

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 2:18-24 10-7-18

They Become One Flesh

- A. Why have a text like this selected to be included in the Bible?
- B. What was the purpose of the original question that Jesus was asked?
- C. How did Jesus answer the question?
- D. What will this mean for us today?

A Luther Sermon Quotation: [Luther's view of marriage was deeply influenced by his understanding of the Scripture]. *This is a true definition of marriage: Marriage is the God-appointed and legitimate union of man and woman in the hope of having children or at least for the purpose of avoiding fornication and sin and live to the glory of God. The ultimate purpose is to obey God; to find aid and counsel against sin; to call upon God; to seek, love, and educate children for the glory of God; to live with one's wife in the fear of God and to bear the cross, but if there are no children, nevertheless to live with one's wife in contentment; and to avoid all lewdness with others.* (Plass, What Luther Says, 4338 p. 1349)

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## Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost

Mark 10:17-31      10-14-18

### LET GO!

*"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." They were greatly astounded and said to one another. "Then who can be saved?" Jesus looked at them and said, "For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible."* Mark 9:50

Jesus' interaction one day with a rich young man presents us with a challenge. How do we as Christians view and use what is of value to us, especially money. Jesus' disciples are not alone when, realizing the hold money has on people, they

ask, “*Who then can be saved?*”

First of all we need to realize that if we have adequate food and shelter, in comparison with at least one-third of the world, we are extremely rich. We cannot evade Jesus’ words.

Then we need to listen to Jesus’ promise, “*For God all things are possible.*” Working through the Gospel, God can de-throne money or whatever else we have as #1 in our lives. We are to let all those things come under his direction.

This is really a stewardship text. It tells us that giving up our possession is not a “prerequisite” for discipleship, but the “result” of discipleship. As God takes #1 place in our lives he moves us to “let go” of our control and let our lives come under his direction.

*“Wealth is the most insignificant thing on earth, the smallest gift that God can give a man. What is it in comparison with the Word of God? Indeed, what is it in comparison even with gifts of the body, such as beauty? What is it in comparison with gifts of the soul? And yet people rush after it so madly.”*

Edwin Plass, *What Luther Says*, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1959, #4618, p. 1435.

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Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost

Mark 10:35-45 10-21-18

Jesus Came to Serve

A. If you want to know and say something about Jesus, then know and say this first: He came to serve.

B. If you want to know and say something about Jesus’ Disciples, then know and say the same thing about them.

A Luther Sermon Quotation: [Luther said in a sermon preached on September 26, 1526, that Christians serve the poor as Christ also came to serve.] *We should learn well how to please Christ. We do please Him by dedicating our entire life with all*

possible diligence solely to the service of our neighbor. Down, down, says Christ: you will find me in the poor; you are rising [aiming] too high if you do not look for me there. Therefore his command of love should really be written on all the foreheads of the poor with letters of gold that we may see and grasp how close Christ is to us on earth. And yet even this would not help if Christ Himself did not impress this truth on the heart. The Holy Spirit has written it often enough. He who will not read it there will not read it at all, no matter where you write it. (Plass, What Luther Says, 600 p. 206)

Reformation Sunday

John 8:31-36

10-28-18

CONTINUE

“Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, ‘If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.’” John 8:31 (NRSV)

Have you ever noticed that it’s usually easier to start something than to finish it? What are some of the activities for which that is true in your life?

What does Jesus promise will be the result if we “continue” in his Word?”

As we “continue” in his Word what will we discover?

- About ourselves?
- About God?

A good example of a person who “continued in the word” is Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Russian author of *Crime and Punishment*.

Jesus extends an invitation and gives a promise to each of us through our Gospel lesson. In gratefulness for both, let us thankfully “continue” in his Word.

“Either sin is with you, lying on your shoulders, or it is lying on Christ, the Lamb of God. Now if it is lying on your back, you are lost; but if it is resting on Christ, you are free, and you will be saved. Now choose what you want. According to law and justice, your sins should no doubt remain on you; but grace has cast them upon Christ, the Lamb. If God were minded to reason with us on other terms, we would be done for.”

Edwin Plass, *What Luther Says*, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO, 1959, #1854, p. 607.