**Notes for Next Sunday**

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

**The Point of this Week’s Readings**

Except for the Epistle, this week’s texts deal with the value of a God fearing home.

Psalm (Psalm 128). This psalm repeats the theme of the preceding psalm: a contented enjoyment of the possessions and the family which the Lord gives is true happiness. This psalm is both a promise of blessing and a prayer of blessing. (PBC)

Old Testament (Genesis 2:18-25). Adam had just about everything that was possible for God to give him. Adam was without sin and he had dominion over everything on the earth. BUT, while all the animals had mates, Adam was all alone. Therefore God creates Eve out of the rib of Adam and makes them one flesh and perfect in that they were not ashamed to be naked.

Epistle (Hebrews 2:1-18). Verses 1-4 are the first of five warnings spread throughout this epistle. It is a warning to not drift away from the message of salvation. Verses 5-18 are an exposition of Ps 8:4–6, which continues to show Christ’s superiority over the angels—in fulfilling man’s role as sovereign over the earth and in redeeming fallen man, not fallen angels. To accomplish all this, Christ assumed human nature (see vv. 11, 14). (CSB)

Gospel (Mark 10:2-16). Verses 2-12 deal with Jesus’ being tested by the Pharisees concerning divorce. They point to wiggle room concerning this action and use Moses to support their case. Jesus not only refutes their logic, but goes on to teach the real reason for marriage. In verses 13-16 Jesus rebukes His disciples for hindering children from being brought to Him. He then teaches the audience just how important children were in His kingdom and to Himself.

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

**Psalm 128**

1﻿ **Blessed are all who fear the LORD, who walk in his ways. ﻿2﻿ You will eat the fruit of your labor; blessings and prosperity will be yours. ﻿3﻿ Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your sons will be like olive shoots around your table. ﻿4﻿ Thus is the man blessed who fears the LORD. ﻿5﻿ May the LORD bless you from Zion all the days of your life; may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem, ﻿6﻿ and may you live to see your children’s children. Peace be upon Israel.**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

*128:1 his ways.* The Hebrew means “trodden path,” used for a “pattern of behavior or custom.” “The way of the Lord” is twofold: He punishes sinfulness, but He also shows mercy to the repentant. (TLSB)

*128:3 vine.* Here it is a symbol of fruitfulness.

*128:3 olive shoots.* Ever green and with the promises of both long life and productivity (of staples: wood, fruit, oil). The vine and the olive tree are frequently paired in the OT (as, e.g., in Ex 23:11). Both were especially long-lived, and they produced the wine and the oil that played such a central role in the lives of the people. (CSB)

*128:3 around your table.* Ancient tables commonly stood no more than a foot above the floor, where families sat or reclined on cushions during meals. (TLSB) Here is means converting each family meal into a banquet of domestic joys. (CSB)

*128:5–6* The benediction pronounced—completing the scope of true blessedness: unbroken prosperity, secure relationship with God and secure national existence (the prosperity of Jerusalem entailed both), and long life. (CSB)

**Old Testament – Genesis 2:18-25**

**18﻿ The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.” 19﻿ Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. ﻿20﻿ So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam﻿ no suitable helper was found. ﻿21﻿ So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and closed up the place with flesh. ﻿22﻿ Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. ﻿23﻿ The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.” ﻿24﻿ For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. ﻿25﻿ The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

*2:18 not good … to be alone.* Being alone is the first thing that God describes as “not good.” Not moral fault (or evil) but incompleteness. At this point, God’s work of creation was not complete with respect to man. He had no mate appropriate to him and no means of procreation. (TLSB)

*2:23 woman.* He gives her a class name, which marks her as being far above all the other creatures upon whom names had been bestowed. (Leupold)

*2:24* *leave his father and mother.* Instead of remaining under the protective custody of his parents a man leaves them and, with his wife, establishes a new family unit. (CSB) Marriage, childbirth, and growth of the human community were part of God’s plan for humankind from before the fall (1:28). (TLSB)

*2:24 united … one flesh.* The divine intention for husband and wife was monogamy. Together they were to form an inseparable union, of which “one flesh” is both a sign and an expression. (CSB) The coming together of man and woman in marriage is pictured here as the reuniting of what was separated at the creation of woman. (TLSB)

*2:25 naked … no shame.* Such was the union of man and woman with God and with each other before the fall that there was no awareness of separation that produces shame. Only after their eye were opened and they became aware of their separateness from each other and from God did they feel the need to cover themselves and hide from God. (TLSB)

**Epistle – Hebrews 2:1-18**

**We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. ﻿2﻿ For if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, ﻿3﻿ how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. ﻿4﻿ God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

*2:1 closer attention*. If God’s people were to listen to the law delivered by angels (cf v 2), then Christians are bound to give their whole attention to the Word delivered by Jesus, God’s eternal Son. (TLSB)

*2:3 ignore.* Jesus’ sacrifice frees people from the curse of the Law (cf Gal 3:13). If they neglect this gift God has given, they will not escape the just punishment for sin. (TLSB)

**5﻿ It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking. ﻿6﻿ But there is a place where someone has testified: “What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? ﻿7﻿ You made him a littlelower than the angels; you crowned him with glory and honor ﻿8﻿ and put everything under his feet.”﻿ In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him. ﻿9﻿ But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. ﻿10﻿ In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering. ﻿11﻿ Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers. ﻿12﻿ He says, “I will declare your name to my brothers; in the presence of the congregation I will sing your praises.”﻿ ﻿13﻿ And again, “I will put my trust in him.”﻿ And again he says, “Here am I, and the children God has given me.”﻿ ﻿14﻿ Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil— ﻿15﻿ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. ﻿16﻿ For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants. ﻿17﻿ For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement forthe sins of the people. ﻿18﻿ Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

*2:5* Angels oversee the nations of this world (cf Dan. 10:13). But the Son has authority over the whole of creation and time, including the angels. (TLSB)

*2:9 made lower than the angels*. Before His resurrection and ascension, Jesus did not always choose to demonstrate His divine power and so appeared lower than the angels. By taking the form of a servant, He appeared to be less authoritative than those glorious beings who are upheld by His Word. (TLSB)

*2:9 Jesus … now crowned with glory and honor.* Through Jesus’ death and resurrection, His true status as God’s Son was revealed to the sinful world, and God the Father exalted Him (cf Php 2:9–11). (TLSB)

*2:10 many sons to glory.* Jesus’ glory will be shared with all whom God leads in faith. (TLSB)

*2:11 to call them brothers.* Jesus is ready to confess before the Father and all creation that believers in Him are truly His family (Mt 12:48–50). (TLSB)

*2:15 lifelong slavery*. All who sin fear death as a consequence of sin and are bound in this fear unless God speaks His word of mercy in Christ (cf Rm 7:14–25). (TLSB)

*2:17 a merciful and faithful high priest.* Jesus brings our needs to the Father because He knows the reality of human weakness. (TLSB)

*2:18 he was tempted.* Jesus’ prayers are those of one who has suffered and been tempted as a real human being. We are assured that His prayers are effective and heartfelt (cf 5:7; Rm 8:34). (TLSB)

**Gospel – Mark 10:2-16**

**2﻿ Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” ﻿3﻿ “What did Moses command you?” he replied. ﻿4﻿ They said, “Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away.” ﻿5﻿ “It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law,” Jesus replied. ﻿6﻿ “But at the beginning of creation God ‘made them male and female.’ ﻿7﻿ ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife,﻿﻿8﻿ and the two will become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one. ﻿9﻿ Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.” ﻿10﻿ When they were in the house again, the disciples asked Jesus about this. ﻿11﻿ He answered, “Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. ﻿12﻿ And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery.”**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

*Verses 2-5.* The Pharisees attempt to entangle Jesus in a religious controversy. Some (the House of Hillel) thought that divorce was acceptable for any and every reason, even to the point of a man growing tired of his wife. Others (the House of Shammai) taught that divorce was permissible only in the case of infidelity. Jesus responded that it was a matter of hardness of heart (sinfulness) that caused Moses to concede permission for divorce. Jesus teaches that divorce was not God’s plan; it was not serving God’s purposes.

*10:5 because your hearts were hard.* Divorce was an accommodation to human weakness and was used to bring order in a society that had disregarded God’s will, but it was not the standard God had originally intended, as vv. 6–9 clearly indicate. The purpose of Dt 24:1 was not to make divorce acceptable, but to reduce the hardship of its consequences. (CSB)

*10:6 at the beginning of creation.* Jesus goes back to the time before human sin to show God’s original intention. God instituted marriage as a great unifying blessing, bonding the male and female in his creation. (CSB)

*10:8 no longer two, but one.* "Two will become one" rules out divorce and polygamy.  "One flesh" is applied only to marriage, to no other human relationship. (Buls)

*10:12 she commits adultery.* This verse is found only in Mark who was writing for Gentiles. What is said about the husband dismissing his wife is equally true about the wife dismissing her husband. This again is a present general condition which holds true in all cases. (Buls)

**13﻿ People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. ﻿14﻿ When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ﻿15﻿ I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” ﻿16﻿ And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.**

The following are some insights to individual verses…

*10:13 little children.* This well denote any dependent child, from an infant to the 12-year-old girl whom Jesus raised (Mk 5:39–42). Luke has “babies.”

*10:13 rebuked them.* They though children were not important and thus limited their access to Jesus. Cf. 9:36-37. (TLSB)

*10:14 indignant. Jesus displayed r*ighteous anger. When translated it can mean greatly grieved.

*10:14 let little children come…do not hinder them.* With a double command, Jesus ordered the disciples to cease their interference. The first command implies an immediate reversal of their prior conduct: “Allow/permit the children to come to me (now).” The second is present, implies a command that continues in force: “Never again hinder them!” The disciples’ Law was countered with Jesus’ loving Gospel voice, which allows all of us to run to Him, trust Him, depend upon Him, and love Him.

*10:15 like a little child.* The point of comparison is the usual openness and receptivity of children. The kingdom of God must be received as a gift; it cannot be achieved by human effort. It may be entered only by those who know they are helpless, without claim or merit. (CSB)