

Bible Study
February 18, 2019

The Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Samuel 26: 2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23

Luke 6: 27-38

1 Corinthians 15: 45-49

1. 1 Samuel 26: 2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23

- Saul was the first king of Israel. He lost the Lord's favor by disobeying the command of Samuel, the prophet, and by not following the commandment that every person and everything of the defeated enemy be destroyed. Saul captured the king and best livestock. For these offenses, God withdrew his favor and said that the kingdom would be taken away from him.
- There are several traditions about David. (1) Samuel went to Bethlehem to offer sacrifice and was told by the Lord to anoint one of the sons of Jesse. He anointed the youngest, David, who was a shepherd. (2) Saul was emotionally distraught and requested music to soothe his spirit. David was recommended because he had a reputation of playing the harp skillfully. He played and soothed the king who was pleased with his service. (3) Israel was at war with the Philistines for whom the giant Goliath was fighting. David who was bringing food and water to his brothers in the army volunteered to go into battle with Goliath. He refused the king's armor and sword and defeated Goliath with a sling shot. David grew in fame and distinguished himself in battle. As his popularity grew Saul became jealous and saw him as a rival to his throne.
- The hatred of Saul for David grew stronger and stronger. A couple of time Saul threw his spear at David as he played the harp in the palace. David fled the palace and was on the run as Saul pursued him.
- The scene of the first reading for Sunday: Saul has brought 3,000 soldiers against David who has 600 men. David's spies locate Saul. David and Abishai penetrate Saul's camp. David has the perfect opportunity to kill Saul as he sleeps but refuses because he is still the Lord's anointed and must be respected. He takes Saul's spear and water jug as proof that he was there and retreats. David taunts Abner, Saul's guard for not protecting the king. Saul and David have a conversation in which there is a certain amount of reconciliation but it does not resolve the enmity between Saul and David.
- The story vindicated David by the very words of Saul himself. David intentions are honorable even in the face of the unjust mistreatment by Saul.
- The sparing of Saul by David prepares us to hear the Gospel in which Jesus says that we should forgive our enemies, even love them, and not seek vengeance.

2. Luke 6: 27-38

- The Sermon on the Plain continues. Jesus has put forth a radical re-assessment of who is lucky and at an advantage by proclaiming the poor, the hungry, the weeping, and the persecuted blessed. In an even more dramatic fashion he proclaims woe to the rich, the filled, the laughing and the well thought of. Now, he continues with some implications of that world view.
- The exhortation begins and ends with the command to “love your enemies.” Loving your enemy may include returning a blessing for a curse, turning the other cheek, not withholding one’s shirt from a person who has taken one’s coat, give to everyone who asks of you, and if someone take something of yours, do not demand it back.
- It includes the Golden Rule: do unto others as you would have them do unto you.
- Christians need to have a higher standard than non-believers. Everyone loves those who love them. Everyone does good to those who do good to them. Everyone would lend money to one from whom you expect repayment. There is nothing special in that. Jesus says that we should take it further. Love enemies. Do good to them. Expect nothing in return. Why? Then, we shall be children our Father in heaven who is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. We need to be merciful as he is merciful.
- We got to make allowance for the exaggeration that Jesus sometimes uses in his prophetic role. These commands are not necessarily to be literally enacted. Sometimes it would be in the worst interest of a person to let them get away with stealing, assault, and not repaying a debt. Sometimes love requires that we hold another accountable. On the other hand, sometimes mercy is required.
- What is more important is the fundamental attitude in which we are prepared to make ourselves vulnerable just as God makes himself vulnerable by extending mercy and love to both the just and the unjust.
- Jesus sets up a principle: The measure with which you measure is the measure that will be measured out to you. Don’t judge and you will not be judged. Don’t condemn and you will not be condemned. Give generously and you will receive generously. Comparison to grain and flour being measured out into one’s cloak.
- God’s desire is to be as generous as possible. God is extravagant in his generosity. The more we give, the more he has room to fill up inside of us. We empty ourselves out so that he can fill us up.

3. 1 Corinthians 15: 45-49

- Gen 2: 7 And the man Adam became a living being
- Comparison between the first Adam and the last Adam (Christ)

- Adam: a living being; Christ: a life giving spirit
- The first Adam was of the earth; the second was from heaven
- We are earthly in that we are descendants of Adam
- We are heavenly in that we have received the life giving spirit from Christ
- We will bear the image of the heavenly one (Christ)