

## Pentecost 12A

August 27, 2017

### Other Readings

Isaiah 51:1-6  
Psalm 138

### Readings for study

#### Romans 12:1-8

*Before: God's judgments are above human judgments*

- Appeal
  - The same word would describe rallying troops about to go into battle
- Present your bodies as a living sacrifice
  - Not just bodies (as sometimes interpreted by those in the holiness traditions) the context reveals this rather than the actual words
  - This action is enabled by the mercies of God (aka grace first and then response)
  - Place alongside – preparation for a proper sacrifice
  - Sacrifice could also be understood as offering
    - Is the difference between sacrifice and offering whether or not the giver is willing to give the gift?
  - “We keep crawling off the altar”
- Holy and acceptable
  - Sacrifices could be rejected by God
  - Set for a specific purpose – namely in worship to God
  - Acceptable could actually be offset and not connected to God, but well-pleasing to observers. Context though suggests the NRSV reading
- Spiritual/reasonable worship
  - Literally “logical service”
  - Dedicated devotion to God by action and by reason
- *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect.*
- Conformed to this world
  - Don't be molded by this world – shaped by it
- Transformed
  - Be changed
  - Though mind is mentioned it really means our whole being gets transformed
- Renewing of your minds
  - A double positive word like “really really” that means genuine renewal by moral thought
- Discern
  - To accept after testing
- Not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think
  - Literally – to be high minded (or air-headed)
  - Good wordplay about mindfulness
- Sober judgment
  - A balanced mind – contrasted with high minded (also not low-minded)
- Measure of faith that God has assigned
  - Not all receive the same allotment of faith (which is a gift)
- One body/many members

- While exhibiting individual characteristics – members can only ever be understood as part of the whole
- *So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.*
- Gifts: prophecy, ministry, teacher, exhorter, giver, leader, compassionate
  - 7 gifts of grace
  - 1 Corinthians does actually provide a ranking of the gifts (not an identical list)
  - These are the things which we receive from God – all supposed revelations must be discerned (evaluated) by how they reflect these characteristics
  - God’s gifts are in us and the Spirit pulls them out based on circumstances
  - How do we make the best use of our gifts?

*After: Encouragement to put faith into action*

### Matthew 16:13-20

*Before: The disciples don’t wash their hands before dinner*

- Son of Man
  - As we’ve said before, Jesus isn’t the only one to be called son of man (Ezekiel), here he’s definitely asking how he is viewed in the community
  - Meaning here: maybe the allusion to his death?
- John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, one of the prophets
  - Recall, Herod thought Jesus was John resurrected, possibly the return of one of the other prophets
- YOU?
  - Much like feeding the 5000, Jesus puts responsibility on the disciples
- Messiah, son of the living God
  - Jesus has been named both Son of Man and Son of God (also not unique to Jesus (the kings of Israel))
- Simon son of Jonah
  - A slight variance between Matthew and John’s Gospel about who Simon’s dad is (John or Jonah) – it’s mostly inconsequential but some people may point it out, not necessarily tied to the prophet
- Peter/rock
  - Cephas – in Aramaic, Paul’s later used name for Peter
  - Interestingly enough – Simon means “to listen”
- Build my church
  - Literally I will house-build my community
- Gates of Hades
  - Not hell, the land of the dead
  - The gates will not prevail – meaning the church is on the offensive against death
- Keys of the kingdom
  - One of the ways of speaking of the office of pastor: office of the keys
  - This is the justification of apostolic succession (Jesus blessed Peter and Peter blessed the next leader of the church...etc., etc.)
    - Lutherans don’t believe a direct line can be drawn but do believe in the accountability contained therein
  - The ability to unlock or lock, include or exclude
- Bind on earth/heaven
- Loose on earth/heaven
  - God will do what is asked by two or more (18:18) so that whatever the church does on earth is done in heaven

- Lord's prayer anyone?
  - Could be forgiveness of sin, heal, exorcise demons, remove from community, teach with authority
- Ordered disciples not to tell anyone
  - More a thing for Mark than Matthew
    - Usually withholding the name "Messiah" so it can be reinterpreted

*After: Jesus heals many maimed, blind, mute, others*