**Notes for Next Sunday**

Sixth Sunday of Easter

**The Point of this Week’s Readings**

Jesus loved all people so much that He lived, died and rose again for every tribe and race. He asks that our faith in Him is shown by the love we have for those around us.

The Psalm (Psalm 98) is a call to celebrate with joy the righteous reign of the Lord. The three stanzas progressively extend the call to ever wider circles: (1) the worshiping congregation at the temple; (2) all the peoples of the earth; (3) the whole creation. (CSB)

The First Reading (Acts 10:34-48) has the setting of Peter being at Cornelius house (a Gentile). Peter had at first resisted this call. Now He is giving a powerful and courageous witness about Jesus life, death and resurrection as well as Jesus’ appearances afterward. Peter points out that “God does not show favoritism, but accepts all men from every nation.” While at Cornelius’ house Peter orders the baptism of those who believed.

The Epistle (1 John 5:1-8) has John pointing to the power all believers of Jesus have because their faith makes them a part of the Body of Christ. John goes on to say that the world around them will know that they are Christians by the love they show to others. John also states that showing this love will “not be burdensome” because they are God’s children and it is His love that flows through their veins.

The Gospel (John 15:9-17) has Jesus pointing out to the disciples that they did not choose Him but that He chose them (v. 16). All through this lesson Jesus is emphasizing over and over again that He wants them to remain in His love. Then their “joy will be complete” (v. 11) Then they will be Jesus’ friends (v. 13). Then they will know Jesus’ business (v. 15). Then they will know everything that Jesus learned from the Father (v. 15). Then they will bear much fruit (v. 16). Then they “will be given whatever they ask in Jesus’ name” (v. 16). Jesus only asks that they “love each other” (v. 17).

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

**Psalm 98**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

*98:2 made … known … revealed … to the nations.* God’s saving acts in behalf of his people are also his self-revelation to the nations; in this sense God is his own evangelist. (CSB)

*98:4-6* Praises of worship are joyous, unrestrained, and exuberant. The psalmist calls for outburst of song and music, words and acclamation for God’s marvelous victories on behalf of His people. (TLSB)

The defeats of life are discouraging. Thanks be to God that He is victorious for us! Sin and death are conquered. Satan’s head is crushed. Eternally, we are God’s children. All creation is waiting for that final day of redemption. For the Lord’s victory is an empty tomb on Easter morning. • Thank You, Lord, for the glorious victory of our salvation, which only You could give us! Amen. (TLSB)

**First Reading – Acts 10:34-48**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

*10:34 God does not show favoritism.* God does not favor an individual because of his station in life, his nationality or his material possessions

*10:36-37*These verses provide a summary of the entire apostolic ministry and mission. Even though the Gospel reading is Mt 3:13–17, the Acts passage aligns better with Mark’s gospel, which begins not with the birth narrative, as do Luke and Matthew, but with Jesus’ Baptism, which for Luke is the beginning of Jesus’ ministry.

*10:44 the Holy Spirit came on.* The Holy Spirit comes through the Word to everyone who hears and believes. Luther says: “For the living Word of Christ, when preached, imparts the Spirit, who writes the law of God in our hearts with living fire, as happened to Cornelius in Acts 10 [:44].”

*10:46 astonished … even on the Gentiles.* Apparently the early Jewish Christians failed to understand that the gospel was for the Gentiles as well as for the Jews, and that they would share alike in the benefits of redemption. Gentile proselytes to Judaism, however, were accepted (CSB)

**Epistle – 1 John 5:1-8**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

St. John is writing in view of the growing heresy of Gnosticism, which held that matter was evil and spirit was good. Some said that Christ only seemed to have a human body (Docetism). It was unthinkable to the Gnostics that the Son of God would become a physical human being, since flesh was evil. Others held that the divine Christ came upon the man Jesus in His Baptism and left Him when He was crucified. For the Greek it was unreasonable that the Son of God would be crucified. John testifies that indeed the man Jesus is the Son of God (v. 5), and indeed He is the one who came not by water only, but “by water and blood” (v.6).

*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.*† Not because the commands themselves are light or easy to obey but, as John explains in v. 4, because of the new birth. The one born of God through faith is enabled by the Holy Spirit to obey. (CSB)

*5:4 born of God*. Obedience is possible for believers, who have been regenerated and renewed by the Holy Spirit. The Word and Sacraments really do have that much power. (PBC)

*5:6* *by water and blood*. This 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**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

What the people around Jesus were about to do to Jesus makes this passage all the more remarkable. Judas was on his way to betray Him. The other disciples were about to abandon Him. Within hours, Gentiles and Jews each would have a part in unjustly arresting, abusing, and murdering Him as a criminal.

*15:9 love.* This is love that acts without any expected return. It is charity. It is this form of love that is mentioned 8 times.

*15:10 obey … as I have obeyed.* The key here is a proper relationship. Our obedience does not bring Christ’s love, but it is the evidence that we are remaining in his friendship. Christ’s choosing us does not depend on our love, but remaining in Christ’s love and doing what he commands go hand in hand. We love because he first loved us—and loving each other is how Christ’s disciples will be known in the world. We are called to be Christ’s friends—and to be obedient. Both are emphasized by Jesus, and we can neither play one against the other nor omit one to focus solely on the other. What Jesus has joined together so masterfully, we must not separate.

15:11 joy complete. It means “to be fully supplied; perfect.” Christ has done it all, there is nothing for us to do but respond. This could be compared to a cup that is filled to overflowing.

*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)