

September 14<sup>th</sup>  
14<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

## **“Given Me Strength”**

Text: 1 Timothy 1:12-17  
(Exodus 32:7-14; Luke 15:1-10)

When we are off course, we can find ourselves without the strength to continue. Paul was off course. He had the passion and believed strongly in the cause, but his zealousness was not focused on the right course. The good news is that God met him where he was, redirected him and then gave him the strength he needed for this new course. A course much more demanding and yet much more fulfilling than the one he had been on. In this reading from Exodus, God is about to let his wrath consume him. The people had fallen off course and began to create their own way and their own gods. Moses literally called God to stay the course despite where the people had gone. He then relents and invites them back on the course where he can be their life and strength. Our reading from Luke begins with Jesus asking the question “What man? Or What woman would?” As we read the story carefully, the answer is nobody would. Only God would search that way for the lost. In the world, the lost would be written off as an acceptable loss. They would be forgotten. We are reminded that Christ came to meet the lost, be their strength and set them back on course. He did it for the people of Israel. He did it for Paul, and he will do it for us. He gives us strength for the course laid before us.