

Notes for Next Sunday

Sixth Sunday of Easter

The Point of this Week's Readings

First Reading (Acts 10:34-48). Peter affirms for devout Cornelius that Jesus is truly the Christ; the Spirit affirms for Peter that the Gospel applies to all people without partiality. The Holy Spirit unites one and all in the Body of Christ.

Epistle (1 John 5:1-8). The children of God bear the family traits of their Brother, Jesus. He has faith, love, and victory over the world. The world tempts us to think of our Lord's Commandments as a burden, too hard and too heavy for us to bear. The world seems too much for us to overcome. But our Lord Jesus has overcome the world for us. He has fulfilled all of God's Commandments for us. He made Himself our human Brother, that through Him we might become the children of His Father and share in His great family of love.

Gospel (John 15:9-17). Jesus' farewell address to the disciples, John 13:31-17:26, is one of the grandest and profoundest passages in the Gospels. In view of the fact that Judas was about to betray Him and the other disciples were about to abandon Him, plus the fact that He would be unjustly arrested as a criminal, the quiet serenity of this whole passage is remarkable. He had just said in verse 5: "Apart from Me you are able to do absolutely nothing." That proved to be true in the abandonment of Jesus by the disciples and the denial of Peter.

For more in-depth commentary on each reading, read the notes found after each text below.

FIRST READING – Acts 10:34-48

³⁴ Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism ³⁵ but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. ³⁶ You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. ³⁷ You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached—⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. ³⁹ "We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰ but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. ⁴¹ He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴² He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name." ⁴⁴ While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. ⁴⁵ The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. ⁴⁶ For they heard them speaking in tongues^a and praising God. Then Peter said, ⁴⁷ "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." ⁴⁸ So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

10:36 peace. The hallmark of the kingdom of God is the announcement of peace, healing, and forgiveness. (TLSB)

10:37 you yourselves know. Though they had heard about Jesus' ministry, Peter gave them an eyewitness account of Jesus' ministry, death, and resurrection. Cf 1Jn 1:1-4. (TLSB)

10:41 who ate and drank. Those who ate with Jesus after he rose from the dead received unmistakable evidence of his bodily resurrection. (CSB)

10:43 forgiveness of sins through His name. “Peter says we receive forgiveness of sins through Christ’s name, that is, for His sake. It is not for the sake of our merits, not for the sake of our contrition, attrition, love, worship, or works. He adds: *When we believe in Him.* Peter requires faith. For we cannot receive Christ’s name except by faith” (Ap IV 83). Luther: “Cornelius (Acts 10:43) had to be brought to the new faith that Christ had already come” (WLS § 2125). (TLSB)

EPISTLE – 1 John 5:1-8

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. ²This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. ³This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, ⁴for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. ⁵Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. ⁶This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. ⁷For there are three that testify: ⁸the^a Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.

5:1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. Only those born of God are able to believe in Jesus as their Savior, true God and true man. (TLSB)

5:1 everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. John wrote at a time when members of a family were closely associated as a unit under the headship of the father. He could therefore use the family as an illustration to show that anyone who loves God the Father will naturally love God’s children. (CSB)

5:3 this is the love of God. The love of God is so powerful that it inspires and enables one to keep His Commandments. But only those who keep His Commandments by loving their brother truly walk in God’s love. (TLSB)

5:3 his commands are not burdensome. In contrast to the demands of the old covenant. With the Gospel, believers cannot help but love one another; it is what children of God naturally do. (TLSB)

5:4 overcomes ... has overcome. Believers may not feel like conquerors of the world, but, thankfully, overcoming the world depends not on our feelings or experiences but on our faith.

5:6 by water and blood. Refers to the testimony of Jesus’ Baptism and crucifixion, which revealed the love of God and accomplished His will for the salvation of the world. (TLSB)

GOSPEL – John 15:9-17

⁹“**As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹²My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. ¹⁷This is my command: Love each other.**

15:10 just as. Our Savior gives us His own example of what it means to remain in His love. It means keeping God's commandment as a show of that love at work in our lives, just as Jesus kept all of the Father's commands. The fruits of our faith will demonstrate the faith in our hearts. (PBC)

15:11 joy. Not the passing happiness that worldly pleasures bring, but deep and abiding joy of being loved by God through Jesus Christ. (TLSB)

15:15 servants ... friends. But He is not yet finished with the word "friend" as applied to the disciples. "No longer do I call you slaves, because the slave does not know what his Master is doing." A slave is a mere instrument. He does what the Master says. That's all. The Master gives the slave no explanations. He merely expects obedience. (Buls)

15:15 everything ... I have made known to you. From 16:12 we learn that though Jesus had let his disciples know as much as they were able to absorb of the Father's plan, the revelation was not yet complete. The Spirit would make other things known in due course. (CSB)

15:16 I chose you ... bear fruit ... ask.† Disciples normally chose the particular rabbi to whom they wanted to be attached, but it was not so with Jesus' disciples. He chose them, and for a purpose—the bearing of fruit. We usually desire a strong prayer life in order that we may be fruitful, but here it is the other way around. Jesus enables us to bear fruit as a result of faith, and then the Father will hear our prayers. (CSB)