

The Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost—October 14, 2018

First Lesson

Amos 5:5-7, 10-15

Amos was a herdsman by profession and a prophet by God's call. During a time of great prosperity in the northern kingdom of Israel, the prophet speaks to the wealthy upper class. He warns his listeners that fulfilling God's demand for justice brings blessing, while corruption and oppression incur God's wrath.

⁶Seek the LORD and live,
or he will break out against the house of Joseph like fire,
and it will devour Bethel, with no one to quench it.

⁷Ah, you that turn justice to wormwood,
and bring righteousness to the ground!

¹⁰They hate the one who reproves in the gate,
and they abhor the one who speaks the truth.

¹¹Therefore because you trample on the poor
and take from them levies of grain,
you have built houses of hewn stone,
but you shall not live in them;
you have planted pleasant vineyards,
but you shall not drink their wine.

¹²For I know how many are your transgressions,
and how great are your sins—
you who afflict the righteous, who take a bribe,
and push aside the needy in the gate.

¹³Therefore the prudent will keep silent in such a time;
for it is an evil time.

¹⁴Seek good and not evil,
that you may live;
and so the LORD, the God of hosts, will be with you,
just as you have said.

¹⁵Hate evil and love good,
and establish justice in the gate;
it may be that the LORD, the God of hosts,
will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

The Word of the Lord.

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Psalm 90:12-17

Read responsively

- A** ¹²So teach us to number our days
that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.
- C** ¹³**Return, O LORD; how long will you tarry?
Be gracious to your servants.**
- A** ¹⁴Satisfy us by your steadfast love in the morning;
so shall we rejoice and be glad all our days.
- C** ¹⁵**Make us glad as many days as you afflicted us
and as many years as we suffered adversity.**
- A** ¹⁶Show your servants your works,
and your splendor to their children.
- C** ¹⁷**May the graciousness of the Lord our God be upon us;
prosper the work of our hands; prosper our handiwork.**

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Second Lesson

Hebrews 4:12-16

We cannot hide our thoughts, desires, and actions from God, to whom we are completely accountable. Nevertheless, Jesus understands our human weakness and temptations, because he also experienced them. Therefore we can approach the throne of grace to receive divine mercy from Christ.

¹²Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

¹³And before him no creature is hidden, but all are naked and laid bare to the eyes of the one to whom we must render an account.

¹⁴Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession.

¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

The Word of the Lord.

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***Holy Gospel**

Mark 10:17-31

Jesus has been teaching his disciples about what is most valued in God's eyes. Now, a conversation with a rich man brings his message home to the disciples in a way that is surprising but unforgettable.

¹⁷As [Jesus] was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” ¹⁸Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. ¹⁹You know the commandments: ‘You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honor your father and mother.’ ” ²⁰He said to him, “Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth.” ²¹Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, “You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.” ²²When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

²³Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!” ²⁴And the disciples were perplexed at these words. But Jesus said to them again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵It 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.” ²⁶They were greatly astounded and said to one another, “Then who can be saved?” ²⁷Jesus looked at them and said, “For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible.”

²⁸Peter began to say to him, “Look, we have left everything and followed you.” ²⁹Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news, ³⁰who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age—houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields, with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. ³¹But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.”

The Gospel of the Lord.