

Thoughts on the Readings of October 2, 2022

The Common Thread We must take our stand in the face of our enemies—sin, death, and the devil—to see what God will say to us. And this is what he says: “The righteous shall live by his faith.” In the face of sin, he alone is our salvation; in the face of death, he is our Rock; in the face of the devil, he is our fortress. So we must always rekindle our faith and trust in him whom we believe. Faith increases as we keep our faith in Christ.

First Reading - [Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4](#) Nothing much has changed. People still cry for help, though they often look to the wrong place for that assistance. Life is tough all over, as the saying goes. Despite the times we live in, or the difficulties therein, the righteous shall live by faith.

Psalm - [Psalm 62:1–12](#) God alone is our refuge in difficult times. Indeed, God is our hope and fortress in times of peace and prosperity as well. Our task is to wait in hope, and trust God despite what we experience. Otherwise, we may try in vain to fix what God has ordained, and for that God will repay us. Wait. Hope. Trust. God is faithful.

Second Reading - [2 Timothy 1:1-14](#) Paul exemplifies the patient believer: he prays night and day. In spite of his suffering, he encourages the faith in Timothy. He emboldens him to keep that faith, and to share in his suffering for the gospel. Here we meet the powerful grace of God to which we too were called. Follow in this pattern of sound doctrine, continuing in faith and the love of Christ Jesus. This is what the Holy Spirit has deposited within us and we must guard it well in times like these.

Gospel - [Luke 17:1-10](#) Faith is not something to be increased, as the disciples asked at that time, as much as it is something to be kept. God, in his grace, has given you all the faith you need. Your faith may seem meager but it is great when you maintain your faith in God. When times are tough, you do not need more faith; instead, you must keep the faith already given to you. When you do so, God accomplishes great things—and increases your faith. Our works earn us nothing. This is a clear teaching, made even clearer by

understanding that the word translated as “servant” in so many English translations, literally means “slave.” This is humanity’s condition; we are not mere servants, in today’s understanding of someone who is paid for their service. We are indentured servants, slaves to sin and death, and we can never earn our freedom. No matter how much work we do, that labor is simply what is demanded of a slave. The slave’s work does not make the master indebted to the slave.

Either the master sets us free—and death and the devil are not going to do that—or someone pays our debt and sets free. This is precisely what Christ has done for us. He has paid our debt and liberated us, declaring, “No longer do I call you slaves” ([John 15:15 NASB](#)). If we are no longer indentured, to whom do we owe the debt? Indeed, if there is no longer a debt to be repaid, since Christ has paid it ([Col 2:14](#)), why would we even imagine a debt is to be required? We not only condemn confidence in works, the whole notion of paying an already-paid debt is unreasonable.