

## **Pentecost 14A**

September 10, 2017

### **Other Readings**

Ezekiel 33:7-11

Psalm 119:33-40

### **Readings for study**

#### **Romans 13:8-14**

*Before: Those in authority have been placed there by God*

- Owe no one anything (except love)
  - o This is the same thing as “due” in the previous verse
  - o Being in debt to someone, whether financially or in honor changes the relationship
- Love fulfills the law
  - o Done what the law has required (what is due)
- The commandments are summed up: love your neighbor as yourself
  - o Quoting Leviticus 19:18, it also makes an appearance in Galatians 5:14, Jesus says it in Matthew 22:39
  - o The word neighbor means one who is near – we can take this geographically or metaphorically
- Love does no wrong to a neighbor
  - o Recall that famous 1 Corinthians 13 passage about love
- What time it is
  - o Paul is obviously calling them to a stirring moment to stand for the spread of the Gospel both by self-discipline but also by sharing love of neighbor
  - o This possibly refers to the death of Claudius (54) who banished the Jews from Rome
- Wake from sleep
  - o To enact the spread of the gospel, where they had been mute
- Salvation is nearer than when we became believers
  - o Parousia (second coming) which is not really a theme in Romans outside of this instance
  - o There is a thought in Christianity that Jesus’ return was imminent, Paul appeals to hold out for that day is near
- The night is far gone, the day is near
  - o Changing from darkness to light is akin to changing from evil to good
- Works of darkness
- Armor of light
  - o Changing clothes, moving from darkness to light all the same as being clothed in Christ
- Live honorably
  - o Just a few verses earlier, Paul spoke of giving honor to those who were due honor
- Drunkenness, debauchery, licentiousness, quarreling, jealousy
  - o These are the works of darkness and the desires of the flesh (not an exhaustive list mind you)
  - o Licentiousness is sexual promiscuity
- No provision for the flesh
  - o Literally, don’t give thought to the flesh and gratifying its desires

*After: Don’t criticize others’ faith practices*

#### **Matthew 18:15-20**

*Before: Parable of the Lost Sheep*

- Member of the church
  - o Greek says “your brother” NRSV tries to make this inclusive, probably a good move there

- Sins against you
  - o Amartese – eis se (the greek pronounced amart ay-say-ay-say)
  - o There's a textual note that there is disagreement whether the word should be just "sins" or "sins against you"
  - o This is not just someone that you disagree with (like a style of doing things) but someone whose behavior is harmful to the community
- Point out the fault
  - o Reprove, show as guilty
- Alone
  - o Rather than gossip or letting things simmer in unspoken resentment, first talk to the offender
- Regained
  - o Recall that the lost sheep preceded this speech
  - o The purpose is not punishment but restoration
- Every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three
  - o Deuteronomy 19:15
  - o Literally – so that they may strengthen every word
    - Does this mean bring two people who agree with you?
- Tell it to the church
  - o The whole church gathered together
  - o Puts an awful lot of work into the hands of the church
    - Real, genuine change does take a lot of work as well but is powerful when it happens
- Gentile and a tax collector
  - o See Matthew 9:10
- Bind/Loose
  - o Recalling again the office of the keys for those who organize the church
  - o Here maybe the authority to discern which sins are worth involving the community over
- If two of you agree, it will be done
- Where two or three are gathered, I am there among them

*After: How many times shall we forgive?*