



**Serve God With Money;
You Can't Serve God and Money**

The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH | Seward, Nebraska

September 18, 2022

SERIES THEME: HARD TRUTH

“Jesus went through the towns and villages, teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem” (Luke 13:22). Jesus knows that when he gets to Jerusalem, he is going to die. If you expect Jesus to use these final teaching opportunities to share happy thoughts, you don’t know him well. With a sense of extreme urgency, Jesus shares truths we need to hear, even if we do not want to hear them. As Jesus teaches hard truth, he challenges conventional wisdom. He reverses the normal and natural order of things. This should not surprise us, considering this Teacher’s life and work are the opposite of what one would expect. When the truth is hard to hear, the first temptation is to deny it. We cannot do that with Jesus’ teaching, for he never lies. When the truth is hard to hear, the second temptation is to simply ignore it. To do that with Jesus is to court eternal death. Thus, Jesus’ words contain an urgent warning: Listen! Take to heart what Jesus says! For his Word, though it contains hard truth, gives eternal life.

THEME OF THE DAY: SERVE GOD WITH MONEY; YOU CAN’T SERVE GOD AND MONEY

There are more than 2300 Bible passages that speak about money. Why? Money is a master Satan frequently tempts us to serve. And that evil foe knows how successful his efforts with money can be. Money provides us with a false comfort and a sense of security. It serves as a source of pride. It serves as a wonderful tool for a favorite pastime: justifying ourselves in our own eyes and the eyes of others. Jesus knows that serving money makes it impossible to serve God. The human heart is not big enough for both. As a result, Jesus does all he can to expose the futility of serving money. He also helps us see that the only one truly worth serving is our gracious, loving God. When we serve God, money is put in its proper place. Instead of money being a lord to serve, it becomes a resource for serving the Lord. This is the hard truth. There is no way for us to serve both God and money. But we can serve God with our money.

Worship Leader
Organist/Pianist

Pastor Justin Wilkens
Cori Humann

Acknowledgments

Software distributed in partnership with Northwestern Publishing House. Created by Christian Worship: Service Builder © 2022 Concordia Publishing House. Scripture quotations The Holy Bible, Evangelical Heritage Version® (EHV®) copyright © 2017 The Wartburg Project/NPH. All rights reserved.
www.wartburgproject.org

The Service, Setting One (page 154 in Christian Worship 21)

Hymn: 708 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

Stand

Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Confession

CW 154

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just
and will forgive us our sins
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Holy God, gracious Father,

I am sinful by nature

and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.

I have not loved you with my whole heart;

I have not loved others as I should.

I deserve your punishment both now and forever.

But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins

with his innocent suffering and death.

Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Silence for meditation and reflection

Absolution

CW 154

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen.

Glory Be to God

CW 157



Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men.



We praise you, we bless you, we wor - ship you, we glorify you,



we give thanks to you, for your great glory, O Lord God, heav'n-ly King,



God the Fa-ther Al - mighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Je-sus Christ;



O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sin of the world;



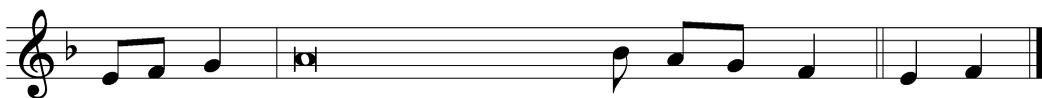
have mercy on us. You take away the sin of the world; receive our prayer.



You sit at the right hand of God the Father; have mercy on us.



For you on-ly are holy; you on-ly are the Lord. You only, O Christ, with the



Ho-ly Spirit, are most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

THE WORD

Salutation

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

O God, you have told us not to be anxious about what we need for this life. Move our hearts to seek you and your kingdom, that all good things may be given to us as well; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

First Reading

Ecclesiastes 5:10–20

King Solomon knew from experience that if you serve money, you will end up disappointed.

¹⁰ Anyone who loves money is never satisfied with money, and anyone who loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is vanishing vapor.

¹¹ When goods increase, so do those who eat them. What profit, then, does the owner get, except to see these things with his eyes?

¹² The worker's sleep is sweet, whether he eats little or much, but a rich person's abundant possessions allow him no sleep.

¹³ I have seen a sickening evil under the sun—wealth hoarded by its owner to his own harm, ¹⁴ or wealth that is lost in a bad investment. Or a man fathers a son, but he has nothing left in his hand to give him. ¹⁵ As he came out from his mother's womb, so he will go again, naked as he came. From his hard work he can pick up nothing that he can carry away in his hand. ¹⁶ This too is a sickening evil: Just as he came, so he will go. So what does he gain, he who works for the wind? ¹⁷ Besides this, during all his days he eats in darkness, with great frustration, sickness, and anger.

¹⁸ So then, here is what I have seen to be good: It is beautiful to eat, to drink, and to look for good in all a person's hard work which he has done under the sun, during the few days of his life that God has given him, for that is his reward. ¹⁹ Likewise, for everyone to whom God has given wealth and riches, if God has also given him ability to eat from it, to enjoy his reward, and to rejoice in the results of his hard work—this is a gift of God, ²⁰ for the man seldom reflects on the days of his life, since God keeps him busy with the joy in his heart.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm of the Day: 128- Front of Hymnal: Blest Are All Who Fear the LORD *sts. 1,2,5*

Second Reading

1 Timothy 6:6–10,17–19

Saint Paul teaches in straightforward language that serving money will lead to spiritual destruction. But serving God with our money leads to a fulfilling life.

⁶ But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷ For we brought nothing into the world, and we certainly cannot take anything out. ⁸ But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be satisfied.

⁹ Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge them into complete destruction and utter ruin. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of

all sorts of evils. By striving for money, some have wandered away from the faith and have pierced themselves with many pains.

¹⁷ Instruct those who are rich in this present age not to be arrogant or to put their hope in the uncertainty of riches, but rather in God, who richly supplies us with all things for our enjoyment. ¹⁸ Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and willing to share. ¹⁹ In this way they are storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

Gospel Acclamation

Matthew 6:33



Refrain



Tone



Tune: © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 713578

All money actually belongs to God; he loans it to us to manage for his glory. Through a parable, Jesus teaches us to be shrewd in the way we use money to serve him.

The Parable of the Shrewd Manager

¹ Jesus also said to his disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager who was accused of wasting his possessions. ² The rich man called him in and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you can no longer be manager.’ ³ “The manager said to himself, ‘What will I do, since my master is taking away the management position from me? I am not strong enough to dig. I am ashamed to beg. ⁴ I know what I will do, so that when I am removed from my position as manager, people will receive me into their houses.’ ⁵ “He called each one of his master’s debtors to him. He asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ ⁶ He said, ‘Six hundred gallons of olive oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and write three hundred.’ ⁷ Then he said to another, ‘How much do you owe?’ And he said, ‘Six hundred bushels of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill and write four hundred and eighty.’ ⁸ “The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the children of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the children of the light are. ⁹ I tell you, make friends for yourselves with unrighteous *mammon*, so that when it runs out, they will welcome you into the eternal dwellings. ¹⁰ The person who is faithful with very little is also faithful with much. And the person who is unrighteous with very little is also unrighteous with much. ¹¹ So if you have not been faithful with unrighteous *mammon*, who will entrust you with what is really valuable? ¹² If you have not been faithful with what belongs to someone else, who will give you something to be your own? ¹³ No servant can serve two masters. Indeed, either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and *mammon*.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

Hymn of the Day: 807 All Depends on Our Possessing

sts. 1–4

Sermon

Stand

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Be seated

Prayer of the Church

Brief intercessory prayers may be added in a fitting place.

Eternal God and Father, we thank you for the blessings we share as members of your holy Church, for your gracious Word and sacraments, for opportunities to worship and to grow in faith and knowledge, for occasions to serve and be served, and for fellowship with believers in our congregation and our synod.

Help us rejoice in these blessings, dear Lord, and use them faithfully.

Jesus Christ, Lord of the Church, you give grace to your people by calling us to be your witnesses in the world. Open our eyes to see the great and noble mission that lies before us.

In the hurting eyes of the lonely, in the pained eyes of the sick, and in the searching eyes of the lost, help us to see your face, Lord Jesus, and to serve others as we would serve you.

Awaken us to opportunities to proclaim your message of love.

Holy Spirit, giver of life, through Word and sacrament bestow on us the wisdom and power we need to witness clearly and to act boldly. Help us to speak the truth in love, to give the reason for the hope we have, and to conduct ourselves with gentleness and respect.

Set our hearts on fire as we work and witness for Christ.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray for a family member, a neighbor, or a friend who does not believe in you, or whose faith is weak or troubled.

Silent prayer

Keep in your care those who are enduring chronic pain and incessant unhappiness, those enduring rejection and struggling with poverty, those mourning the loss of someone they loved. [Especially bless... *here name the person and the cause of the petition.*] Bring healing and help and comfort and calm to everyone in distress.

Move us to act alone or join with others to provide help and support.

Bless the Church with men and women who are willing to proclaim your Word in places where we cannot go. Keep them and their loved ones in your care and let nothing hinder their work. By the power of the gospel, restore their spirits each day, so that they do not lose heart as they serve us and others.

Move us to support them with our sincere prayers and generous offerings.

Wherever your Word is proclaimed, O Lord, grant it success. Let your kingdom come to us and others, so that we and many more might join the assembly of saints and angels to sing your praise forever.

Savior of all, hear our prayer and help us in our mission. Amen.

Offering

Hymn: 750 We Give Thee but Thine Own

Prayer

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask

this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

Amen.

Hymn: 678 Once in the Blest Baptismal Waters

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: 8:00 AM Bible Study, 8:45 AM Worship, 9:45 AM Fellowship and Sunday School

Sunday: 8:00 AM Bible Study, 8:45 AM Worship and Communion, 9:45 AM Fellowship and Sunday School

CONNECTION CARDS: Visitors or members with changes in contact information, please fill out a connection card online at www.graceseward.org on the member connect tab or scan this code.



Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/gracelutheranseward



Personal assisted listening devices are available.

Given to the Lord: Attendance: Sunday Bible Class 13, Sunday School 6, Worship 37 in person, Facebook Reached 76, Audio/YouTube 11. Offerings: Home 1,615.00, WELS 495.00, NELHS 25.00, Trinity 1,300.00. **To God be the glory!**

746 Pinewood Ave | Seward, NE | www.graceseward.org