**Notes for Next Sunday**

Third Sunday after Pentecost

**The Point of this Week’s Readings**

The Old Testament and Gospel readings are about God’s power over the devil. The Psalm is a Penitential Psalm. The Epistle has to do with human weakness. Both the Psalm and the Epistle end in confident hope in the Lord.

The Psalm (Psalm 130) begins with a personal confession but takes on a congregational tone at the end. It is especially the congregational aspect which makes it appropriate for the festivals and for times of national repentance.

The Old Testament (Genesis 3:8-15) begins with God finding Adam and Eve hiding in the garden because of their sin. Adam blames God for the woman (Eve) whom God had given Adam as a helpmate. Eve passes the blame on the devil. God then confronts the devil and pronounces punishment upon him.

The Epistle (2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1) has Paul confidently speaking about his and the Corinthians eternal outcome because of faith in Christ. Paul acknowledges that he and the Corinthians live in a weak and decaying human body. BUT, Paul points them to the eternal home (heaven) that awaits them after life here on earth. All this is possible because Jesus was raised from the dead.

The Gospel (Mark 3:20-35) tells us that both Jesus’ family and the teachers of the law feel that Jesus is losing it. His family believes that because of Jesus’ phrenic pace (not even taking time to eat v. 20) He is out of His mind. The teachers of the law use this same situation to say that Jesus is possessed by the devil. Jesus speaks a parable to point out the illogicalness of their argument. Jesus uses the presence of His family to teach that those who believe in Him are His true family. (Except for His mother, His family did not believe in Him at this time.)

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

**Psalm 130**

**Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD; ﻿2﻿ O Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy. ﻿3﻿ If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand? ﻿4﻿ But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are feared. ﻿5﻿ I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I put my hope. ﻿6﻿ My soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning. ﻿7﻿ O Israel, put your hope in the LORD, for with the LORD is unfailing love and with him is full redemption. ﻿8﻿ He himself will redeem Israel from all their sins.**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

This is the Sixth of the seven penitential psalms (cf. Ps 6; 32; 38; 51; 102; 143). Because of its eloquent expression of desperate sorrow, the Church has often used it in the funeral liturgy. When Luther was asked what were the best psalms of all, he cited Ps 130—along with 32, 51, and 143—calling them the “Pauline Psalms.” For Luther, these are like Paul’s Epistles in setting forth the realities of human sin, God’s grace, and Christ’s redemption. (TLSB)

*130:1* *the depths.* The psalmist realizes that his sin has separated him from God. His guilt has plunged him into sorrow and despair. He knows that self-help and positive thinking will not pull him out of the depths.

*130:3 mark iniquities.* God has perfect knowledge of our sins, but he does not charge them against us, because Christ paid for them.

*130:5* *I wait.* Luther: “Those who wait for the Lord ask … for mercy; but they leave it to God’s gracious will when, how, where, and by what means He helps them” (AE 14:192). “Because You have promised the forgiveness of sins, I am sustained by Your promise” (Ap IV 58). (TLSB)

*130:6* *watchmen*. A night watchman looked to for the light of dawn, which told him that his long night of labor was almost over.

*130:8* *from all their sins.* Sin is the root of trouble and it has consequences. Deliverance from both sins and its consequences is the greatest of all hopes has been fulfilled in Christ. (CSB)

**Old Testament – Genesis 3:8-15**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

*3:8 the garden.* The Garden of Eden was once a place of joy and fellowship with God, but it became a place of fear and of hiding from God. (CSB)

*3:9 Where are you?* A rhetorical question meant to make Adam think about what he and Eve had done and what it had led to at this point in time. It is also a reminder that we can’t hide from God and that he looks deeper than just earthly surface matters.

*3:10 I was afraid.* A dread came over Adam. When we are frightened by our own guilt we often fudge on the truth and begin to make excuses as Adam does in this verse.

*3:10 eat dust.* Serpents do not eat dust, and the Scriptures do not mean to say that they do. It implies “to be humbled,” “to suffer defeat.”

*3:15 he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.*† Although no other offspring of the woman was able to overcome the tempter, One, “born of woman” (Gal 4:4), would come “to destroy the devil’s work” (1 Jn 3:8). Mortally wounded in the conflict, he nevertheless inflicted the deathblow on demonic power. Jesus Christ, Executor of God’s curse on Satan and man’s Champion, enables man to look forward to a victorious end of his strife with his enemy because the “God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet” (Ro 16:20).

**Epistle – 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

*4:13 same spirit of faith*. Believers from every generation and time possess the same faith in God’s Word, which delivers a spirit of perseverance to speak of God’s grace no matter the cost. (TLSB)

*4:13 I believed; therefore I have spoken.* Faith leads to testimony. Paul therefore tirelessly labored and journeyed to bring the gospel message to others. (CSB)

*4:15 grace extends to more*. The goal of Paul’s ministry to the Corinthians was to reach more people. (TLSB)

*4:16 being renewed.* They’ are renewed because the inextinguishable flame of the resurrection life of Jesus burning within. The inward renewal overcomes the outward destruction, and ultimately overcomes even death itself. God’s Word and Sacraments give strength for each day of our lives.

*5:1 a building from God, an eternal house in heaven.* He does not use here the Greek word that means knowing by personal experience, for he has not yet left this tent-house for the eternal house in heaven. Paul knows, he is certain, that an eternal house in heaven awaits him because that is what God has said. So true and certain, in fact is this promise of God that Paul can use a present tense verb, “we have a building from God,” even though he has not yet left the tent-house of his earthly existence. That is how reliable God’s promises are. If God says it, God’s children have it.

**Gospel – Mark 3:20-35**

**20 Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat.  21 When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, “He is out of his mind.” 22 And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, “He is possessed by Beelzebub! By the prince of demons he is driving out demons.” 23 So Jesus called them and spoke to them in parables: “How can Satan drive out Satan?  24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.  25 If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand.  26 And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come.  27 In fact, no one can enter a strong man’s house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can rob his house.  28 I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them.  29 But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin.” 30 He said this because they were saying, “He has an evil spirit.”**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

*3:20-30*This portion of our text provides an important high point in the resistance to Jesus by his enemies—a movement against him that began in 3:1–6—as he is accused of complicity with Satan. Jesus explains the situation with a stunning piece of literary activity, using parabolic non-literal speech, laying out clearly what is at stake.

*3:21* *his family … went to take charge of him.* No doubt Jesus’ family had come to Capernaum from Nazareth, some 30 miles away. (CSB)

*3:22 came down*. Jesus is in Capernaum at this time. The Bible scholars come all the way from Jerusalem and spread the story that He can cast out devils because He is working together with the devil. Note that they make two claims: He has Beelzebul and by means of the rule of demons He casts out demons. By making two statements they make the slander more vicious.

*3:24-26* Jesus points out that the argument of these Jewish teachers makes no sense. If Satan’s house was divided against itself, it would fall of its own accord. There would be no need for exorcisms. But that clearly was not the case.

*3:29-30*This famously difficult passage; equates blasphemy of the Holy Spirit with the unpardonable sin – unyielding refusal to believe the Gospel and a rejection of the Holy Spirit’s work to create faith in Jesus. Guilt of this sin brings one into the everlasting condemnation and punishment.

**31 Then Jesus’ mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him.  32 A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, “Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you.” 33 “Who are my mother and my brothers?” he asked. 34 Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, “Here are my mother and my brothers!  35 Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother.”**

3:31-35At this point in the story, Jesus’ family members arrive and are standing outside. Their position gives more than a description of their physical location. They are outside the circle of those who have come to Jesus in their need and are seated around him. They send for Jesus in order to grasp him.

3:33 who are my mother and my brother? Jesus is not belittling human relationships. But there is a bond which is more important than blood-relationship. It is a blessed situation in which the members of a family practice love. It leads to closeness. That is the picture which Jesus is drawing. The spiritual bond, made possible by Jesus Himself, transcends all human relationships, ever the closest of them and goes on into eternity.