

Thoughts on the Readings of May 9, 2021

The Common Thread The world needs preachers of the good news of Jesus Christ—because he is Lord of all. The news of judgment must come to every ear. But the joyful news of salvation must be preached too. The song goes like this: Christ is the victory who overcomes what we call the world: sin and its judgment which is death. Everyone who believes on Christ, who has faith in him, overcomes this judgment. Because God's will is that the world believe, this world needs preachers, so that people may hear and believe ([Rom 10:17](#)) and so, live in Christ who is Lord of all.

First Reading - [Acts 10:34-48](#) Where the Word of God is preached, the Holy Spirit brings conversion. God delights in coming to those whom others find unremarkable and unworthy of redemption. Then it falls to us to love whom we found unlovable, for Christ is Lord of all, and forgives the sins of everyone who believes.

Psalms - [Psalm 98:1-9](#) What if salvation was available but it was kept secret? Imagine failing to deliver the news that God delivers. If we are silent and do not sing of the Lord's salvation to the ends of the earth, the stones will cry out ([Luke 19:40](#)) and so will the sea, the rivers, and the hills. The whole world should roar the news, for the Lord is coming to judge the world with righteousness — but the world has a Savior. “He has done marvelous things!”

Second Reading - [1 John 5:1-8](#) Suppose there was an Internet survey that gave us the following choices: (A) I do a great job in keeping the commandments. (B) I don't do too bad. (C) I fail the Lord a lot. (D) I'm probably going to hell. Hopefully, none of us would choose “D.” But most of us probably do not feel too great about our walk with the Lord sometimes. We wonder if we truly love the Lord since we fail him in his commandments so frequently.

The greatest commandment is to love the Lord with the whole heart ([Matthew 22:37-38](#)). What fuller, more committed hearts, souls, and minds are there than those that recognize their need of God and turn to him again and again when they so honestly chose “C: I fail the Lord a lot”? It is the Lord Jesus who is victor. We

overcome the world and sin and death and the devil only by our faith in his victory — not our own occasional spiritual successes.

Gospel - [John 15:9-17](#) Oh! How easy it is to fall in love with Jesus. The attraction is palpable at one time or another even in the hardest hearts. But to stay in love — there is the rub. Marriages also begin with strong attractions, but when feelings wane or even wear completely away, remaining in love can be harder work than people want to do. Being friends with folks in the church seems easy at first, too. After serving on a committee, that feeling can go away. Christ calls his people to abide, to live and keep in his love. Remaining in love can only be done through his grace, by remembering his great love for us ([Ephesians 2:4](#)). When we feel like lashing out at Jesus' friends in a meeting, walking away from our spouses, or even giving up on Jesus, we must remember the great love with which he loved us. Only through the example of Christ and the urging of his Spirit do we learn to abide in his great love and to love one another.

Today is Mother's Day in the US. Give thanks to God for all mothers, grandmothers, and those who have nurtured us in the faith. Remember that not all women have been able to have children and it can be a sensitive subject for those who have struggled with fertility. It may be more helpful to remember all the women in our lives that have walked with us in the faith.