end, all in the power of the Spirit. His life is the shape of the love he commands. So, we're not asked to manufacture love from our own thin supply—we are invited to share in his.***

The Pharisees left the Temple with nothing to say. We can be quiet too, hoping that having run out of answers we may finally hear him ask, "Whose son is he?" and answer, "The Son of God."

FOR *reflection*

Which small gods are pulling at your heart these days?
What would it mean to hand the pieces over to the one God?
Who is the neighbor you've been leaving out?
And if Jesus asked you, "Whose son is he?", what would you say?



SCRIPTURE

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Thursday	Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17; Deuteronomy 31:14-22; Titus 1:5-16
Friday	Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17; Deuteronomy 32:1-14, 18; Titus 2:7-8, 11-15
Saturday	Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17; Deuteronomy 32:44-47; John 5:39-47
Sunday	Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17; Deuteronomy 34:1-12; Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18; Psalm 1; 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8; Matthew 22:34-46
Monday	Psalm 119:41-48 ; Numbers 33:38-39; James 2:8-13
Tuesday	Psalm 119:41-48; Exodus 34:29-35; James 2:14-26
Wednesday	Psalm 119:41-48; Deuteronomy 26:16-27:7; Matthew 19:16-22

Why do the daily readings begin on Thursday?

The daily readings for each week begin on Thursday and end on the following Wednesday. The Thursday through Saturday readings prepare the reader for the Sunday ahead. The Monday through Wednesday readings reflect on what was presented on Sunday.

The Morning Liturgy

Opening Scripture

I was glad when they said unto me, "We will go into the house of the Lord." *Psalm 122:1*

Opening Prayer *(based on Psalm 51)*

Open my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Give me the joy of your saving help again and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. *Amen.*

Scripture Reading *(read Psalm and Gospel text here)*

Period of Silence

Confessing Our Faith *(Apostles' Creed)*

The Lord's Prayer

The Collect *(Proper 25)*

Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us the gifts of faith, hope, and charity; and, that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

A Midday Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles, “Peace I give to you; my own peace I leave with you.” Regard not our sins, but the faith of your Church, and give to us the peace and unity of that heavenly City, where with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, now and forever. *Amen*.

An Early Evening Prayer

Lord Jesus, stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past; be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts, and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. *Amen.*

A Bedtime Confession and Prayer

Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep, we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts, we have offended against thy holy laws, we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, spare thou those who confess their faults, restore thou those who are penitent, according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord; and grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of thy holy name. *Amen.*

Visit this place, O Lord, and drive far from it all snares of the enemy; let Your holy angels dwell with us to preserve us in peace; and let Your blessing be upon us always; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

