

19TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY 10/07/18

Mount Calvary, West View

GENESIS 2: 18-25, HEBREWS 2; 1-13, MARK 10: 1-16

HYMNS: LET US EVER WALK WITH JESUS LSB #685,

WITH THE LORD BEGIN YOUR TASK LSB #869,

JOYFUL, JOYFUL WE ADORE THEE LSB #803

Theme: Trust in the Lord

+ **Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. AMEN +**

Our Text is from the continuation of Saint Mark's Gospel, the 10th Chapter:

But Jesus said to them, "For your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh."

Marriage Counseling. One of the hardest hats the pastor has to wear. Pre-marital counseling is easy. The happy couple has no idea what is in store for them, so the imparting of information is simple: tell them everything God says about the marriage commitment and give them pointers to use when the "honeymoon" is over. When it comes to marriage counseling, you have two seasoned fighters, much like Ali and Frazer, pure heavyweights that have been honing their craft of vicious arguing and malicious fighting so that by the time they come to the pastor for help in staving off the divorce, 99 times out of a hundred it is far too late. The trenches have been dug in. Any assistance I offer is either met with the standard resistance, "You don't know the half of it!" or "We tried that already." Maybe the response is, "That will never work," or my personal favorite, "Oh sure. Take His/her/its side!" I said it was vicious, did I not?

Ah, to go back to the time of Moses, where apparently all you needed was a certificate ó preferably made from one of the spiffy Word document templates, or go whole hog on the Print Master 2018 with

all the squiggly lines and vibrant colors to really lessen the blow of a certificate which will be used to identify the termination of a committed life-long relationship. Life long, I said. I would like to think that the Jews understood this. After all, God in the first chapter of His first book instituted this blessed arrangement, and I really do not think you can make the case that marriage was to be a temporary convenience, like the gas station to get that emergency milk since the favorite store is closed at 11. Marriage is not a thing to do when you feel like it. It is the blessed union of God the Father upon two of his blessed creations, that they can live their lives together until one life is parted from the other. They are truly no longer two but one flesh.

As an aside for explanation purposes, let us understand what Moses was doing here. Moses was simply laying out the legal proceedings necessary in case there was an evil intent to dissolve a marriage. It was not meant to be an easy way to get a divorce, but an easy way to move on, so there would be no messy legal proceedings to tie up one's time and resources. Divorce Certificates were not for the intended purpose to celebrate the ease, but to state in a simple way, "If you are going to do something stupid, like separate what God has put together, then you might as well do it quick and easy, so we can deal with the sin appropriately."

The reason why divorce was so prevalent then as it is now, is because we have lost trust in God. We are taking it out of our schools, we are trying to erase it from our coinage and money, and there is even a movement to remove it from the pledge of allegiance. After all, if you do not believe in it why pledge to it? This society is so afraid to be Godly it wants every vestige to be removed, like the Ten Commandments, every mention to be squelched, such as in the pledge, and every inference to be vanished. Why do you think same sex marriages was pushed through? God said, "No." but society silenced it by saying, "You cannot say that." So now the civil realm has taken the mantle of allowing marriages, purely as a legal definition. It simply denied the Godly blessings.

Which is what Jesus was trying to get across to these pharisees: God made them Male and Female,

so God joins them together. This is a God union, and if it is, then trust God to make it work; trust God to bless it. Certainly, there will arise conflicts within a union. Any two sinners placed in close proximity for extended periods of time will eventually rise strife. It is what sin does. The trick is to understand how to deal with sin. It is not done by human reason or strength ó that is what caused Moses to issue certificates not unlike how restaurants give out free meals. And when the sin is not dealt with, as Jesus so pointedly put it, the people involved commit adultery. Sin therefore must be dealt with at the cross of Christ, and if I truly believe that my sins are forgiven by the blood shed at the cross of Calvary, then by heaven above I can certainly forgive my neighbor who sins against me, who just happens to be my spouse. Once this happens, complete trust in the Lord to forgive and to bless, there is a happy union of any kind, and certainly the one of marriage.

Just as the writer to the Hebrews professed, we must pay closer attention to what we have heard. Not just pick out bits and pieces as the Pharisees do to justify their teachings but incorporate all that is written for our learning. When God placed Adam and Eve together, yes, I know there were no other options, but he still declared her to be bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh as God has given me the gift. This is the gift of God, and it is mine to keep. Eve had the same blessings, she was just smart enough to keep it to herself. Knowing that this is a blessing for me, why get rid of it? If it is a blessing from God, how can you tire of it? And most certainly, if this is a saved child of God, how can I not rejoice in the grace of God and His salvation through Jesus Christ? As the writer to the Hebrews declared, *õI will place my trust in Him.ö*

The trick to a happy marriage is not a bumper sticker theology which I have grown weary of: *õDo not look for a person you can live with, but for a person you cannot live without.ö* The only person I cannot live without is my Lord and Savior. However, I do rejoice immensely in the helper He saw meet for me in my wife, and I will enjoy every opportunity to be with her and my children as long as He sees fit to give me. That is the trick to a happy marriage. Trust God above all things and love your neighbor

as yourself. After all, you are one flesh. Do this, and there is no more divorce and the Lawyers will have to find something else to argue for. In our Triune God's Name, we pray. **AMEN.**

+ AND NOW MAY THE PEACE OF GOD WHICH SURPASSES ALL UNDERSTANDING
KEEP YOUR HEARTS AND MINDS IN UNION WITH CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD. AMEN+

There are only two days on my calendar...today and the day of judgment