

## The Twenty Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Luke 10:25-37

And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. (KJV)

Attentive reading and listening to the Holy Gospel are direct experiences with the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Gospel proclaims the words of the Lord Jesus Christ as they are known and have been preserved.

Attentive listeners and readers of the Gospel are directly and deeply affected. The Gospel transforms lives. The Gospel affects thoughts and actions. The Gospel touches the heart, mind and soul.

The present Gospel teaches a lasting lesson of love for our neighbors. Love of neighbor is directly connected to experiencing eternal life. The lawyer in the current Gospel asked what was required of him to experience eternal life.

The plight of the robbery victim as neighbor was presented to the lawyer. Jesus told the lawyer to show mercy as did the Samaritan to the robbery victim. Attentive believers heed this message in considering neighbors suffering in their midst.

Seeking eternal life is the goal believers embrace at Holy Baptism. Living in ways pleasing to Jesus Christ is expected from the time of Baptism until departure from this life. Repentance is always possible to begin anew in Christ.

God's Holy Church provides the guidance, nourishment for the soul and experiences for the journey from Baptism to the Heavenly Kingdom. Attentiveness in reading and listening to the Gospel is completely voluntary.

The hunger in the soul seeks the Gospel's nourishment. The soul requires the words of the Lord Jesus Christ throughout earthly life. The soul needs the Precious Body and Blood of Christ.

The Holy Mysteries of the Church, Baptism, Chrismation, Holy Confession and Communion, Marriage, Ordination and Holy Unction provide structure, purpose and direction for the Christian life.

The present Gospel reveals the value of showing mercy to a suffering neighbor. This message is proclaimed in the Church every year. The lesson of providing mercy to suffering individuals has eternal value.

Believers attentive to the present Gospel readily show mercy to suffering persons met in daily life. Attentive believers increase their sensitivity to suffering neighbors. The value of showing mercy increases for attentive believers.

Christians are to be active following Holy Baptism. Believers are to live in ways pleasing to the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus' known compassion for the sick and the suffering serves as an example for believers to make a part of their lives.

God's Holy Church offers continuous learning for believers. The heart, mind and soul benefit from the learning opportunities in the Church. Life is continually enriched in the Church.

Growth in Jesus Christ is possible throughout life. The Church offers the opportunities in Jesus Christ for unlimited growth. Believers choose at each moment of time whether to grow in Christ.

Valuing learning is beneficial throughout earthly life. The Church offers the best learning opportunities available. The Church offers the Lord Jesus Christ. The Mother of God, the saints and martyrs are proven examples to learn from.

The lives and writings of the Holy Fathers and Mothers inspire learning opportunities for all aspects of life. The Holy Scriptures are completely relevant for each day in each century.

Suffering exists in every community, in every neighborhood. Persons suffer in the streets, in jails and in workplaces. Serious Christians demonstrate Christ's love by responding to the suffering.

Parish churches are examples in outreach efforts to the sick and suffering. Priests encourage parishioners to show mercy to the hurting and victimized. Priests and deacons are personal examples in responding to the abused and needy.

The lawyer in the current Gospel asked about attaining eternal life. His question resulted in a lasting lesson that has endured through the centuries. Thank God for the question being asked. Thank the Lord Jesus Christ for the answer.

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The Twenty Fifth Sunday after Pentecost. St. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople. November 13/26, 2023. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania.

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