

Notes for Next Sunday

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

The Point of this Week's Readings

Old Testament (Genesis 32:22-30). Jacob had to leave his family in a big hurry because his brother Esau had taken great offense at Jacob receiving the birthright in a deceitful manner. Jacob has moving away from his uncle Laban on not such great conditions. He has been moving his whole family and great number of cattle back to his homeland. Knowing under what conditions he parted company with Esau, Jacob is expecting the worst kind of reception from Esau. In the first 21 verses of this chapter he has put in place a strategy to appease Esau but now he spends the night alone. Jacob went to God in prayer. It became a wrestling match that even though Jacob could not win he would not let go of the Lord until God blesses him. God not only blessed Jacob but also changed his name to Israel which *means struggles with God*.

Epistle (2 Timothy 3:14-4:5). Here Paul is winding down his instruction to Timothy and giving some last minute charges. The heart of Paul's message to Timothy is found in verses 15-17. In these verses Paul points out that Scripture is not just another set of words but God's Word which Timothy has known since he was a child being taught by his mother and grandmother. This Word can be applied in every situation and it will be affective. Paul goes on to tell Timothy to properly prepare the message he needs to preach because the time is coming when people will not want to hear things that don't suit their own desires.

Gospel (Luke 18:1-8). We saw the effectiveness of persistent prayer in our Old Testament reading. Now in this parable Jesus teaches the people how powerful dogged prayer can be. There is quite contrast in the characters in this parable. Outside of an orphaned child the widow at that time was on weakest side of society. She was particularly helpless and vulnerable because she had no family to uphold her cause. Her only justice was her own persistence. The king on the other hand had all the power to do whatever he pleased. But in this story her tenacious prayer just wore him down and he gave in to her requests. God is not an unrighteous judge. But if even an unrighteous man will give justice to the persistent, how much more will our righteous God do so? When Jesus asks *will he find faith*, it is a rhetorical question, urging faithfulness, which is the key ingredient in the prayers of the saints. (TLSB)

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

OLD TESTAMENT – Genesis 32:22-30

²² That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two maidservants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. ²³ After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. ²⁴ So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. ²⁵ When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. ²⁶ Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." ²⁷ The man asked him, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he answered. ²⁸ Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel,^a because you have struggled with God and with men and have overcome." ²⁹ Jacob said, "Please tell me your name." But he replied, "Why do you ask my name?" Then he blessed him there. ³⁰ So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared."

32:22 *Jabbok*. Jabbok means "wrestler." (Leupold)

32:25 *could not overpower him ... touched the socket*. God came to him in such a form that Jacob could wrestle with him successfully, yet he showed Jacob that he could disable him at will. (CSB)

32:27 *what is your name.* The Lord asked him, not because He had forgotten, but to remind Jacob that he had been a “heel-grabber,” one who took unfair advantage of a rival. That old name no longer fit this man and so God gave him a new one. (PBC)

Bible names often serve as more than convenient labels for people. Here Jacob’s new name describes the new nature and character the Spirit of God had patiently and painstakingly created in him. Jacob had learned to lean on God. (PBC)

32:30 *Peniel.* Means “face of God.” (Leupold)

EPISTLE – 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

3:15 from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures. A Jewish boy formally began to study the OT when he was five years old. Timothy was taught at home by his mother and grandmother even before he reached this age. (CSB)

3:16 God-breathed. Paul affirms God’s active involvement in the writing of Scripture, an involvement so powerful and pervasive that what is written is the infallible and authoritative word of God. (CSB)

3:16 training in righteousness. Training raises the picture of a child that need to be disciplined and corrected, guided and encouraged if it is to grow up as well-manner useful citizen. Similarly the Christian during his life on earth needs ongoing training to attain to the righteous life (sanctification) that is part of being a Christian in this world of sin. (PBC)

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: ² Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. ³ For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. ⁴ They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. ⁵ But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.

4:1 Christ Jesus who will judge. Timothy is to do his work mindful that the Lord Jesus on the Day of Judgment will appear again as the glorious king he is. From Him on that glorious day Timothy will want to hear the words, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” (PBC)

4:5 sober-minded. Be level-headed, keep a clear mind. A pastor must not permit himself to become confused or carried away in these situations. This will bring him hardship which he will endure.

GOSPEL – Luke 18:1-8

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. ² He said: “In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. ³ And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, ‘Grant me justice against my adversary.’ ⁴ “For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, ‘Even though I don’t fear God or care about men, ⁵ yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she

gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!"⁶ **And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷ And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? ⁸ I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"**

18:2 there was a judge. From OT times the gate area of an Israelite city was the central place for commerce and the dispensing of law. There judges – often the wise elders of the community, who had many civic responsibilities – would hear cases and administer justice fairly. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 4)

18:2 His sin of callousness is especially serious because judges were to represent God. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 4)

18:3 came to him. The original means she kept coming” to the official whose business it was to adjudicate matters of that kind in this verse implies that she returned again and again.

18:5 wear me out. The literal meaning, “strike under the eye,” “give a black eye” captures the despair of this scene and the shame this widow would give the judge if she continued harassing him. This is probably not to be understood literally as a physical blow to the face, but metaphorically (as also the English idiom has it), that she would “blacken” his reputation.

18:7 will not God bring about justice ... ? If an unworthy judge who feels no constraint of right or wrong is compelled by persistence to deal justly with a helpless individual, how much more will God answer prayer! (CSB)

18:8 will he find faith ... ? Particularly faith that perseveres in prayer and loyalty (see Mt 24:12–13). Christ makes a second application that looks forward to the time of his second coming. A period of spiritual decline and persecution is assumed—a time that will require perseverance such as the widow demonstrated. (CSB)