

## Notes for Next Sunday

Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost

### The Point of this Week's Readings

Old Testament (Ecclesiastes 5:10-20). The author is sometimes thought to be pessimistic or even cynical. I would suggest that “realistic” is a more apt description. Apart from God, all things are meaningless. But with him, in him, and through him, all things have meaning and purpose, and the believer has hope and joy.

Epistle (Hebrew 4:1-13). God's people missed rest in the Promised Land through their unbelief. This is a warning to us. God calls us to trust Him and to enter into the rest that He has enjoyed since the completion of creation. In Christ Jesus, we have rest from the accusation of the Law. The Holy Spirit leads us to trust in Christ, granting us everlasting peace.

Gospel (Mark 10:23-31). This reading is a continuation of last week's text. There Jesus was approached by a rich young man who claimed he had kept all of the commandments. Jesus exposed his weakness by asking him to give up his wealth and give it to the poor. It showed that he loved his money more than Jesus. In our reading the people get really upset about having wealth that might get in the way of their salvation. Jesus points out that God's power it is okay to have riches and still be saved by faith.

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

#### OLD TESTAMENT – Ecclesiastes 5:10-20

**<sup>10</sup> Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless. <sup>11</sup> As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owner except to feast his eyes on them? <sup>12</sup> The sleep of a laborer is sweet, whether he eats little or much, but the abundance of a rich man permits him no sleep. <sup>13</sup> I have seen a grievous evil under the sun: wealth hoarded to the harm of its owner, <sup>14</sup> or wealth lost through some misfortune, so that when he has a son there is nothing left for him. <sup>15</sup> Naked a man comes from his mother's womb, and as he comes, so he departs. He takes nothing from his labor that he can carry in his hand. <sup>16</sup> This too is a grievous evil: As a man comes, so he departs, and what does he gain, since he toils for the wind? <sup>17</sup> All his days he eats in darkness, with great frustration, affliction and anger. <sup>18</sup> Then I realized that it is good and proper for a man to eat and drink, and to find satisfaction in his toilsome labor under the sun during the few days of life God has given him—for this is his lot. <sup>19</sup> Moreover, when God gives any man wealth and possessions, and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work—this is a gift of God. <sup>20</sup> He seldom reflects on the days of his life, because God keeps him occupied with gladness of heart.**

*5:10* Behind this greed lies an insatiable lust for money. Those who love money never have enough. The elder Rockefeller was once asked, “How much money does it take to satisfy a person?” The billionaire snapped back, “Always a little more!” (PBC)

*5:11-12* Great wealth brings greater anxiety. The more one has, the more one covets. (TLSB)

*5:13 grievous evil.* After a life of toil to both the owner and his heirs, it must at all events be left behind at death. (Concordia Bible)

*5:13 harm.* Hoarding wealth can invite charlatans, sin, pride, and love of money, thus drawing one away from the Lord and His Word. (TLSB)

*5:14 some misfortune.* Things are not always as they seem. Entrepreneurs often have debt that exceeds their assets, making their apparent fortune worthless. This man is even unable to provide for his child. (TLSB)

*5:17 eats in darkness.* He eats the bread of sorrows. This is not a repentant sorrow before God (cf Ps 77:2) but anger in old age, where affliction and failing health beg the question as to the worthiness of laboring “under the sun.” (TLSB)

*5:18 is good and proper to eat and drink...find satisfaction.* Since riches are unsatisfying, uncertain, attended with an increase of trouble and anxiety, and must all be left behind at death, the wise man will be contented with the supply of his daily wants, and will lay up treasure in heaven. (CB)

*5:20 keeps him occupied with gladness of heart.* Answers his desire in the joy with which he fills his heart. The thankful and contented enjoyment of God’s present gifts causes him to forget the ills with which life is checkered. (Concordia Bible)

#### EPISTLE – Hebrews 4:1-13

**Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. <sup>2</sup>For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith. <sup>3</sup>Now we who have believed enter that rest, just as God has said, “So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’” And yet his work has been finished since the creation of the world. <sup>4</sup>For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words: “And on the seventh day God rested from all his work.”<sup>5</sup> And again in the passage above he says, “They shall never enter my rest.”<sup>6</sup> It still remains that some will enter that rest, and those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not go in, because of their disobedience. <sup>7</sup>Therefore God again set a certain day, calling it Today, when a long time later he spoke through David, as was said before: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.” <sup>8</sup>For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. <sup>9</sup>There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; <sup>10</sup>for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. <sup>11</sup>Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience. <sup>12</sup>For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. <sup>13</sup>Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.**

*4:1 the promise of entering his rest still stands.* God’s promise of forgiveness and peace remains true and can be lost only if we refuse it. (TLSB)

*4:3 we who have believed enter that rest.* Prefigured by the promise of a new life for God’s people in the Promised Land. This promise is fulfilled in Christ Jesus, who gives us an eternal home and rest. (TLSB)

*4:8 if Joshua had given them rest.* Eventually, God’s people possessed the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua, but the ultimate rest was with the second Joshua, Jesus, who saves His people from their sin. (TLSB)

*4:9 There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest.* God has fully completed the six days of His work in creation; thus, His Sabbath rest extends throughout time. In Christ, God’s people enter into God’s day of rest and experience the peace He gives. (TLSB)

*4:10 rests from his own work.* Enjoying the result of God's completed work. The benefits of Christ's completed work, received by faith, are distributed in the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. (TLSB)

*4:11 make every effort.* † Not a call to earn one's salvation by works, but an exhortation to enter salvation-rest through faith and not follow Israel's sad example in the desert. (CSB)

*4:12 sharper than any two-edged sword.* Even the sharpest sword can cut only through flesh and bone; God's Word cuts through any spiritual barriers that stand between human beings and God. (TLSB)

*4:13 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight.* Image is of a sacrificial animal prepared for slaughter. Before the power of God's Word we have no defense. Unless God has mercy, we will die. (TLSB)

#### GOSPEL – Mark 10:23-31

**<sup>23</sup> Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!" <sup>24</sup> The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! <sup>25</sup> It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." <sup>26</sup> The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, "Who then can be saved?" <sup>27</sup> Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God." <sup>28</sup> Peter said to him, "We have left everything to follow you!" <sup>29</sup> "I tell you the truth," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel <sup>30</sup> will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life. <sup>31</sup> But many who are first will be last, and the last first."**

*10:23 Jesus looked around.* Jesus looked around to see impression that was left on disciples. (Kretzmann)

*10:23 hard...rich to enter kingdom of God.* "He went on to say." Very often the wealthy, like this young man, cannot give up their love and trust in their wealth. (Buls)

*10:24 disciples were amazed.* The Jews regarded wealth as a mark of God's favor. The disciples thought rich people had the best chance to enter the kingdom of God because of all the good things they could afford to do. (TLSB)

*10:24 hard to...enter kingdom.* This is an understatement. No people will ever enter the Kingdom based on their own reason or strength. (TLSB)

*10:25 eye of a needle.* A camel, proverbially the largest animal, had a better chance of slipping through the eye of a needle, proverbially the smallest opening, than the most favored human being had of entering the kingdom of God through works. (TLSB)

*10:25 even more amazed.* The disciples understood that the manner in which Jesus spoke of the rich in fact blocks the way for any man and they were frightened by the implication. (Lane)

*10:27 With man this is impossible, but not with God.* Salvation is totally the work of God. Every attempt to enter the kingdom on the basis of achievement or merit is futile. Apart from the grace of God, no one can be saved. (CSB)

*10:28 we have left everything.* Peter's anguished cry is poignant, for he had left everything to follow Jesus. Owing to the heartfelt nature of Peter's exclamation, Jesus responds not with a rebuke but with a wonderful promise and reassurance. (TLSB)

*10:30 a hundred times as much ... and with them persecutions.* The life of discipleship is a combination of promise and persecution, blessing and suffering. God takes nothing from a Christian without making multiplied restoration in a new and glorious form. Paradoxically, fellowship with other believers develops most deeply in persecution. (CSB)

*10:31 first will be last.* The poor, sinners, and Gentiles whose confidence was in God alone would enter the Kingdom ahead of those whose spiritual confidence was in their worldly power and wealth. (TLSB)