

The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Matthew 19:16-26

And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible. (KJV)

God's Holy Church proclaims the Gospel at each Divine Liturgy for the benefit of listeners. The Gospel holds rich meaning and nourishment for the soul. Attentive listeners incorporate the Gospel reading into personal life.

Believers attentive to the Gospel make a sincere effort to bring life into conformity with the Gospel. The Lord Jesus Christ helps the believer in the efforts to live according to the Gospel.

The Gospel addresses the hunger in the soul. The Gospel is authentic nourishment for the soul. The Lord Jesus Christ speaks to believers through the Gospel.

The Lord Jesus Christ is present with believers in the Gospel's proclamation. Serious believers treasure the Gospel and seek to learn from the Gospel. Life is often difficult. The Gospel serves as the beneficial guide for daily life.

Believers' relationship with Jesus Christ is intertwined with the Gospel. The Gospel enables believers to learn and grow in Christ. Being attentive to the Gospel unifies the listener with the Lord Jesus Christ.

The whole person is united with Jesus Christ at Holy Baptism. The whole person is dedicated to Jesus Christ at Baptism. The dedication to Jesus Christ is for the remaining time of life.

When a believer falls away from Christ or fails to live up to the full teachings and standards of Christ, sincere repentance is in order. In the present Gospel, the young man honored the primary commandments of God.

The young man was not willingly to heed Jesus completely. The man's personal commitment to his possessions prevented him from listening to Jesus and experiencing treasure in heaven.

How many believers are willing to only commit partially to Jesus Christ?
How many believers fail to honor the complete commitment to Christ made at Holy Baptism?

God's Holy Church teaches of the saints and martyrs through the centuries. The saints and martyrs completely commit to Christ. Believers of each generation benefit from learning from and about the Church's saints and martyrs.

The Lord Jesus Christ does not ask of believers more than what is possible to accomplish. The present Gospel clearly states with God all things are possible. Saints and martyrs prove complete commitment is possible.

The Church proclaims the current Gospel each year for believers to personally assess the commitment to Jesus Christ. The current Gospel asks believers to examine if following Christ is fully first and foremost in life.

The Gospel serves more than a basis for personal self-examination. The Gospel provides certain hope that regardless of the strength of personal commitment to certain possessions, following Christ is entirely possible.

The present Gospel assures believers that attachments in this world can be severed and the believer freed to give all for the benefit of treasure in heaven. The present Gospel confirms that complete commitment is possible.

Wise believers turn to Christ in prayer and fasting in search for the means to follow the narrow path to the heavenly Kingdom. Wise believers take the present Gospel to heart and wrestle within to take the steps needed to follow Christ.

Confidence placed in Jesus Christ is well-placed confidence. Jesus Christ does not disappoint believers putting faith and trust in Him. God's Holy Church teaches the ways to follow Christ and to remain fully united with Christ.

Believers need not be sorrowful as the man in present Gospel because his attachments to his possessions exceeded his willingness to follow Jesus. Believers heeding and following Jesus find the will to move forward with Christ.

The Church wants hearers of the present Gospel to honor Christ first and foremost and to follow Christ's teachings. The life in Christ is of greater value than retaining earthly possessions

Being freed to live in Christ is an act of being obedient to the will of God. Obedience to the will of God brings freedom and joy. Joy and freedom arise within the heart, mind and soul when the believer is obedient to the will of God.

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