

## 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)

### Synaxis of the Serbian Saints

#### Matthew 5:14-19

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (KJV)

St. Matthew's Gospel for today reveals the difficulty of pursuing eternal life. When a person clings to personal possessions to a greater degree than seeking the Kingdom of God, the possessions become an impediment to eternal life.

The Lord Jesus Christ made clear the difficulties the rich man faced in seeking eternal life can be overcome with God's help. St. Mathhew's Gospel verifies that with God, all things are possible. (Mt. 19:26)

The Gospel for this Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost inspires believers to examine their relationship with personal possessions. Believers are to honestly assess the desire for seeking the Kingdom of God and eternal life.

The rich man in the Gospel was so wedded to his possessions that he was not willing to listen to Jesus Christ and lay up treasures in heaven. He was unwilling to relinquish his possessions to seek the Kingdom of God.

Believers today are challenged to think about the degree they invest in the Kingdom of God. Believers are to thoroughly examine themselves to determine if they are laying up treasures in heaven each day.

The way a person manages the time, wealth and gifts of life reveals the depth of interest in the Kingdom of God and eternal life. Budgeting the time, talents and treasures of life to pursue the Kingdom of God requires considerable discipline.

The Church provides the Divine services, fasting periods and the Gospel to nourish and guide the believer from the baptismal font to the Kingdom of God and eternal life.

Wise believers assess whether the personal time of life and personal wealth are being used for the glory of God. Grateful believers use the time and wealth of life to demonstrate complete gratitude toward God

God is the Origin of all good in life. (James 1:17) Gratitude for God's goodness is reflected when personal treasures are invested in the Kingdom of God. Grateful believers lay-up treasures in heaven.

Today God's Holy Church remembers and celebrates the Saints of the Serbian Orthodox Church. The Serbian saints are remembered dearly in celebration because of the Light of Christ shown through their lives.

The Serbian saints commemorated today are beacons of light enabling believers to travel through periods of darkness in life. The saints demonstrate in their lives resolute hope in the Resurrected Christ.

When Jesus Christ was crucified great darkness covered the earth. (Lk.23:44) The rich man experienced darkness in his life when he was challenged to give up his possessions to seek the Kingdom of God.

The Resurrected Christ brings Light to the world. The darkness of Jesus' crucifixion did not prevail. Jesus' Resurrection offers hope to all believers for all the times of life even in the darkest moments.

Jesus' Resurrection is enduring proof that with God all things are possible. Jesus' defeat of death opens the path for believers seeking eternal life. Jesus is the Light shining through the darkness of every century until the Second Coming.

Today's Divine Liturgy reveals the Light of Christ. Believers partake of the Precious Body and Blood of Christ today. Believers are united with and renewed in the Resurrected Christ.

Christ's Resurrection eradicates darkness. The Light of Christ is stronger than any darkness. Embrace today with immeasurable joy. Unite with the Resurrected Christ throughout all the days of life. Seek first the Kingdom of God! (Mt.6:33)

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The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost. St. Mamas, Venerable John the Faster of Constantinople. Synaxis of the Serbian Saints. September 2/15, 2024. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic