**Hebrews 2:1-13 (ESV)**

**1** Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. **2** For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, **3**  how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard, **4**  while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will. **5** Now it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking. **6** It has been testified somewhere, “What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him? **7** You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, **8** putting everything in subjection under his feet.” Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. **9** But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. **10** For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. **11** For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers, **12** saying, “I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.” **13** And again, “I will put my trust in him.” And again,   
“Behold, I and the children God has given me.”

**“Hardy Home”**

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forever ever. Amen (Galatians 1:3-5). As we pause today to honor and celebrate the work of the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League. The theme “Salted to Serve” for the LWML this year, leads us to think about how much of this service and witness to the Gospel goes right into the home. Matter a fact, when the LWML came to be in 1942. It was during a time when great pressures were upon family caused by war, economic instability, and much change.

Once again, life in the home today is more than feeling pressure. The Devil is trying to bring chaos and question against God’s good order for creation. It is to despise and twist those words from Genesis about marriage. Of course, during the Reformation, similar darkness arose. They wrote,

“Nature is growing older and progressively weaker, so that we ought to use the remedies God has given us. The destruction in the flood and the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah reveal God’s wrath at human vice…In a time like this it was appropriate to guard marriage with the strictest laws and examples and to invite men to it. This is the duty of public officials, who ought to maintain public order. Meanwhile, preachers of the Gospel should exhort the uncontrolled to marry and also exhort others not to despise the gift of self-control” (Tappert 246:54 -247:55).

This old creation is constantly under siege by the powers of sin, death, and the Devil. Yet, in this battle fought right to the end of days here is our hope. Jesus has built a hardier home in the midst of a sinful world by His death and resurrection.

Negligence brings separation from the home. We see this played out in life with the distancing between spouses by work, goals, or other interruptions. Divorce comes about not from fighting or infidelity, but just plain carelessness toward the other. The book of Hebrews addresses this kind of separation that also can fall upon the spiritual life. “Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.” This speaks to the gradual detaching apart of a person from the baptized family of God. At the earliest times, it happened with Jewish Christians wanting to return to their homely life found in Judaism. It was to practice the Law as if that held the promise and not the good news of God’s Son. Jesus put it well in the parable of the wedding feast, “But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business…” (Matthew 22:5).

There is nothing wrong with fighting for marriage. However, defending the moral law has a danger. It is easy to drift away to worship what the Law demands for our life. The slogan many support is, “Marriage: one man, one woman.” It speaks directly against gay marriage. Yet, more could go on that sign. “Marriage: one man, one woman until death” There is no reason to stop there. “Marriage: one man, one woman until death without love in any way for another.” We can fight for this old creation, but neglecting the Gospel is not going to forgive and free sinners by the Law. As the Psalmist proclaimed, “Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain” (Psalms 127:1). There is a hardier home made for us in Jesus for all brokenness of our families. “For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?”

Where neglect does not win the day, subjection is a standard of love for the home. We find this as God’s design for married life. St. Paul says, “Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her…” The emphasis lies on the husband winning submission in the home by how he sacrifices out love for his wife. Man has a natural authority from Adam. Except, only One man rules His home without problems with sin, death, and the Devil. We hear, “At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.” Christ’s love is what stands out in the world to come, with a kingdom as proclaimed by His cross.

There are plenty of things bearing down on the home be it money, fear, power, selfishness, competition, glory, and many other matters. It is what causes much division and why Jesus said told the Pharisees about divorce, “Because of your hardness of heart Moses wrote you this commandment.” However, Jesus built by His sacrifice what holds together the true home outside the hands of sinners. It is for forgiveness that the Father sends the Son into a sinful world to suffer and die. The governing factor is love that looks to save by subjecting all to the cross. It means that Jesus really did take upon Himself your sin, death, and shame as promised in baptism. Chrysostom states,

“For as a physician, though not needing to taste the food prepared for the sick person, tastes it first himself so that he may persuade the sick person to eat with confidence, so also, since all people were afraid of death…Jesus tasted it himself, though he did not need it himself” (ACC).

The Father left nothing outside the control of His Son. His kingdom makes its way into the world, into homes, and into lives. Subjection to His Word and sacrament prevails today, as He will on the Last Day.

Those submitting to such a standard of love, praise the glory given in the home. What one receives all receive. “For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source.” Since Christ took upon our flesh, we in turn have His holiness as our guarantee before God and each other. In other words, this perfect victory of Jesus by suffering is able to enter even into our homes. He reshapes them with the glory He has given from heaven to His baptized saints on earth. Luther says it this way,

“One would commonly say that Christ is the Instrument and the Means by which God leads His sons. Therefore since He has determined to draw His sons through Christ, the text says correctly that ‘it was fitting that He should make Christ perfect through suffering,” that is, that He should make Him the most perfect and the complete Example through which to inspire and draw His sons.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

What draws us is what God does as a gift. What Christ promises to be as Savior. What service He gives without shame to sinners. The church gathers to praise of the glory of a new creation, a new kingdom, a new home as Jesus brings in the Sacrament. It is here where He not only calls us brothers and sisters, but where we turn unashamed to be with each other.

Jesus has built a hardy home for all by His death and resurrection. It is for a time that we fight for the family declaring God’s order for this old creation. Yet, Christ already fights even more for us with the glory of His eternal home for all who trust in Him. As seen in the Gospel reading, broken marriages are disaster for the weaker ones who witness such a war waged between moms and dads. Yet, what does Christ immediately address and say to His disciples? “Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God.” Jesus has an unbroken dedication to humanity. He will not abandon this sinful world to the darkness. The glory of His eternal home speaks with comfort saying, “I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.” And again, “I will put my trust in him.” And again, “Behold, I and the children God has given me.” As husband and wife were to be one flesh as stability for a home in this world. Christ has bound Himself to His bride the Church, the baptized, securing an eternal home made right by the glory given alone in the Gospel. Amen. Now may the peace of God, which passes all understanding, be with your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus to life everlasting, Amen.

1. Luther, M. (1999, c1968). *Vol. 29*: *Luther's works, vol. 29 : Lectures on Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works (Heb 2:11). Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)