

An introduction to the reading: In this lesson Christians are urged to conform to a new way of life which is pleasing to the Holy Spirit. They are to have a love like the love of Christ. All manner of evil is to be shunned. Especially are the new converts to put away spitefulness and other sins which harm the one body and grieve the Spirit with which they have been sealed in baptism. The model is none other than a God who is revealed in the Christ who sacrificed himself for us. Hear now these words from Ephesians.

Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Follow God’s example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

John 6:35, 41-51

An introduction to the reading: In our gospel Jesus continues to teach that he is the true bread who will bring all who have faith in him eternal life. The discussion is meant to recall the story of the Israelites protesting and murmuring against God in the wilderness because they had no bread. But even the manna that God gave them was only a temporary food. While Jesus seems very ordinary to the Jews (who represent a worldly lack of faith), he offers the world both his teaching and himself, a life-giving bread from heaven. Hear now these words from the gospel of John.

Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

At this the Jews there began to grumble about him because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” They said, “Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, ‘I came down from heaven’?”

“Stop grumbling among yourselves,” Jesus answered. “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day. It is written in the Prophets: ‘They will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard the Father and learned from him comes to me. No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father. Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”

This is the word of the Lord. **May the reading and the hearing of your word inform our minds, comfort our souls and guide our feet.**