

Sermon Notes on Mt. 22:34-46, Trinity XVIII

1. Our text is paralleled at Mk. 12:28-37. Lk. 10:25-28 is not the same incident as Mt. and Mk. Mt. tells us that the lawyer asked Jesus a question to trap him. But the account in Mk. shows us that Jesus' answer changed the heart and mind of this lawyer. Mt. 22:46 tells us that after this occasion Jesus' enemies did not dare to trap Him again. But Mk. 12:37 tells us that the people heard Jesus gladly. The purpose of our text is Jesus' final attempt to bring His enemies to faith. But they refused Him. In our text Jesus first tells them about His true Word and then about His true Person.
2. Jesus says that the whole Word of God can be summarized in two sentences. The first is quoted from Deut. 6:5 about man's love for God. To love God with one's whole being means to believe Him, to trust Him. To believe in Jesus is the highest form of worship. The second is quoted from Lev. 19:18 and 34. To love one's neighbor means to do for him what we do for ourselves. Rom. 13:10 reads "Love is the fulfillment of the Law." I Jn. 4:16 says "God is love." To love God means to believe in Him. To love one's neighbor means to do for him what we do for ourselves. Jn. 14:23 reads: "If anyone loves Me (Christ) he will observe My Word and My Father will love him and we will come to him and make our home in him." To love Jesus means to believe His Gospel. And then ^{the} Triune God loves the believer by living in him.
3. Now we come to vss. 41-45 of our text. Jesus continues to draw His enemies to Himself. In vs. 42 He asks them two questions: "What do you think of Christ? Whose son is He?" The answer to the first question depends on the answer to the second question. They answered the second question correctly. So far, so good. But now Jesus quotes a saying of the Holy Spirit from Ps. 110:1. The first line reads: "The Lord said to My Lord." The original Hebrew for this is: "Jehovah said to Adonai." In other words, two persons, not one, are noted. That ultimately means: "The Father said to the Son." David calls Jesus "my Lord." The Father tells the Son, in prophecy, to sit at the right hand of His power until all His enemies would be conquered. Read I Cor. 15:25, 27 and Heb. 2:8. Now Jesus asks a third question: "If, therefore, he (David) calls Him (Jesus) Lord, how can He (Jesus) be His (David's) son?" Jesus' enemies had rightly called the Lord the son of David but they would not agree that He was also David's Lord. As true God, Jesus is David's Lord. As true man, Jesus is David's son, descendant. Like Abraham, David believed in Him Who is true God and true man, Jesus Christ. See Jn. 8:56 and Lk. 10:24.
4. Jesus loved His enemies dearly and wanted to convert them. See Mt. 23:37. But they hardened their hearts against Him. Our text occurred on Tuesday, three days before His trial. At His trial, Mt. 26:63-66, Jesus was put under oath: "Are You the Christ, the Son of God?" When He said: "Yes I am" they sentenced Him to death.
5. In our communion prayer we ask God to give us faith in Him and love toward our neighbor. That is the message of the whole Bible in one sentence. That is what Jesus means in vss. 37-40 of our text. Faith in Jesus and love toward our neighbor stand or fall together. Where you have one, you will have the other. In this way the image of God is restored in a sinner. Col. 3:10.
6. Ps. 110 is a grand prophecy of Jesus' person, Word, work and victory over all His enemies. It is quoted often in the NT. Jesus' enemies believed that it was the inspired Word of God and that it prophesied the Messiah. But they refused to admit that Jesus was the Messiah. That is very sad! The Jews still pray for the coming of the Messiah but they still reject Jesus. How very sad! In our text Jesus summarizes His entire Word in two sentences and identifies Himself as the God-man, the son of David Who is also the Son of God.

Sermon Outline on Mt. 22:34-46, Trinity XVIII

Theme: JESUS' LAST ATTEMPT TO CONVERT HIS ENEMIES WHO REJECT HIM

Introduction: Our text took place during Jesus' last week before He died. He wept because of their unbelief. Mt. 23:37. From Sunday to Tuesday we can trace their hatred for Him. Mk. 11:18; Jn. 12:37; Mt. 21:23,43,46; Mt. 22:15,29,46. But we also read that the common people heard Him gladly. At this last attempt to convert His enemies Jesus offers them the clear teaching of the OT of what the Word of God says and of His person, true God and true man.

I-THE OLD TESTAMENT SUMMARY OF WHAT THE WORD OF GOD SAYS

- A-You will love the Lord, your God, with your entire person. Jesus is not talking about affection or mere feeling. He is talking about an attitude. To love God with one's entire being means to trust Him and His promises, especially those about Jesus. The first commandment says: "Thou shalt have no other gods beside Me." How do we do that? All we can give God is our sin. We have no righteousness to offer God. Our righteousness is as filthy rags. But Christ is our righteousness. That is ours by faith and trust in the Gospel. At the beginning of this service we confessed our sins. The pastor forgave us in Jesus' name. That is the first step in loving God with our whole being. God says that we should cast all our care on Him for He cares for us. When we do that we love God with our whole being.
- B-You will love your neighbor as you love yourself. Jesus is not talking about affection or mere feeling. He is talking about an attitude. He does not say that our neighbor must be our friend. But He does say that we should love him as we love ourselves. The best example of that is the account of the Good Samaritan who cared for and rescued the wounded man lying at the side of the road. We should be like God Who is merciful to all people. He sends His sunshine and rain to all alike. When people asked Jesus for help He gave it. He gave it even when they did not ask. To love the Lord with our whole being and to love our neighbor as we love ourself summarizes the teaching not only of the OT but also of the NT. Lord, give us faith in You and love for our neighbor.

II-THE OT SUMMARIZES WHO CHRIST IS AND WHAT HE DID FOR US. Vs. 44 is a confession by David, under inspiration of the Spirit, first about who Christ is. The first line means: "The Father said to my Lord Jesus 'Sit at My right hand'." We know the true interpretation of this line from Acts 2:34 and 35 and Heb. 1:13. Even Jesus' enemies admitted that Jesus was the son of David, the son of man. But they would not confess that He was the Son of God, the Lord of David. Jesus is David's son but also David's Lord, true man and true God in one person. When Jesus was asked at His trial (Mt. 26:63-66): "Are you the Christ, the Son of God?" Jesus said: "I truly am." They called that blasphemy. The OT also tells us what He did for us. God has exalted Jesus to His right hand because Jesus has paid for our sins, conquered death and conquered the devil. See I Cor. 15:25,27 and Heb. 2:8. When Jesus completed His work of redemption on earth He ascended into heaven. He is not locked in heaven. He is everywhere with us, even to the end of the age. To sit at God's right hand means that He now has all power as He said in Mt. 28:19 "All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth." The God-man, Jesus Christ, is King of kings and Lord of Lords and He shall reign forever and ever. Some day in heaven we shall see Him not only as our brother and shepherd but also as the King of kings.

Conclusion: Jesus' enemies were always giving Him trouble. Even today they make fun of Jesus and His Word. But the common people gladly heard Jesus. Likewise, many common people today gladly hear Jesus' Word. He tells us to trust in Him and His promises. He tells us that we are more than conquerors through Him Who loved us. He tells us that He will protect and keep us until we see Him on His throne.

1. This text is found also at Mt. 19:16-30 and Lk. 18:18-30. Please read these texts too. This happened during the last year of Jesus' public ministry. Evidently the disciples had not learned the lesson which Jesus wanted to teach them in vss. 13-16. They needed another lesson. From the three accounts this man has been called "the rich young ruler". Note the utter contrast between vss. 15 and 17. Furthermore, note the difference in attitude between vss. 17 and 22. This young man is the only instance in the N.T. of someone leaving Jesus sad. We don't know what happened to him.
2. This young man trusted in his good works to arrive in heaven. He betrays this in two ways: a) He does not realize that God and Jesus alone are good; and, b) His possessions mean more to him than Jesus does.
3. If man were sinless he could gain eternal life by what he does. But man is not sinless. Jer. 17:9 reads: "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it?" Therefore Jesus uses the Law to show this man his sin. Rom. 3:20; Gal. 3:24. Man is blind to the love of God in Jesus and must first be shown his own sins. Note that Jesus speaks to him from the second table, commandments 4-10, not the first table, 1-3.
4. In vs. 20 the man, blind to his own sin, claims that he has always done what Jesus demands. Why then did he ask Jesus the question in vs. 17? Because deep down in his heart he realized that he lacked something. When people trust in themselves they are never quite sure.
5. The young man says "all of these" but Jesus says "just one". Now comes the real test. "Sell all you have. Give the money to the poor. Then you'll have treasure in heaven by following Me," that is, trusting in Jesus. There is a sense in which all true children of God sell all they have, give to the poor and follow Jesus. He means this figuratively; not literally. He means: "If you trust in Me, your goods will no longer be your god. And your trust in Me will cause you to give to the poor."
6. The young man left with a downcast face and sorrowful heart. Why? Because he was wealthy but could not pass the test.
7. The word for "look" in vss. 21, 23 and 27, in Greek denotes a look of love. Jesus preached the Law to this young man because He loved Him. He wanted to save him. Likewise to the disciples.
8. Twice Jesus stated the difficulty of entering the Kingdom of God. The first time the disciples were amazed. Then Jesus compared it to the impossibility of a camel passing through a needle's eye which made the disciples even more amazed. By "rich man" Jesus means a person who trusts in self or money rather than in Jesus the Savior. By saying "Who can be saved?" the disciples are practically saying that Jesus does not know what He is talking about. Then comes Jesus' wonderful statement: "With people it is impossible, but not with God. You see, with God all things are possible." Paul said "All have sinned and therefore do now fall short of God's approval, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus." Rom. 3:22-23. On the thought cf. Gen. 18:14 and Lk. 1:37. Even though Sarah was too old to have a child, with God nothing is impossible. Elizabeth too was too old to have a son. And Mary had not even known a man. But the angel said: "With God nothing is impossible." For me to save myself is impossible. I excuse my own sins. I deceive myself by thinking that I am better than others. I deceive myself by thinking that I keep God's commandments. But I am wrong. When I hear the Law, my face is downcast and my heart is crushed. But, with God nothing is impossible. He is love. He proved it by sending His Son to be sin for me, to pay my debt, to die for me. I enter the kingdom of God only by His marvelous mercy and grace which tells me: "Be of good cheer. Your sins are forgiven." This is life's hardest lesson.

Sermon Outline on Mk. 10:17-27, Trinity XVIII (vss. 17-18 included)

Theme: IMPOSSIBLE WITH MEN BUT POSSIBLE WITH GOD

Introduction: This thought occurs elsewhere in the Bible. See Gen. 18:14; Job 42:2; Lk. 1:37. Even Jesus in Gethsemane. Mk. 14:36. Man thinks he can do anything. But there is a limit. He thinks he can save himself, but he cannot. This is not an easy lesson to learn. Jesus had just said: "Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a child, cannot enter into it." vs. 15. Jesus mentions the kingdom of God three times in our text vss. 23, 24, 25. What is impossible for us, is possible with God.

I-ENTRANCE INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH MEN

People outside the kingdom must learn this lesson. And people inside the kingdom easily forget it and must be reminded.

A-People outside the kingdom. As Jesus was coming out of the house (vs. 1) a rich, young ruler ran up to Him, kneeled and asked: "Good teacher, what must I do to acquire eternal life?" Vs. 18 shows us that this young man did not really know who Jesus was. The young man's question shows that he was not quite certain or he would never have asked the question. This man was not confessing his sin. He did not need comfort. He needed the Law to show him that he was sinful. Rom. 3:20; Gal. 3:24. And so Jesus recites commandments from the second table, 4-10. The man surprises us by saying that he had observed all these since he was a child. Like all sinful, impenitent people, this man was deceiving himself. He did not confess his sins nor did he have a child-like faith (vs. 15). He was proud of himself. But Jesus put him to the test: "Go, sell all you have, give the money to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven and come follow Me." The man was crushed because he was wealthy and could not part from his treasure. Entrance into the kingdom is impossible with men.

B-People inside the kingdom. Vss. 23-27 are devoted entirely to the disciples. We would have expected them to understand immediately. Weren't they children of God? Yes. But God's children must learn daily. At first they were amazed when Jesus said that it is difficult for rich people to enter God's kingdom. Weren't Abraham, Isaac and Jacob wealthy? They thought: "How could Jesus say that?" But when Jesus said that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God they were very, very surprised and said: "Well, then, who CAN be saved?" They were practically saying: "We don't believe what you are saying." Their real problem was with themselves. They needed the Law too. They were not rich but evidently they trusted in the little they had. It was their treasure. They concluded: "Nobody can be saved." If that is true, why did Jesus become a man? Why was He teaching? The disciples were perplexed.

II-ENTRANCE INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS POSSIBLE ONLY WITH GOD

A-The cause of the problem. Man's sinful flesh makes its own god. It makes money, people, fame, human intelligence, etc. its god, its treasure. He knows that there is a life beyond the grave and he thinks he needs no help to get there. But he's not quite sure. He is like this rich young man who asked Jesus even though he thought he knew the answer. He said to himself: "I can do it myself." When Jesus suggested that he give up all his own resources, the man left in sorrow. Read the warnings in Lk. 14:26, 27, 33. If sinful man is not willing to give up his own resources, his own treasures, he cannot be Jesus' disciple, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Even Christian like the disciples, find it hard to do this.

B-The only cure for this problem. Peter said at Acts 15:9: "He cleansed their hearts by faith." When the Law of God shows people that they are lost and that their money, their friends, their reputation, cannot save them, the Holy Spirit comes and cleanses their hearts by faith. He takes away earthly treasures and replaces it with the treasure of the Good News of the Gospel. He replaces self-trust with faith in Jesus. They become like little children. *They enter the Kingdom.*