

Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

Seek 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.

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

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

Therefore, 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.

For 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.

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

Seek 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.

Hate 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.

Amos 5. 6-7, 10-15

Indeed, 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. And 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.

Since, 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. For 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. Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. *Hebrews 4.*

12 – end

Collect

O God, forasmuch as without you we are not able to please you; mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen



As he 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?' Jesus said to him, 'Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You 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; Honour your father and mother.'" He said to him, 'Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth.' Jesus, 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.' When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions. Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, 'How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!' And the disciples were perplexed at these words. But Jesus said to them again, 'Children, how hard it is[b] to enter the kingdom of God! It 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.' They were greatly astounded and said to one another, 'Then who can be saved?' Jesus looked at them and said, 'For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible.' Peter began to say to him, 'Look, we have left everything and followed you.' Jesus 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, who 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. But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.'

Mark 10. 17-31

Reflection

It was not uncommon at the time of Jesus to consider that a person who had wealth and riches was blessed by God. Believe it or not, it is still a view which exists today. Some people think that when things go badly for them that this is a sign of God's disapproval. Occasionally if a person suffers prolonged illness they will be heard to utter the words, 'What have I done to deserve this?' The answer is of course 'Nothing'. God does not reward us with blessings, or punish us with curses.

This explains why in our reading today Jesus is able to say 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. The wealth of the rich is not a sign of God's blessing, indeed Jesus sees wealth as having the potential so to divide our commitment and loyalty to God, that the rich are in a perilous position. Considering that many of us are a lot wealthier than the folks living at the time of Jesus, we need to listen to the words of Jesus this week very carefully. @thisischurch