

Lessons for Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

October 14, 2018

Psalm 90:12–17 ~ *Moses, prayer for God's compassion, that days of joy break even with the days of trouble.*

Amos 5:6–7, 10–15 ~ *The people of Amos' day used their power to deprive the poor rather than promote justice.*

Hebrews 3:12–19 ~ *Through confidence in Christ we encourage one another and share in His eternal rest.*

Mark 10:17–22 ~ *Eternal life is an inheritance given to family members; it is not deserved or bought.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: It is a Matter of Inheritance.

“What must I do to inherit eternal life?” The man asked Jesus, as if inheritance depends on performance. Even in the Prophet Amos' day, riches were thought to be an indication of God's favor. The wealthy used that misconception as an excuse to oppress the poor. It also explains the disciples' amazement at Jesus' words: “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!” Inheritance is a matter of sharing in Christ and encouraging one another to draw near to God with confidence in Him. By His grace God extends His household to us through Jesus Christ because “with God all things are possible.”

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: Dear Father in heaven, You have made me and claimed me. You have given me all that I have. Help me remember that the greatest gift is a place in your family. Help me use all my possessions in ways that are appropriate for a child of Your kingdom. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: The greatest inheritance is given us through the Father's will and consists of eternal treasures. The riches of this world that God gives us are best used to promote justice and bring the poor into God's kingdom of grace.

OFFERING PRAYER: Lord, in Your mercy let us seek
to right the wrongs that crush the meek.
Now bless these gifts to gracious ends
that we may win eternal friends. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: As in Amos' day, so today, not only in the legal system but also in daily life, we turn power to our advantage and make the goal winning rather than seeking justice. We think we can use the same tactics to win blessings from God instead of bringing blessings to the poor and oppressed in God's kingdom. But God gives the blessing of His eternal rest as an inheritance to those who are His children because they believe in the One He has sent to finish the work we are unable to do