

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

OLD TESTAMENT – Genesis 2:18-25

18 Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” 19 Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. 20 The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. 21 So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. 22 And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. 23 Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” 24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

2:18 *not good ... to be alone.* Without female companionship and a partner in reproduction, the man could not fully realize his humanity. (CSB)

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)

In chapter 1, God saw that his creation was “good” on days 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6. The second good on day 6 was a superlative “very good” (1:31). But in 2:18 the Lord said, “It is not good for the man to be alone.” Good can be defined as that which fulfills God’s will. The divine intention of one humanity comprised of two kinds of persons, introduced in 1:27, was unfulfilled until the creation of woman. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

My answer is that God is speaking of the common good or that of the species, not of personal good. The personal good is the fact that Adam had innocence. But he was not yet in possession of the common good which the rest of the living beings who propagated their kind through procreation had. For so far Adam was alone; he still had no partner for that magnificent work of begetting and preserving his kind. Therefore “good” in this passage denotes the increase of the human race. In this way, although Adam was innocent and righteous, he did not yet have that good for which he was created, namely, immortality, into which he would have been translated in due time if he had remained in innocence. Hence the meaning is that Adam as the most beautiful creature is well provided for so far as his own person is concerned but still lacks something, namely, the gift of the increase and the blessing—because he is alone. (Luther)

Make him a helper – “Helper” means “supporter, enabler.” The word does not imply inferiority, as if God made women to be slaves to men or solely to improve men’s quality of life. God himself is said to supply “help” for us in Ps 121:1–2 (using the same Hebrew root), and God certainly is not inferior to man! (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

Hebrew *’ezer*; elsewhere has sense of “assistant” or even “ally” and is applied to God. It implies no inferiority, but does reinforce the significance of the order of creation. Accordingly, Adam was the more responsible party (Gen. 3; Rm. 5). Some have seized on this passage to accuse the Bible of being hostile to women. However, the Bible is the only piece of religious literature from the ancient Near East that

gives a full account of the creation of woman; also, the Bible has more significant women figures presented in a positive light than any other body of religious literature from the ancient world. (TLSB)

Robert Alter says this is a “notoriously difficult word to translate.” It means something far more powerful than just “helper”, it means “lifesaver.” The phrase is only used elsewhere of God, when you need Him to come through for you desperately. “There is no one like God of Jeshurun, who rides on the heavens to help you” (Deut 33:26). (Wild at Heart – Eldredge pp. 52-53)

Ezer – literally a help – If man is to achieve his objectives in life, he needs the help of his mate in every way, from the propagating of his kind down through the scale of his varied activities. (Leupold)

Fit for him – Literally, “like his opposite.” There was no appropriate mate for him. Cf. v. 20. (TLSB)

The man is the head, a servant of God, and the one who initiates love. She responds to his role by following his lead and joining him as a fellow servant of God in the order of creation, Christ-man-woman-children (see Eph 5:21–31; 1 Cor 11:3ff.) (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

It is worth pointing out that the only other occurrence of this Hebrew word for “desire” is in Song of Songs 7:10 (in Hebrews, 7:11). There, through the power of God’s love, the woman says, “I belong to my lover, and his desire is for [or over] me.” God’s love in Jesus Christ leads the woman to rejoice in the order of creation; she is glad that her husband is the one who is the head. The curse of sin is reversed by God’s grace so both sexes rejoice in the order of creation. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

Keneghdo – like him – literally as “agreeing to him,” or “his counterpart.” She is the kind of help man needs, agreeing with him mentally, physically, spiritually. She is not an inferior being. (Leupold)

2:19 *had formed* – Text could be misunderstood to imply a different sequence in creation than that suggested by 1:20-27, where man is created after the animals (E.g., some ancient versions have the phrase “formed again,” indicating that after creating man, God made additional animals.: “Formed” or “had form,” meaning that the animals God had already formed were now brought before Adam. (TLSB)

call them. His first act of dominion over the creatures around him. (CSB)

The writer is reminding us that each living creature was getting a name in conformity with the type of life it lived. (Leupold)

Here again we are reminded of the superior knowledge and wisdom of Adam, who was created in innocence and righteousness. Without any new enlightenment, solely because of the excellence of his nature, he views all the animals and thus arrives at such a knowledge of their nature that he can give each one a suitable name that harmonizes with its nature. From this enlightenment there also followed, of course, the rule over all the animals, something which is also pointed out here, since they were named in accordance with Adam’s will. Therefore by one single word he was able to compel lions, bears, boars, tigers, and whatever else there is among the more outstanding animals to carry out whatever suited their nature. This ability, too, we have lost through sin. (Luther)

2:20 *man call... its name* – What an ocean of knowledge and wisdom there was in this one human being! Moreover, although Adam lost much of this knowledge through sin, I nevertheless believe that everything still to be found in the books of all the wise men who have written for the many centuries since scientific

pursuits had their first beginning could not equal that wisdom which still remained in Adam later on but gradually became fainter in his descendants and has almost been blotted out. (Luther)

Sign that Adam exercised authority over animals as God's steward of His creation (1:28; 2:15). (TLSB)

2:21 caused a deep sleep – The Lord God, says Moses, caused a *הַקִּיָּץ*, a “deep sleep,” to fall upon Adam. The verb *קָיַץ* denotes to be overwhelmed by “sleep,” like those who fall asleep unawares and nod their heads. There are different kinds of sleep. Some are deep or heavy and are not disturbed by dreams. These are healthful, for they moisten the body well and are useful for digestion; they do not tire the head either. Others are lighter and, as it were, mixed with periods of waking. In the case of these, dreams are more frequent; they also bother the head and are evidence of a less healthy body. (Luther)

Hebrew implies something more than normal sleep. God sometimes brought a special sleep upon a person for a specific purpose (cf. Is. 29:10). (TLSB)

One of man's ribs – God made Eve with a rib from the side of Adam. Many have illustrated this by saying woman was not made from his head to rule him, nor from his feet to be trampled upon by him, nor of other dust to be independent of him, but out of his side to stand at his side equal with him, under his arm to be protected by him, and near his heart to be loved by him. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

Hebrew word is commonly used for a structural component related to the side of something. When used of a building, it may mean a pillar, beam, or plank of wood. When used of a person, it generally means a rib bone. (TLSB)

The giving of the “rib” can also signify man's sacrifice of himself for his bride, whereby all that is his is hers. In response, all that is hers is his. An exchange takes place between bridegroom and bride, just as Christ made the great exchange with his bride, the church: He took her sins upon himself so that she might receive his righteousness. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

While Adam was sleeping this way, the Lord took one of his ribs. The Hebrew word *עֲצָב* denotes a rib and side. Therefore I hold that the Lord did not take a bare rib, but one covered with flesh, since Adam says below: “This is bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh.” Moreover, the Lord does this also through His Word. We should not suppose that, like a surgeon, He did some cutting. He said: “From this bone thus covered with flesh let there be made a woman,” and it was done. This gap in the side He later on closed with flesh. (Luther)

2:22 *he made into a woman* – Literally, “built.” Only instance in creation account that this verb is used, underscoring its distinction in the story. God did not make Eve out of nothing or form directly out of the dust of the ground. By making her from something from Adam, God both establishes their relationship within the order of creation and ensures that she will be a helper appropriate to Adam. (TLSB)

Thus this expression is common in Scripture, that the wife is called a household building because she bears and brings up the offspring. The form which this building would have had in Paradise we have lost through sin so completely that we cannot even conceive of it in our thinking. But, as I said above, this present life of ours possesses some small and pitiable remnants of its culture and safeguards as well as of its dominion over the beasts. Sheep, oxen, geese, and hens we govern, although boars, bears, and lions pay no attention to our rule. Similarly, some faint image of this building remains; for he who marries a wife has her as a nest and home where he stays at a certain place, just as birds do with their young in their little nest. (Luther)

This living-together of husband and wife—that they occupy the same home, that they take care of the household, that together they produce and bring up children—is a kind of faint image and a remnant, as it were, of that blessed living-together because of which Moses calls the woman a building. If Adam had continued in his innocence, his descendants would have married and wandered away from their father Adam to some little garden of their own. There they would have lived with their wives, and together they would have filled the soil and brought up their children. There would have been no need for imposing buildings of hewn stone or for kitchens or for cellars, as we have now. Just as birds live in their little nests, so they would have dwelt here and there in God’s work and calling. And the wife would have been the main reason for the husbands’ dwelling in fixed habitations. Now in this disaster of sin, when we must have houses because of the severity of the climate, we cannot even conjure up a picture of this bliss; and yet these pitiable remains are excellent gifts of God, and it is truly wicked to use them ungratefully. (Luther)

2:23 *she shall be called woman* – Adam called his wife *ishah* “woman,” the feminine form of *ish* “man.” She does not differ from him in essence or substance, but in gender, just as for example a male and female giraffe are “of the same kind” and distinct from all other creatures, differing from each other only in the matter of gender. (Of course, man is quite different from the animals). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

First name Adam gives to his wife. Like the name of the man (*'adam*), the name of his wife (*'ishshah*) is a classification. In his role as God’s steward, Adam gives a name to this category of created beings, just as he has given names to the rest of God’s creation. (TLSB)

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

The manner in which, and the object for which woman was made show that the husband and wife should love each other with tender affection; cultivate union of views, interest, and effort; and mutually seek each other’s highest good. (Concordia Bible)

But it is most worthy of wonder that when Adam looks at Eve as a building made from himself, he immediately recognizes her and says: “This now is bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh.” These are words, not of a stupid or a sinful human being who has no insight into the works and creatures of God, but of a righteous and wise being, one filled with the Holy Spirit. He reveals a wisdom hitherto unknown to the world: that the effecting cause of the wife and of marriage is God, but that the final cause is for the wife to be a mundane dwelling place to her husband. This knowledge is not simply the product of intelligence and reason; it is a revelation of the Holy Spirit. (Luther)

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)

“Leave,” “be united” or “cleave,” and “become one”: These process words describe the essence of marriage and tell when a couple is married. A man is to “leave” his father and mother. The word means to depart from his former relationship to his parents, to “untie the apron strings.” He still honors his father and mother but is no longer under their authority and headship. He forms a new family unit as its head. The word “be united” or “cleave” denotes an intimate clinging. The Hebrew word can also denote a deep, loyal friendship (Ruth 1:14), and is also used of believers who love God and cling to God in faith (Dent 11:22; 30:20; Josh 22:5; etc.). Love as a willful act of commitment is the glue which binds couples

together in a monogamous, life long relationship. “Become one flesh” speaks of oneness in mind, will, emotions, spirit, and physical being. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

Christ (Matt. 19:5) and Paul (Eph. 5:31) apply this statement as a general rule also to our marriages after innocence has been lost. Accordingly, if Adam had continued in his innocence, the children that were born would have married. Then, after leaving the table and dwelling place of their parents, they would have had their own trees under which they would have lived separately from their parents. At times they would have come to their father Adam to sing a hymn and praise God, and then they would have returned to their own homes. Although sin has now brought about changes in other respects, there still remains this close bond between spouses, so that a man leaves father and mother rather than his wife. But where something different happens, as when married people mutually forsake each other, this is not only against this command; it is also an indication of the awful depravity which has come into human beings through sin and gets support from Satan, the father of all dissensions. (Luther)

come 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 ... not ashamed.* Freedom from shame, signifying moral innocence, would soon be lost as a result of sin (see 3:7). (CSB)

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 eyes 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)

2:4–25 Ch 2 is a more detailed account of creation, focusing on the creation of humankind. It ends by emphasizing that Adam and Eve are not ashamed—they have nothing to be ashamed of. Too often, we are not ashamed because in our spiritual pride we refuse to acknowledge the shameful of our thoughts, words, and deeds. One of the reasons that God gave His Law was to teach us shame, to show us our sinfulness and need of forgiveness. There can be no true repentance without the experience of shame. However, in Jesus Christ, God heals our shame, not by allowing us to deny it but by taking our shameful upon Himself and declaring us to be without shame in Him (1Jn 2:28). • Jesus, cover my shame with the robe of Your righteousness, that I may serve my family with joy and confidence. Amen. (TLSB)

EPISTLE – Hebrews 2:1-13

Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. 2 For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard, 4 while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

2:1–4 The first of five warnings strategically positioned throughout the letter (see 3:7–4:13; 5:11–6:12; 10:19–39; 12:14–29). (CSB)

2:1 *therefore* – The basis of this encouragement is what has just been asserted and proven in chapter 1. Since the Son is above the angels, the word He spoke should be listened to even more keenly than the revelation given through the angels (i.e. the Law at Mt. Sinai). This does not mean that the OT is to be rejected. The OT is God’s Word and is to be heeded. But its meaning and purpose is to be seen in the light of the revelation in Jesus, not the other way around. The Gospel, testified to in the OT but revealed in all its clarity in Jesus, is God’s final word and is to be heeded most carefully. (LL)

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)

what we have heard. The message of the gospel, including that of Christ’s person as the God-man and his redemptive work on the cross. (CSB)

The message of Jesus, the Son of God, whose sacrifice cleanses us from sin. (TLSB)

drift away. From the greater revelation given through the Son. (CSB)

pararuōmen. The text begins by warning us not to “drift away” from the Gospel, just as a boat may drift before a contrary wind. In Eph 4:14, Paul employs essentially the same image and identifies contrary winds as being false doctrine. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 4)

This reminds us of a ship that is drifting past, instead of into the safety of the harbor. Some wayward wind is carrying it slowly, almost unnoticed, past its destination. This was no idle concern on the part of the author. The drifting past the harbor had already begun for those Jewish Christians. The winds of persecution and oppression were carrying them further out to sea. (PBC)

2:2 *the message declared by angels.* The law given to Moses at Sinai. That angels were active in giving the law is indicated by Dt 33:2 (“myriads of holy ones”); Ps 68:17; Ac 7:38, 53; Gal 3:19. (CSB)

Angels were responsible for handing on God’s Law to Moses (cf Ac 7:38, 53). (TLSB)

received a just retribution – Everyone who violated the law by stepping over it in thought, word and deed and everyone who disobeyed it by being unwilling to hear it would be justly punished. No sin of commission or omission would go unpunished by a fair and impartial God; so the OT history of God’s people plainly showed. (PBC)

God’s Law is authoritative. Any breaking of the Law leads to the appropriate punishment. (TLSB)

2:3 *neglect-* The writer warns that simply *amelēsantes*, neglecting salvation, becoming indifferent, is to reject it. The phrase “attested to us” suggests that Hebrews was not written by Paul or another of the apostles, yet is apostolic in content and authority. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 4)

such a great salvation. The argument here is from the lesser to the greater, and assumes that the gospel is greater than the law. Thus, if disregard for the law brought certain punishment, disregard for the gospel will bring even greater punishment. (CSB)

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)

confirmed to us by those who heard him. The eyewitnesses, chiefly the apostles (see 2Pe 1:16; 1Jn 1:1), had vouched for the message first announced by Christ. The author himself apparently was neither an apostle nor an eyewitness (see Introduction: Author). (CSB)

Suggests that the writer of Hebrews was not St Paul or one of the Twelve, because they were directly called by Jesus and received the Word from Him. (TLSB)

Confirm is a legal term designating something properly documented. What court in the land will throw out evidence brought by actual eyewitnesses? The gospel was not human speculation, but divine revelation. It was not man's thoughts, but God truth. (PBC)

2 Peter 1:20-21, “²⁰ Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. ²¹ For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”

2:4 *God also bore witness.* The Father and the Holy Spirit attested to the message of salvation, first spoken in its fullness by Jesus (v 3). (TLSB)

signs, wonders and various miracles. God added his confirmation to the gospel message through supernatural acts such as healing the sick (see Ac 3:7-9, 11-12, 16). (CSB)

Signs put stress on the meaning of the miracles. The miracles were not to be pointless displays, but pointers to Christ. (PBC)

Wonders refer to the effect of the miracle on the observers. (PBC)

Miracles refer to the superhuman power involved pointing to the Omnipotent as the source. (PBC)

gifts of the Holy Spirit. Such as the gift of tongues (see Ac 2:4-12). (CSB)

Cf Rm 12:6-8; 1Co 12-14; Gal 5:22-23; Eph 4:11-12. God chooses to bless His people with what they need to live by faith. (TLSB)

distributed according to his will. See 1Co 12:4-11. (CSB)

2:1-4 Christians need God's Word, spoken by Jesus and attested by those who heard Him. The Father and the Holy Spirit also bear witness. Ignoring God's revelation of how to be saved is frightening. Jesus gives the Church pastors, teachers, and other leaders to spread the Word. He likewise gives us brothers and sisters to encourage us in our life of faith. He will always provide all that is needed to receive the gift of life. • Lord Jesus, thank You for speaking the Word of the Father to me. By Your Holy Spirit, keep me anchored to the hope of salvation that You freely give. Amen. (TLSB)

The Founder of Salvation

5 For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking. 6 It has been testified somewhere, “What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him? 7 You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, 8 putting everything in subjection under his feet.” Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. 9 But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. 10 For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things

exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. 11 For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers, 12 saying, “I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.” 13 And again, “I will put my trust in him.” And again, “Behold, I and the children God has given me.” 14 Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. 16 For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. 17 Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 18 For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

2:5–18 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)

2:5 *It was not to angels that God has subjected the world to come.* Some think the readers were being enticed to believe that the future kingdom would be under the rule of angelic beings (see note on 1:4). Others see the author trying to dissuade his readers from turning back to Judaism. He shows that Christ, as bearer of the new revelation, is superior to angels who had participated in bringing the revelation at Sinai. (CSB)

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

2:6a *it has been testified somewhere.* Such a well-known passage as Ps 8:4–6 did not need precise identification. (CSB)

Ps 8 reflects on the apparent insignificance of human beings in contrast to their great significance to God. (TLSB)

Psalm 8, quoted here, is speaking of God’s original intention for his creation of human beings. But the double entendre is not lost on the inspired writer. In v 9, he makes clear that these words also point to Jesus, who by becoming man, and thus “for a little while . . . lower than the angels,” has restored our human nature and again exalted man to the honored position God intended. Paul makes the same point explicit when he applies Ps 8:6 specifically to Jesus (1 Cor 15:27). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 4)

2:6b–8 Awed by the marvelous order and immensity of God’s handiwork in the celestial universe, the psalmist marveled at the high dignity God had bestowed on puny man by entrusting him with dominion over the other creatures (see Ge 1:26–28 and notes). (CSB)

testified somewhere. Writer perhaps cites from memory or from notes (finding lines in a scroll was considerable trouble). Though he often quotes Scripture, he does not provide specific references. His free style is an example of the human side of Scripture. (TLSB)

2:8 *subjection under him.* Ps 8:6 speaks of human beings, who have dominion over the earth and its creatures (Gn 1:28). As man, Jesus also has this dominion over creation. As God, He has still greater dominion. (TLSB)

everything. God's purpose from the beginning was that man should be sovereign in the creaturely realm, subject only to God. Due to sin, that purpose of God has not yet been fully realized. Indeed, men are themselves "in slavery" (v. 15). (CSB)

By faith alone (cf Heb 11:1), we confess Jesus' authority over our own lives and His authority over all things, even though life may seem out of control. (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 (1:3). (TLSB)

Jesus crowned with glory and honor. Ps 8 is here applied to Jesus in particular. As forerunner of man's restored dominion over the earth, he was made lower than the angels for a while but is now crowned with glory and honor at God's right hand. By his perfect life, his death on the cross and his exaltation, he has made possible for redeemed man the ultimate fulfillment of Ps 8 in the future kingdom, when man will regain sovereignty over creation. (CSB)

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)

Our Lord did not sit in some remote throne room in heaven, watching and sadly shaking his head at our feeble, futile efforts. Instead, himself came down to earth and took on our human nature. What a sight that must have been for the angels as their Lord stepped down from his eternal glory to be wrapped in human flesh and made a little lower than they. (PBC)

Psalm 8: O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. ²From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise ^bbecause of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger. ³When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, ⁴what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? ⁵You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings ^cand crowned him with glory and honor. ⁶You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet: ⁷all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, ⁸the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas. ⁹O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Philippians 2:5-11 ⁵Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: ⁶Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross! ⁹Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

by the grace of God. God has freely provided His Son as the sacrifice for the sin of the world (Jn 19). (TLSB)

might taste death for everyone – Jesus became man to die for man. To do so is more than merely to sip at the dread cup. It is to drain it completely, to experience it fully. And this he did for everyone. (PBC)

Jesus' death has drained the cup of sin and death that poisoned every person (cf Rm 5:12–17). (TLSB)

“taste death for everyone.” Jesus restores our human nature by his substitutionary death for all. By becoming man, Jesus is able to identify with us in all of our various needs (such as in our struggles against temptation, v 18). However, this substitution—his death for our life—is the ultimate purpose of Jesus so intimately and fully identifying himself with mankind (v 17). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 4)

2:10 *He ... by whom all things exist.* God the Father, who created all. (TLSB)

for whom. Aug: “You have formed us for Yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in You” (NPNF 1 1:45). (TLSB)

many sons to glory. Those who believe in Christ are made God’s children through his only Son (cf. Jn 1:12–13). (CSB)

Jesus’ glory will be shared with all whom God leads in faith. (TLSB)

Many people are saved through what Jesus did.

This plan of salvation was no haphazard happening. (PBC)

John 1:12-13 “Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—¹³ children born not of natural descent, ^c nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.”

founder. The Greek word occurs only four times in the NT: here; 12:2; Ac 3:15; 5:31 (“Prince”). (CSB)

Jesus (cf 12:2). (TLSB)

The “founder” of our salvation, Jesus—and thus also our salvation itself—is made *teleiōsai*, complete, through his suffering. This is from the same root as Jesus’ *tetelestai*, “It is finished,” from the cross. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 4)

arkhaygos - The chief leader or captain. It is someone who begins and finishes something. There is little value in starting things and not finishing them. They payoff is in what we finish and not in what we start. This is called to mind in Revelation where it calls Jesus “the Alpha and Omega” the beginning and the end. It can also mean “source.”

John 14:6 “Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

In one way or another it always means “to bring to the goal.” (Beck)

This can also be translated as “source.” Jesus didn’t merely lead to salvation. He did more than blaze a trail to heaven; he became the Way without which no one comes to the Father. (PBC)

perfect through suffering. Christ had not been morally or spiritually imperfect, but his incarnation was completed (perfected) when he experienced suffering. He identified with us on the deepest level of

anguish, and so became qualified to pay the price for our sinful imperfection and to become our sympathetic high priest. (CSB)

As God's eternal Son, Jesus demonstrated complete obedience to the Father through His suffering. Just as a test may show that a student has perfect or complete knowledge of a topic, the cross showed that Jesus completely obeyed the Father's will. Jesus' Passion led to His exaltation and glory following the resurrection. (TLSB)

This was not a hit or miss plan. It was perfectly planned and executed. People are brought to glory not by God just winking at sin but because Jesus took the complete punishment for each and every sin.

Perfect is teleioo and means to complete something, to accomplish a goal without any shortcomings.

2:11 *who sanctifies and those who are sanctified.* Christ became man to identify himself with man and, by his substitutionary sacrifice on the cross, to restore the holiness man had lost. (CSB)

Because the Father adopts us through Jesus, Jesus and Christians have God as their Father (Rm 8:15). Also Jesus, as a true human being, shares descent with us from the one human father, Adam. (TLSB)

to call them brothers. Our brotherhood with Jesus is the brotherhood of the Redeemer with the redeemed, who are truly one with him. (CSB)

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

This is spoken about in the OT and shows how perfect and well thought-out a plan this is.

Psalm 22:22 “I will declare your name to my brothers; in the congregation I will praise you.”

He took on our flesh and according to our flesh has truly become our brother. (Beck)

They are truly brothers and Jesus did not shrink from declaring the fact. (PBC)

Hebrews 2:14-18, “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 for^f the sins of the people. ¹⁸ Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.”

Matthew 25:36 sick or in prison n prison and you came to visit me.’

2:12-13 OT quotes emphasize Jesus' solidarity with mankind. (TLSB)

2:12 *I will tell of your name to my brothers.* A quotation from Ps 22:22, a psalm describing the sufferings and triumph of God's righteous servant. The key phrase is “my brothers,” seen here as coming from the lips of the triumphant Messiah. (CSB)

In Ps 22, David prays to God because he is suffering from persecution and distress. He ends with a confident confession of the Lord's righteousness (Ps 22:22). Jesus, David's descendant and heir, prayed a portion of this psalm on the cross (Mt 27:46; Mk 15:34). (TLSB)

2:13 Speaks of the trust that the prophet Isaiah and his family had in the face of coming judgment. Also describes Jesus, who while suffering judgment for sin, placed His trust in His Father. Jesus is bound to those who place their trust in Him. (TLSB)

I will put my trust in him. An expression of true dependence on God perfectly exemplified in Christ. In him humanity is seen as it was intended to be. (CSB)

Here am I, and the children God has given me. Also seen ultimately as an utterance of the incarnate Son. The Father's children are given to the Son to be his brothers (see v. 11). (CSB)

Verse 10 spoke of us as "sons," emphasizing inheritance. Here we are called "children," referring to our dependence on Christ. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 4)

GOSPEL – Mark 10:2-16

2 And Pharisees came up and in order to test him asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" 3 He answered them, "What did Moses command you?" 4 They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of divorce and to send her away." 5 And Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. 6 But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' 7 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, 8 and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. 9 What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." 10 And in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. 11 And he said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her, 12 and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

Ch 10 The key to this chapter is that God accepts us by grace through faith in Jesus, not through obedience or status, just as children receive love they do not earn. (TLSB)

10:1-16 At first glance it may appear that verses 1-12 have nothing in common with verses 13-16. But they have this in common that the disciples still have much to learn. Verses 1-12 are paralleled at Matthew 19:1-9. Matthew is briefer but is writing for a Jewish audience. Mark is clearly writing for a Gentile audience. Verses 13-16 are paralleled at Matthew 19:13-15 and Luke 18:15-17. A very important principle, enunciated by all three. (Buls)

10:1 *region of Judea.* The Greek and Roman equivalent to the OT land of Judah, essentially the southern part of Palestine (now exclusive of Idumea), which formerly had been the southern kingdom.

East of the Jordan River toward the Dead Sea. (TLSB)

Jordan. Jesus' journey took him south from Capernaum, over the mountains of Samaria into Judea and then east across the Jordan into Perea, where he was in the territory of Herod Antipas (see note on Mt 14:1). For Jesus' ministry in Perea. (CSB)

At this point we are in the later Perea Ministry, the final three and a half months of Jesus' ministry. (Buls)

Stoekhardt: This was the last province of the land of the Jews which received His gracious visitation. (Buls)

Jesus was constantly teaching the crowds and His disciples. (Buls)

At this point we are in the later Perea Ministry, the final three and half months of Jesus' ministry. This is the last province of the land of the Jews which received his gracious visitation.

The time for longer periods of seclusion with His disciples was past, and the time for His passion was drawing near. During these months He again spent time in teaching the crowds that gathered and in healing many of their number. He did not cease the instructing of His disciples, but used every possible opportunity to do so. (PBC)

as was his custom – Jesus conducted a preaching ministry, interrupting it occasionally to focus on His Disciples (cf 9:30). (TLSB)

Jesus now, definitely and finally, left Galilee. He went out from Capernaum, after the last discourse to His disciples, journeyed southward along the shores of the Sea of Galilee, and then crossed the Jordan into Perea, on the far side of the Jordan, on His way into Judea. But as He went along His way, probably even in Galilee, but especially in Perea, people crowded about Him, His identity being known, and they went with Him, they accompanied Him. With His usual Savior's mercy, He saw these people in their great spiritual need, and therefore He again followed His custom of teaching them the one thing needful. (Kretzmann)

10:2-16 Man and woman, created by God to be each other's helper, companion. God blesses their union, and to some has granted the opportunity to be stewards of additional gifts. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

Part of this stewardship is in the unity of the home into which these gifts are bestowed. We as his people can and ought to respect what has been made one. We ought not separate the gift. The results of the union of the man and the woman is spoken of in the second portion. Children are important in Jesus' sight. They can and do believe. Let them come, "for to such belongs the kingdom of God" (v 14). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

10:2-5 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. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

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10:2 *Pharisees*. The Pharisees sought either to justify themselves or trap Jesus. (TLSB)

Pharisees had plagued Jesus in Judea, Galilee, and now even in Perea. Their sole motive is like that of Satan in Matthew 4:1. It shows the spirit in which they asked the question. They wanted to destroy Him. (Buls)

came...test him. The question of the Pharisees was hostile. It was for unlawful divorce and remarriage that John the Baptist denounced Herod Antipas and Herodias (see 6:17–18), and this rebuke cost him first imprisonment and then his life. Jesus was now within Herod's jurisdiction, and the Pharisees may have hoped that Jesus' reply would cause the tetrarch to seize him as he had John. (CSB)

Is it lawful ... to divorce his wife? Jews of that day generally agreed that divorce was lawful, the only debated issue being the proper grounds for it. (CSB)

The question of the Pharisees was not a sincere one. They were trying to trap Jesus into saying something they could use to discredit Him. The divorce question was made to order, since they themselves were not agreed on the proper interpretation of Moses' words (see Deuteronomy 24:1). Those who followed Rabbi Shammai said the only reason for divorce was moral indecency; those who followed Hillel said anything in a wife that did not please the husband was grounds for divorce. They expected Jesus to side with one or the other, and they would then have the opportunity to criticize Him publicly. (PBC)

10:3 *what did Moses command you* – Jesus always appeals to the Old Testament. So did the Pharisees but their exegesis always missed the mark. By the way, Jesus clearly stresses the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch and is saying: "Moses' word is God's Word." (Buls)

10:4 **WRITE A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE** – Ylvisaker: This was one of the burning questions of the day between the two schools in Israel, those of Hillel and of Shammai. The latter was the more strict and conservative, while the former was liberal and tolerant to a degree. . . In spite of mutual disagreements, both schools were agreed that divorce was justified for causes other than that of adultery in the strict sense of the word. (Buls)

Deuteronomy 24:1 is from a section of Jewish POLITICAL Law, not MORAL Law.

Stoekhardt: Moses was also a civil law-giver. In Israel there were many immoral people who would not submit to God's Law. (Buls)

Hendriksen: The 'certificate of divorce' was a merciful concession made for the sake of the wife, for without this regulation a harsh man might be inclined to dismiss his wife even without giving her any written evidence that she was now no longer married. (Buls)

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. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

A Harsh man might be inclined to dismiss his wife even without giving her any written evidence that she was now no longer married. (Hendriksen)

Some husbands might divorce their wives because of bad meal. Divorce often left the wife with few if any resources to live.

The Mosaic provision was made for the contingency of divorce, but did not in itself determine whether that contingency was right or wrong. Its primary function was to provide a degree of protection for the woman who had been repudiated by her husband. (Lane)

10:5 *because your hardness of heart* – 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)

"Hard hearts" amounts to unbelief. Look at Mark 16:14. NEB: "Because you were so unteachable." Beck: "On account of your closed minds." Note "your" not "their." Jesus includes the Pharisees and the schools of Hillel and Shammai. This arrangement was a gracious concession, not an approval of obvious sin. (Buls)

Jesus was well acquainted with this bit of Mosaic legislation, and He also knew the reasons for the adoption of this precept in the Jewish law. The form of government in the Jewish nation during the first centuries of its national existence was that of a theocracy, of a direct legislating by God. The order to which they referred was given by Moses in his capacity as Jewish lawgiver, in order to prevent worse injury and injustice. The government will sometimes find it a wise policy to leave some wrong go unpunished, lest a great many innocent people suffer with the guilty. But this dispensation of Moses, which was given on account of the hardness of their hearts, did not in any way invalidate the institution of marriage and the holiness of the tie of wedlock. (Kretzmann)

The situation that provided the occasion for the permission of divorce was one of moral perversity which consisted in a deliberate determination not to abide by the will of God. Such stubborn rebellion against the divine ordinance is the essence of hardheartedness. The calloused attitude which could be taken in regard to divorce is well illustrated by the counsel of a respected teacher, Joshua be Sira (ca. 200 BC): “If she go not as you have her go, cut her off and give her a bill of divorce” (literally “cut her off from your flesh,” a reflection on the phrase “they shall be one flesh” in Gen. 2:24) (Eccl 25:26). (Lane)

10:6–8 God intended marriage to be lifelong. (TLSB)

10:6 *from 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)

This little "but" shows that their interpretation was contrary to Moses' word, which is God's Word. The creation principle of marriage is now stated by referring to Genesis 1:27; 2:24; 5:2. (Buls)

“But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ ” Jesus viewed marriage as God’s plan. Creation is the basis for marriage. God made man, and for man (Adam) he created woman (Eve). There was no one formed as man was formed from the dust of the ground and then filled with the breath of God. So woman was also specially, fearfully, and wonderfully made from the bone of Adam. Distinctly and differently created, male and female, made for each other and no other. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

Marriage is not a human arrangement. It is God who joins husband and wife together. The Greek word actually means “yoked together as a team.” God wants marriage to be “so long as you both shall live” or “till death us do part.” Marriage is not just a temporary convenience, but a lifelong commitment. (PBC)

10:7 *therefore a man shall* – "For this reason," because of this creation principle. "Will leave" and "be united" are not mere predictions but enunciate the creation principle for all times and peoples. (Buls)

"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife." The key word, *proskollēthēsetai*, translated in various ways (cleave, hold fast, be joined), means "to glue together." It is a new bond, a new family. A man shall join his wife. It is the new prime relationship for them. They've left father and mother; leaving is permanent. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

A man, having reached marriageable age, and having observed the other preliminary steps enjoined by God, will leave his father and his mother, will sever the relationship of childhood and youth, and will be joined to his wife, will enter into a new relationship which will make him and his wife one flesh. (Kretzmann)

10:8 *no longer two, but one*. The deduction drawn by Jesus affirms the ideal of the permanence of marriage. (CSB)

"Two will become one" rules out divorce and polygamy. "One flesh" is applied only to marriage, to no other human relationship. (Buls)

“ ‘And the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one flesh.” We’re not just talking about sex, but the unity of the family. Husband and wife become a unit. “Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth” (Mal 2:15). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

10:9 *Therefore God has joined together*. Jesus grounds the sanctity of marriage in the authority of God himself, and his “No” to divorce safeguards against human selfishness, which always threatens to destroy marriage. (CSB)

"Therefore" this is how mankind should view it. "Man" here means "any human being." In verse 7 it means "a husband." When people marry, God thereby yokes them together. Every valid marriage must be considered such a divine yoking. The creation principle is involved. If disregarded, it proceeds from unbelief. The marriage is God's yoking, and presents a lasting principle. (Buls)

“What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.” *sunezeuxen*: God has joined, yoked together, the husband and wife. Jesus declares that God has joined the husband and wife together as yokefellows, those who pull together. Only God can spiritually bind them together. It is not an activity of the state. According to Christ, it is God's act, and man better not attack what God has done. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

When people marry, God thereby yokes them together. Every marriage must be considered such a divine yoking. The creation principle is involved. (B)

Jesus' final pronouncement grounds the sanctity of marriage in the authority of God Himself. This is consistent with the biblical perspective, which never considers husband and wife alone but always in the presence of God, subject to His commands and aided by His grace. (Lane)

10:10 *in the house* – They ask in private. The Pharisees are no longer with them. The disciples, much influenced by the lax thinking of the school of Hillel, needed further instruction. (Buls)

The disciples were still deeply imbued with the teaching of the scribes, of the rabbis, which they had heard from their youth. The statements of Christ differed so plainly from the customs with which they were familiar that they took up the matter with the Master once more in their lodging-place. (Kretzmann)

10:11-12 They wanted to be sure that they had heard aright and that Jesus had nothing to add in further explanation to them alone. But He only summarizes once more what He said on the way: If any man divorce his wife, loose her from the marriage-bond, and marry another, he commits adultery to the prejudice of, against, the first. The loose morals in the intercourse between the sexes may have been the rule among the Jews, and constant association with these abuses may have made the disciples as callous as all the rest. But that does not affect one whit the ordinance of God. The same rule holds true in the case of a woman: If she divorces her husband, looses the marriage-bond that held him to her, as she could do according to Palestinian law in those days, she commits adultery. Cf. Matt, 5:31-32; 19:3-9. (Kretzmann)

Jesus likely shocked His disciples (cf. Mt. 19:10), since other teachers were more permissive and even the law seemed to grant this as a right. (TLSB)

10:11 *he said* – "He went on to say." He states another principle. It is always so, no exceptions. Jesus does not mean that adultery is not committed until he marries another but rather that this marrying another aggravates the adultery. Most translations: "Commits adultery against her (his wife)." The real point is that not only is he sinning but is also offensive to another. The exception "except it be because of fornication" mentioned at Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 is not mentioned here but is implicit in the text. (Buls)

whoever divorces his wife. In Jewish practice divorce was effected by the husband himself, not by a judicial authority or court. (CSB)

commits adultery against her. A simple declaration of divorce on the part of a husband could not release him from the divine law of marriage and its moral obligations—this enduring force of the marriage bond was unrecognized in rabbinic courts. 1Co 7:15 may contain another exception (see notes on 1Co 7:12, 15). (CSB)

According to rabbinic law a man could commit adultery against another married man by seducing his wife (Deut 22:13-29) and a wife could commit adultery against her husband by infidelity, but a husband could not be said to commit adultery against his wife. The unconditional form of Jesus' statement served to reinforce the abrogation of the Mosaic permission in Deut 24:1. This sharp intensifying of the concept of adultery had the effect of elevating the status of the wife to the same dignity as her husband and placed the husband under an obligation of fidelity. (Lane)

10:12 *she commits adultery.* In this historical and geographical context, Jesus' pronouncements confirm the bold denunciation by John the Baptist and equally condemn Herod Antipas and Herodias. (CSB)

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)

The right of a wife to divorce her husband was not recognized by Jewish law and even in Roman law was a relatively recent development near the end of the Republic (ca. 50-40 BC). (Lane)

10:1-12 Jesus teaches that God wants a man and a woman in marriage to be exclusively committed to each other for life. Attempts to alter or get around God's good intentions bring condemnation, not greater liberty. Thoughtfully and prayerfully embrace God's ways. What He establishes is for our good and stems from His love and grace. • "O Spirit of the Father, Breathe on them from above, So searching in Your

pureness, So tender in Your love That, guarded by Your presence And kept from strife and sin, Their hearts may heed Your guidance And know You dwell within.” Amen. (LSB 858:3). (TLSB)

The Little Children and Jesus

13 And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. 14 But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. 15 Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” 16 And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

10:13 ESV has “and” as the first word of the verse - Mark appears little interested in biographical details. The story is attached to what precedes by a simple *kai*, “and,” without further note of time and place; it may have been at the home where Jesus was staying (Mk 10:10). We are not told who brought the children, who the children were, or how old they were. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

People were bringing the children to Jesus that he might bestow his blessing upon them. To some, children are a problem—they take attention; they need to be clothed, fed, and bathed; they depend upon us. But these parents wanted Jesus to bless their children. They recognized that there was something special here with this miracle-working teacher. This was troubling to the disciples. They did not understand the truth about children and their faith. So they rebuked (*epetimēsan*) the parents. They turned them away in a rather negative manner. The text uses the term that is translated in a number of ways—rebuke, admonish strongly, scold, or threaten. Perhaps they said, “Don’t you know he is much too busy to be bothered with something like this!” (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

little children – *Paidion* may denote any dependent child, from an infant to the 12-year-old girl whom Jesus raised (Mk 5:39–42). The parallel to our verse in Lk 18:15 has *brephē*, “babies, infants.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

It was while Jesus was still on His way to Judea, and while He was making the journey by easy stages, that one of the most appealing incidents in His entire ministry occurred. He had probably sat down in some village to rest for a few moments, when a new idea suggested itself to the mothers of the town. They brought little children of all sizes to Him, from infants in arms up, their request to Him being that He merely touch them, that is, put his hands upon them in blessing. There is no indication of a superstitious notion connected with the action. The children probably all loved the Savior at sight for His gentleness and kindness, and the hearts of the mothers were reached through the children. (Kretzmann)

Luke clearly has “babies” and therefore Beck rightly translates: “Babies.” RSV, NEB and NASB are weak: “children.” There is nothing magical or mechanical in His touch. To touch is an indication of love and intimacy. Those who brought the babies very likely believed in Jesus. That is the point. (Buls)

touch them – This was to bless them. (TLSB)

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

NEB: “Scolded them.” A strong word. The disciples had a lot to learn. “Them” does not mean they were only men, this very likely includes mothers, believing mothers. (Buls)

But here came interference from an unexpected quarter: the disciples harshly rebuked those that were bringing the children. They may have thought that the children were not worth while to bother with, and that the Lord needed the few moments rest and should not be annoyed. (Kretzmann)

Nor do we know why the disciples rebuked “them” (the male Greek pronoun suggesting fathers as well as mothers). Perhaps the disciples were annoyed because the children were members of families outside the primary circle of Jesus’ followers; this was the reason the apostles rebuked the man in Mk 9:38 (see last Sunday’s sermon study). Another possible factor, also present in last Sunday’s Gospel, is that the disciples may have had an inflated view of their own role as Jesus’ closest associates, and felt these outsiders were taking inappropriate liberties in bringing mere kids so close to Jesus. Such familiarity was reserved for the disciples alone! They had not learned that a disciple’s job is to bring others to Christ, not keep them away. Moreover, they had quickly forgotten Jesus’ promise that to receive a child in Jesus’ name is to receive Jesus himself, and the Father who sent him (Mk 9:36–37). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

Perhaps the disciples thought this was an unnecessary intrusion on Jesus’ time and energy, and below the dignity of their Master. Did they consider the children too immature to make any responsible commitment to Jesus themselves? If so, we may draw a parallel to decision theology today and the “age of accountability,” which some set at around 12 years old. Did the disciples fear that the adults would suppose something magic would happen when Jesus touched their children? Nevertheless, Jesus’ mere touch had value (cf. v 16; *haptō*, “touch,” occurs also in the healing in Mk 5:25–34). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

Whatever the reason, those bringing the children met the disciples’ resistance. “Rebuke” carries the idea of censure. The disciples “shooed them away” (Living Bible). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

10:14 *he was indignant* – *aganaktasen* – Righteous anger. (TLSB)

In another part of the house, away from the action, Jesus notices what is going on. You might say that he was upset! *ēganaktēsen* is translated as “indignant”; greatly grieved was Jesus to see his disciples turning the children away. Jesus ordered them to let the children come to him. Don’t hold them back. They need to be coming to Jesus. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

In this account, Jesus forms much of our Church’s attitude toward children, including infant Baptism. This passage is a crucial part of our Lutheran baptismal rite. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

Beck: "He didn't like it at all." Beck continues: "don't keep them away, even to these belongs the Kingdom of God." Not only to adults but even to these. The disciples, like many moderns, were denying this. The Kingdom of God is the gracious rule and reign of God in the hearts of people for Jesus' sake. (Buls)

When Jesus saw what was happening, he was deeply distressed and displeased. *Aganakteō*, “be indignant,” is an intensified compound of *agan*, “very much,” and “to grieve, anguish.” It implies both grief and anger, with great pain. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

let the children come and do not hinder them – With a double command, Jesus ordered the disciples to cease their interference. The first command is aorist, implying an immediate reversal of their prior conduct: “Allow/permit the children to come to me (now).” The second is present, implying 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. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 4)

“Do not hinder them” is a continuous command. Let them come. Little children are invited to Jesus, even if they are so young as to need to be carried. We cannot prevent the children from being with Jesus. It is our responsibility as Christian parents and as his Church to make sure that they are brought to him. He gives them faith in the water and Word of Baptism. How can we Christians keep one from receiving the gift? (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is the gracious rule and reign of God in the hearts of men for Jesus’ sake. (B)

Jesus said, “To such belongs the kingdom of God” (v 14). These children, the boys among them circumcised on the eighth day, were members of the covenant. They had received the promise. And there they were, with the fulfillment of the promise. We, too, who have now received the gift from God, ought to bring the children for whom Christ died. Baptism is but a natural connection. The little Jewish boys and girls were of the Kingdom. Now in Baptism, God makes the child, young and old, part of the Kingdom. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

such belongs the kingdom of God – The kingdom of God belongs to those who, like children, are prepared to receive the kingdom as a gift of God. (CSB)

10:15 *truly I say to you* – “I act as a child who is being taught the catechism...But I must remain a child and pupil of the catechism, and am glad to remain so” (LC, Longer Preface 7-8). (TLSB)

An emphatic truth is enunciated. What follows in this verse allows of no exceptions. "Like a little child" must mean "as a child receives it" thereby plainly indicating that babies can believe. Unless a person has a baby-like faith he cannot "enter it," be reconciled to god through faith in Christ. (Buls)

RECEIVE THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN – Though Jesus was speaking directly to his disciples, the truth is universal. Whoever you are, to enter the kingdom, you must become as a little child—not in the sense of “innocence” (as if children were sinless) or ignorance, but in simple trust in, and dependence on, the Father’s care. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

“Receive” implies salvation is a gift, even as infants receive their parents’ love and care. No effort or merit qualifies you to enter the kingdom. You must acknowledge that you are small, weak, and helpless. Any pretense of greatness, achievement, or independence must be abandoned. Reinforcing this, the Greek verb “take in one’s arms” in v 16 occurs elsewhere in the NT only in Mk 9:36, where Jesus likewise embraces a child as the model for his disciples. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

“Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” The child is the model. We bring nothing to our relationship with God. It is solely by grace that we are saved. The children were directed to Christ by Christ. God gives membership in his kingdom as a gift, not a wage. Through Word and Sacrament, he creates and bestows faith. We must receive his Kingdom as a passive, helpless child. It is Christ who has done it all for us. We bring nothing! (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

like a 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)

10:16 and blessed them. Jesus visually demonstrated that the blessings of the kingdom are freely given. (CSB)

Jesus did three things; embraced them, placed His hands upon them, began blessing them. The latter surely with His Word.

Ylvisaker: The Church has justly recognized in this passage one of the important arguments for the practice of infant baptism . . . Jesus declares that little children are fit for the Kingdom of God through faith . . . And the Church has discovered even more in this passage, the actual origin, in truth, and the institution of the sacrament of Baptism. And so it is. The first ordinance was not given when Jesus commanded His apostles to go and make disciples of all nations through baptism and instruction (Matthew 28:19ff). (Buls)

The Church has justly recognized in this passage one of the important arguments for the practice of infant baptism. Jesus declares that little children are fit for the Kingdom of God through faith. (Ylvisaker)

We better understand the poignant beauty of this passage by remembering that Jesus was on the way to the cross—and he knew it. Its cruel shadow never was far from his mind. It was at such a time that he took time for children. Even with such tension in his mind, our loving Lord took these children in his arms, spoke words of blessing, and applied his special touch. This tells us a great deal about Jesus. He was the kind of person who cared for children, and for whom children cared. What joy he must have beamed as he hugged those children! (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

George MacDonald once said, “I do not believe in a man’s Christianity if the children are never to be found playing around his door.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

Jesus’ final action was as significant as His words. His genuine love of children, and the tenderness expressed in taking them into His arms and blessing them through prayer and laying on of hands, can only be properly appreciated within the context of the calloused attitudes toward children that still prevailed within Hellenistic society in the first century. A papyrus date Alexandria, June 17, 1 BC, contains a letter of instruction from a husband to his expectant wife, who he supposes may have had her child: “if it was a male, let it live; if it was a female, cast it out. (Lane)

10:13–16 This story is the key to the chapter, showing us that salvation is a gift of grace through faith in Jesus Christ. We trust the Lord as a child trusts a parent. We do not earn God’s love and favor by keeping the Law, especially when we look for loopholes to excuse our sinful behavior (cf 10:1–12). All people, like helpless children, receive Jesus’ blessing and enter the Kingdom through faith in Him. • “You have promised to receive us, Poor and sinful though we be; You have mercy to relieve us, Grace to cleanse, and pow’r to free. Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Early let us turn to You. Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Early let us turn to You.” Amen. (LSB 711:3). (TLSB)

2 And Pharisees came up and in order to test him asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” 3 He answered them, “What did Moses command you?” 4 They said, “Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of divorce and to send her away.” 5 And Jesus said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. 6 But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ 7 ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, 8 and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one flesh. 9 What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.” 10 And in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. 11 And he said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her, 12 and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.”

Ch 10 The key to this chapter is that God accepts us by grace through faith in Jesus, not through obedience or status, just as children receive love they do not earn. (TLSB)

10:1-16 At first glance it may appear that verses 1-12 have nothing in common with verses 13-16. But they have this in common that the disciples still have much to learn. Verses 1-12 are paralleled at Matthew 19:1-9. Matthew is briefer but is writing for a Jewish audience. Mark is clearly writing for a Gentile audience. Verses 13-16 are paralleled at Matthew 19:13-15 and Luke 18:15-17. A very important principle, enunciated by all three. (Buls)

10:1 *region of Judea.* The Greek and Roman equivalent to the OT land of Judah, essentially the southern part of Palestine (now exclusive of Idumea), which formerly had been the southern kingdom.

East of the Jordan River toward the Dead Sea. (TLSB)

Jordan. Jesus' journey took him south from Capernaum, over the mountains of Samaria into Judea and then east across the Jordan into Perea, where he was in the territory of Herod Antipas (see note on Mt 14:1). For Jesus' ministry in Perea. (CSB)

At this point we are in the later Perea Ministry, the final three and a half months of Jesus' ministry. (Buls)

Stoeckhardt: This was the last province of the land of the Jews which received His gracious visitation. (Buls)

Jesus was constantly teaching the crowds and His disciples. (Buls)

At this point we are in the later Perea Ministry, the final three and half months of Jesus' ministry. This is the last province of the land of the Jews which received his gracious visitation.

The time for longer periods of seclusion with His disciples was past, and the time for His passion was drawing near. During these months He again spent time in teaching the crowds that gathered and in healing many of their number. He did not cease the instructing of His disciples, but used every possible opportunity to do so. (PBC)

as was his custom – Jesus conducted a preaching ministry, interrupting it occasionally to focus on His Disciples (cf 9:30). (TLSB)

Jesus now, definitely and finally, left Galilee. He went out from Capernaum, after the last discourse to His disciples, journeyed southward along the shores of the Sea of Galilee, and then crossed the Jordan into Perea, on the far side of the Jordan, on His way into Judea. But as He went along His way, probably even in Galilee, but especially in Perea, people crowded about Him, His identity being known, and they went with Him, they accompanied Him. With His usual Savior's mercy, He saw these people in their great spiritual need, and therefore He again followed His custom of teaching them the one thing needful. (Kretzmann)

10:2-16 Man and woman, created by God to be each other's helper, companion. God blesses their union, and to some has granted the opportunity to be stewards of additional gifts. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

Part of this stewardship is in the unity of the home into which these gifts are bestowed. We as his people can and ought to respect what has been made one. We ought not separate the gift. The results of the union of the man and the woman is spoken of in the second portion. Children are important in Jesus' sight. They can and do believe. Let them come, "for to such belongs the kingdom of God" (v 14). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

10:2-5 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. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

10:2-4 Jesus now, definitely and finally, left Galilee. He went out from Capernaum, after the last discourse to His disciples, journeyed southward along the shores of the Sea of Galilee, and then crossed the Jordan into Perea, on the far side of the Jordan, on His way into Judea. But as He went along His way, probably even in Galilee, but especially in Perea, people crowded about Him, His identity being known, and they went with Him, they accompanied Him. With His usual Savior's mercy, He saw these people in their great spiritual need, and therefore He again followed His custom of teaching them the one thing needful. (Kretzamann)

10:2 *Pharisees.* The Pharisees sought either to justify themselves or trap Jesus. (TLSB)

Pharisees had plagued Jesus in Judea, Galilee, and now even in Perea. Their sole motive is like that of Satan in Matthew 4:1. It shows the spirit in which they asked the question. They wanted to destroy Him. (Buls)

came...test him. The question of the Pharisees was hostile. It was for unlawful divorce and remarriage that John the Baptist denounced Herod Antipas and Herodias (see 6:17–18), and this rebuke cost him first imprisonment and then his life. Jesus was now within Herod's jurisdiction, and the Pharisees may have hoped that Jesus' reply would cause the tetrarch to seize him as he had John. (CSB)

Is it lawful ... to divorce his wife? Jews of that day generally agreed that divorce was lawful, the only debated issue being the proper grounds for it. (CSB)

The question of the Pharisees was not a sincere one. They were trying to trap Jesus into saying something they could use to discredit Him. The divorce question was made to order, since they themselves were not agreed on the proper interpretation of Moses' words (see Deuteronomy 24:1). Those who followed Rabbi Shammai said the only reason for divorce was moral indecency; those who followed Hillel said anything in a wife that did not please the husband was grounds for divorce. They expected Jesus to side with one or the other, and they would then have the opportunity to criticize Him publicly. (PBC)

10:3 *what did Moses command you* – Jesus always appeals to the Old Testament. So did the Pharisees but their exegesis always missed the mark. By the way, Jesus clearly stresses the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch and is saying: "Moses' word is God's Word." (Buls)

10:4 *WRITE A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE* – Ylvisaker: This was one of the burning questions of the day between the two schools in Israel, those of Hillel and of Shammai. The latter was the more strict and conservative, while the former was liberal and tolerant to a degree. . . In spite of mutual disagreements, both schools were agreed that divorce was justified for causes other than that of adultery in the strict sense of the word. (Buls)

Deuteronomy 24:1 is from a section of Jewish POLITICAL Law, not MORAL Law.

Stoeckhardt: Moses was also a civil law-giver. In Israel there were many immoral people who would not submit to God's Law. (Buls)

Hendriksen: The 'certificate of divorce' was a merciful concession made for the sake of the wife, for without this regulation a harsh man might be inclined to dismiss his wife even without giving her any written evidence that she was now no longer married. (Buls)

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. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

A Harsh man might be inclined to dismiss his wife even without giving her any written evidence that she was now no longer married. (Hendriksen)

Some husbands might divorce their wives because of bad meal. Divorce often left the wife with few if any resources to live.

The Mosaic provision was made for the contingency of divorce, but did not in itself determine whether that contingency was right or wrong. Its primary function was to provide a degree of protection for the woman who had been repudiated by her husband. (Lane)

10:5 *because your hardness of heart* – 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)

"Hard hearts" amounts to unbelief. Look at Mark 16:14. NEB: "Because you were so unteachable." Beck: "On account of your closed minds." Note "your" not "their." Jesus includes the Pharisees and the schools of Hillel and Shammai. This arrangement was a gracious concession, not an approval of obvious sin. (Buls)

Jesus was well acquainted with this bit of Mosaic legislation, and He also knew the reasons for the adoption of this precept in the Jewish law. The form of government in the Jewish nation during the first centuries of its national existence was that of a theocracy, of a direct legislating by God. The order to which they referred was given by Moses in his capacity as Jewish lawgiver, in order to prevent worse injury and injustice. The government will sometimes find it a wise policy to leave some wrong go unpunished, lest a great many innocent people suffer with the guilty. But this dispensation of Moses, which was given on account of the hardness of their hearts, did not in any way invalidate the institution of marriage and the holiness of the tie of wedlock. (Kretzmann)

The situation that provided the occasion for the permission of divorce was one of moral perversity which consisted in a deliberate determination not to abide by the will of God. Such stubborn rebellion against the divine ordinance is the essence of hardheartedness. The calloused attitude which could be taken in regard to divorce is well illustrated by the counsel of a respected teacher, Joshua be Sira (ca. 200 BC): "If she go not as you have her go, cut her off and give her a bill of divorce" (literally "cut her off from your flesh," a reflection on the phrase "they shall be one flesh" in Gen. 2:24) (Eccl 25:26). (Lane)

10:6–8 God intended marriage to be lifelong. (TLSB)

10:6 *from 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)

This little "but" shows that their interpretation was contrary to Moses' word, which is God's Word. The creation principle of marriage is now stated by referring to Genesis 1:27; 2:24; 5:2. (Buls)

“But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ ” Jesus viewed marriage as God’s plan. Creation is the basis for marriage. God made man, and for man (Adam) he created woman (Eve). There was no one formed as man was formed from the dust of the ground and then filled with the breath of God. So woman was also specially, fearfully, and wonderfully made from the bone of Adam. Distinctly and differently created, male and female, made for each other and no other. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

Marriage is not a human arrangement. It is God who joins husband and wife together. The Greek word actually means “yoked together as a team.” God wants marriage to be “so long as you both shall live” or “till death us do part.” Marriage is not just a temporary convenience, but a lifelong commitment. (PBC)

10:7 *therefore a man shall* – "For this reason," because of this creation principle. "Will leave" and "be united" are not mere predictions but enunciate the creation principle for all times and peoples. (Buls)

“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife.” The key word, *proskollēthēsetai*, translated in various ways (cleave, hold fast, be joined), means “to glue together.” It is a new bond, a new family. A man shall join his wife. It is the new prime relationship for them. They’ve left father and mother; leaving is permanent. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

A man, having reached marriageable age, and having observed the other preliminary steps enjoined by God, will leave his father and his mother, will sever the relationship of childhood and youth, and will be joined to his wife, will enter into a new relationship which will make him and his wife one flesh. (Kretzmann)

10:8 *no longer two, but one.* The deduction drawn by Jesus affirms the ideal of the permanence of marriage. (CSB)

"Two will become one" rules out divorce and polygamy. "One flesh" is applied only to marriage, to no other human relationship. (Buls)

“ ‘And the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one flesh.” We’re not just talking about sex, but the unity of the family. Husband and wife become a unit. “Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth” (Mal 2:15). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

10:9 *Therefore God has joined together.* Jesus grounds the sanctity of marriage in the authority of God himself, and his “No” to divorce safeguards against human selfishness, which always threatens to destroy marriage. (CSB)

"Therefore" this is how mankind should view it. "Man" here means "any human being." In verse 7 it means "a husband." When people marry, God thereby yokes them together. Every valid marriage must be considered such a divine yoking. The creation principle is involved. If disregarded, it proceeds from unbelief. The marriage is God's yoking, and presents a lasting principle. (Buls)

"What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate." *sunezeuxen*: God has joined, yoked together, the husband and wife. Jesus declares that God has joined the husband and wife together as yokefellows, those who pull together. Only God can spiritually bind them together. It is not an activity of the state. According to Christ, it is God's act, and man better not attack what God has done. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

When people marry, God thereby yokes them together. Every marriage must be considered such a divine yoking. The creation principle is involved. (B)

Jesus' final pronouncement grounds the sanctity of marriage in the authority of God Himself. This is consistent with the biblical perspective, which never considers husband and wife alone but always in the presence of God, subject to His commands and aided by His grace. (Lane)

10:10 *in the house* – They ask in private. The Pharisees are no longer with them. The disciples, much influenced by the lax thinking of the school of Hillel, needed further instruction. (Buls)

The disciples were still deeply imbued with the teaching of the scribes, of the rabbis, which they had heard from their youth. The statements of Christ differed so plainly from the customs with which they were familiar that they took up the matter with the Master once more in their lodging-place. (Kretzmann)

10:11-12 They wanted to be sure that they had heard aright and that Jesus had nothing to add in further explanation to them alone. But He only summarizes once more what He said on the way: If any man divorce his wife, loose her from the marriage-bond, and marry another, he commits adultery to the prejudice of, against, the first. The loose morals in the intercourse between the sexes may have been the rule among the Jews, and constant association with these abuses may have made the disciples as callous as all the rest. But that does not affect one whit the ordinance of God. The same rule holds true in the case of a woman: If she divorces her husband, looses the marriage-bond that held him to her, as she could do according to Palestinian law in those days, she commits adultery. Cf. Matt, 5:31-32; 19:3-9. (Kretzmann)

Jesus likely shocked His disciples (cf. Mt. 19:10), since other teachers were more permissive and even the law seemed to grant this as a right. (TLSB)

10:11 *he said* – "He went on to say." He states another principle. It is always so, no exceptions. Jesus does not mean that adultery is not committed until he marries another but rather that this marrying another aggravates the adultery. Most translations: "Commits adultery against her (his wife)." The real point is that not only is he sinning but is also offensive to another. The exception "except it be because of fornication" mentioned at Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 is not mentioned here but is implicit in the text. (Buls)

whoever divorces his wife. In Jewish practice divorce was effected by the husband himself, not by a judicial authority or court. (CSB)

commits adultery against her. A simple declaration of divorce on the part of a husband could not release him from the divine law of marriage and its moral obligations—this enduring force of the marriage bond was unrecognized in rabbinic courts. 1Co 7:15 may contain another exception (see notes on 1Co 7:12, 15). (CSB)

According to rabbinic law a man could commit adultery against another married man by seducing his wife (Deut 22:13-29) and a wife could commit adultery against her husband by infidelity, but a husband could not be said to commit adultery against his wife. The unconditional form of Jesus' statement served to reinforce the abrogation of the Mosaic permission in Deut 24:1. This sharp intensifying of the concept of adultery had the effect of elevating the status of the wife to the same dignity as her husband and placed the husband under an obligation of fidelity. (Lane)

10:12 *she commits adultery.* In this historical and geographical context, Jesus' pronouncements confirm the bold denunciation by John the Baptist and equally condemn Herod Antipas and Herodias. (CSB)

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)

The right of a wife to divorce her husband was not recognized by Jewish law and even in Roman law was a relatively recent development near the end of the Republic (ca. 50-40 BC). (Lane)

10:1–12 Jesus teaches that God wants a man and a woman in marriage to be exclusively committed to each other for life. Attempts to alter or get around God's good intentions bring condemnation, not greater liberty. Thoughtfully and prayerfully embrace God's ways. What He establishes is for our good and stems from His love and grace. • "O Spirit of the Father, Breathe on them from above, So searching in Your pureness, So tender in Your love That, guarded by Your presence And kept from strife and sin, Their hearts may heed Your guidance And know You dwell within." Amen. (LSB 858:3). (TLSB)

The Little Children and Jesus

13 And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. 14 But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. 15 Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." 16 And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

10:13 ESV has "and" as the first word of the verse - Mark appears little interested in biographical details. The story is attached to what precedes by a simple *kai*, "and," without further note of time and place; it may have been at the home where Jesus was staying (Mk 10:10). We are not told who brought the children, who the children were, or how old they were. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

People were bringing the children to Jesus that he might bestow his blessing upon them. To some, children are a problem—they take attention; they need to be clothed, fed, and bathed; they depend upon us. But these parents wanted Jesus to bless their children. They recognized that there was something special here with this miracle-working teacher. This was troubling to the disciples. They did not understand the truth about children and their faith. So they rebuked (*epetimēsan*) the parents. They turned them away in a rather negative manner. The text uses the term that is translated in a number of ways—rebuke, admonish strongly, scold, or threaten. Perhaps they said, "Don't you know he is much too busy to be bothered with something like this!" (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

little children – *Paidion* may denote any dependent child, from an infant to the 12-year-old girl whom Jesus raised (Mk 5:39–42). The parallel to our verse in Lk 18:15 has *brephē*, "babies, infants." (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

It was while Jesus was still on His way to Judea, and while He was making the journey by easy stages, that one of the most appealing incidents in His entire ministry occurred. He had probably sat down in some village to rest for a few moments, when a new idea suggested itself to the mothers of the town. They brought little children of all sizes to Him, from infants in arms up, their request to Him being that He merely touch them, that is, put his hands upon them in blessing. There is no indication of a superstitious notion connected with the action. The children probably all loved the Savior at sight for His gentleness and kindness, and the hearts of the mothers were reached through the children. (Kretzmann)

Luke clearly has "babies" and therefore Beck rightly translates: "Babies." RSV, NEB and NASB are weak: "children." There is nothing magical or mechanical in His touch. To touch is an indication of love and intimacy. Those who brought the babies very likely believed in Jesus. That is the point. (Buls)

touch them – This was to bless them. (TLSB)

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

NEB: "Scolded them." A strong word. The disciples had a lot to learn. "Them" does not mean they were only men, this very likely includes mothers, believing mothers. (Buls)

But here came interference from an unexpected quarter: the disciples harshly rebuked those that were bringing the children. They may have thought that the children were not worth while to bother with, and that the Lord needed the few moments rest and should not be annoyed. (Kretzmann)

Nor do we know why the disciples rebuked "them" (the male Greek pronoun suggesting fathers as well as mothers). Perhaps the disciples were annoyed because the children were members of families outside the primary circle of Jesus' followers; this was the reason the apostles rebuked the man in Mk 9:38 (see last Sunday's sermon study). Another possible factor, also present in last Sunday's Gospel, is that the disciples may have had an inflated view of their own role as Jesus' closest associates, and felt these outsiders were taking inappropriate liberties in bringing mere kids so close to Jesus. Such familiarity was reserved for the disciples alone! They had not learned that a disciple's job is to bring others to Christ, not keep them away. Moreover, they had quickly forgotten Jesus' promise that to receive a child in Jesus' name is to receive Jesus himself, and the Father who sent him (Mk 9:36-37). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

Perhaps the disciples thought this was an unnecessary intrusion on Jesus' time and energy, and below the dignity of their Master. Did they consider the children too immature to make any responsible commitment to Jesus themselves? If so, we may draw a parallel to decision theology today and the "age of accountability," which some set at around 12 years old. Did the disciples fear that the adults would suppose something magic would happen when Jesus touched their children? Nevertheless, Jesus' mere touch had value (cf. v 16; *haptō*, "touch," occurs also in the healing in Mk 5:25-34). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

Whatever the reason, those bringing the children met the disciples' resistance. "Rebuke" carries the idea of censure. The disciples "shooed them away" (Living Bible). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

10:14 *he was indignant* – *aganaktasen* – Righteous anger. (TLSB)

In another part of the house, away from the action, Jesus notices what is going on. You might say that he was upset! *ēganaktēsen* is translated as "indignant"; greatly grieved was Jesus to see his disciples turning

the children away. Jesus ordered them to let the children come to him. Don't hold them back. They need to be coming to Jesus. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

In this account, Jesus forms much of our Church's attitude toward children, including infant Baptism. This passage is a crucial part of our Lutheran baptismal rite. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

Beck: "He didn't like it at all." Beck continues: "don't keep them away, even to these belongs the Kingdom of God." Not only to adults but even to these. The disciples, like many moderns, were denying this. The Kingdom of God is the gracious rule and reign of God in the hearts of people for Jesus' sake. (Buls)

When Jesus saw what was happening, he was deeply distressed and displeased. *Aganakteō*, "be indignant," is an intensified compound of *agan*, "very much," and "to grieve, anguish." It implies both grief and anger, with great pain. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

let the children come and do not hinder them – With a double command, Jesus ordered the disciples to cease their interference. The first command is aorist, implying an immediate reversal of their prior conduct: "Allow/permit the children to come to me (now)." The second is present, implying 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. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 4)

"Do not hinder them" is a continuous command. Let them come. Little children are invited to Jesus, even if they are so young as to need to be carried. We cannot prevent the children from being with Jesus. It is our responsibility as Christian parents and as his Church to make sure that they are brought to him. He gives them faith in the water and Word of Baptism. How can we Christians keep one from receiving the gift? (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is the gracious rule and reign of God in the hearts of men for Jesus' sake. (B)

Jesus said, "To such belongs the kingdom of God" (v 14). These children, the boys among them circumcised on the eighth day, were members of the covenant. They had received the promise. And there they were, with the fulfillment of the promise. We, too, who have now received the gift from God, ought to bring the children for whom Christ died. Baptism is but a natural connection. The little Jewish boys and girls were of the Kingdom. Now in Baptism, God makes the child, young and old, part of the Kingdom. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

such belongs the kingdom of God – The kingdom of God belongs to those who, like children, are prepared to receive the kingdom as a gift of God. (CSB)

10:15 *truly I say to you* – "I act as a child who is being taught the catechism...But I must remain a child and pupil of the catechism, and am glad to remain so" (LC, Longer Preface 7-8). (TLSB)

An emphatic truth is enunciated. What follows in this verse allows of no exceptions. "Like a little child" must mean "as a child receives it" thereby plainly indicating that babies can believe. Unless a person has a baby-like faith he cannot "enter it," be reconciled to God through faith in Christ. (Buls)

RECEIVE THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN – Though Jesus was speaking directly to his disciples, the truth is universal. Whoever you are, to enter the kingdom, you must become as a little child—not in

the sense of “innocence” (as if children were sinless) or ignorance, but in simple trust in, and dependence on, the Father’s care. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

“Receive” implies salvation is a gift, even as infants receive their parents’ love and care. No effort or merit qualifies you to enter the kingdom. You must acknowledge that you are small, weak, and helpless. Any pretense of greatness, achievement, or independence must be abandoned. Reinforcing this, the Greek verb “take in one’s arms” in v 16 occurs elsewhere in the NT only in Mk 9:36, where Jesus likewise embraces a child as the model for his disciples. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

“Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” The child is the model. We bring nothing to our relationship with God. It is solely by grace that we are saved. The children were directed to Christ by Christ. God gives membership in his kingdom as a gift, not a wage. Through Word and Sacrament, he creates and bestows faith. We must receive his Kingdom as a passive, helpless child. It is Christ who has done it all for us. We bring nothing! (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 4)

like a 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)

10:16 and *blessed them.* Jesus visually demonstrated that the blessings of the kingdom are freely given. (CSB)

Jesus did three things; embraced them, placed His hands upon them, began blessing them. The latter surely with His Word.

Ylvisaker: The Church has justly recognized in this passage one of the important arguments for the practice of infant baptism . . . Jesus declares that little children are fit for the Kingdom of God through faith . . . And the Church has discovered even more in this passage, the actual origin, in truth, and the institution of the sacrament of Baptism. And so it is. The first ordinance was not given when Jesus commanded His apostles to go and make disciples of all nations through baptism and instruction (Matthew 28:19ff). (Buls)

The Church has justly recognized in this passage one of the important arguments for the practice of infant baptism. Jesus declares that little children are fit for the Kingdom of God through faith. (Ylvisaker)

We better understand the poignant beauty of this passage by remembering that Jesus was on the way to the cross—and he knew it. Its cruel shadow never was far from his mind. It was at such a time that he took time for children. Even with such tension in his mind, our loving Lord took these children in his arms, spoke words of blessing, and applied his special touch. This tells us a great deal about Jesus. He was the kind of person who cared for children, and for whom children cared. What joy he must have beamed as he hugged those children! (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

George MacDonald once said, “I do not believe in a man’s Christianity if the children are never to be found playing around his door.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 4)

Jesus’ final action was as significant as His words. His genuine love of children, and the tenderness expressed in taking them into His arms and blessing them through prayer and laying on of hands, can only be properly appreciated within the context of the calloused attitudes toward children that still prevailed within Hellenistic society in the first century. A papyrus date Alexandria, June 17, 1 BC, contains a letter of instruction from a husband to his expectant wife, who he supposes may have had her child: “if it was a male, let it live; if it was a female, cast it out. (Lane)

10:13–16 This story is the key to the chapter, showing us that salvation is a gift of grace through faith in Jesus Christ. We trust the Lord as a child trusts a parent. We do not earn God’s love and favor by keeping the Law, especially when we look for loopholes to excuse our sinful behavior (cf 10:1–12). All people, like helpless children, receive Jesus’ blessing and enter the Kingdom through faith in Him. • “You have promised to receive us, Poor and sinful though we be; You have mercy to relieve us, Grace to cleanse, and pow’r to free. Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Early let us turn to You. Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Early let us turn to You.” Amen. (*LSB* 711:3). (TLSB)

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