

October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021 – Twentieth Sunday After Pentecost

## Introduction to the Day

The rich man who comes to ask Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life is a good man, sincere in his asking. Mark's gospel is alone in saying that Jesus looked on him and loved him. Out of love, not as judgment, Jesus offers him an open door to life: sell all you own and give it to the poor. Our culture bombards us with the message that we will find life by consuming. Our assemblies counter this message with the invitation to find life by divesting for the sake of the other.

### Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
whose teaching is life,  
whose presence is sure,  
and whose love is endless.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sins to the one who welcomes us  
with an open heart.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

God our comforter:

**like lost sheep, we have gone astray.**

**We gaze upon abundance and see scarcity.**

**We turn our faces away from injustice and  
oppression.**

**We exploit the earth with our apathy and greed.  
Free us from our sin, gracious God.**

**Listen when we call out to you for help.**

**Lead us by your love to love our neighbors as  
ourselves.**

**Amen.**

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

By the gift of grace in † Christ Jesus, God makes  
you righteous.

Receive with glad hearts the forgiveness of all your  
sins.

**Amen.**

### Gathering Song

**“Gather Us In”**

**#532 vs. 1,3,4**

### Prayer of the Day

Almighty and ever-living God, increase in us your gift of faith, that, forsaking what lies behind and reaching out to what lies ahead, we may follow the way of your commandments and receive the crown of everlasting joy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

### Lesson – Hebrews 4:12-16

<sup>12</sup>Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. <sup>13</sup>And before him no creature is hidden, but all are naked and laid bare to the eyes of the one to whom we must render an account.

<sup>14</sup>Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. <sup>15</sup>For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup>Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

### Children's Message

#### Gospel – Mark 10:17-31

<sup>17</sup>As [Jesus] was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” <sup>18</sup>Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. <sup>19</sup>You know the commandments: ‘You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honor your father and mother.’” <sup>20</sup>He said to him, “Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth.” <sup>21</sup>Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, “You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.” <sup>22</sup>When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

<sup>23</sup>Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!” <sup>24</sup>And the disciples were perplexed at these words. But Jesus said to them again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! <sup>25</sup>It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” <sup>26</sup>They were greatly astounded and said to one another, “Then who can be saved?” <sup>27</sup>Jesus looked at them and said, “For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible.”

<sup>28</sup>Peter began to say to him, “Look, we have left everything and followed you.” <sup>29</sup>Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news, <sup>30</sup>who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age—houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields, with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. <sup>31</sup>But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.”

## Message

People of God, grace to you and peace from God, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen

Societally speaking, the rich man in this story is on par with just about every one of the rest of us. We are a doer based society. What more can we do? And, for what? Without really thinking of why.

The man approaches Jesus thinking that there are things he must DO to inherit eternal life. In his life he has kept all of the commandments that are sacred to his understanding of living life the right way, and he is curious what more there is to do. Because, surely, there is something WE can do to inherit eternal life.

Jesus, shockingly (sarcasm) doesn't give the man the answer he is looking for. The man is lacking one thing. And Jesus lets him know it.

Generosity. “Go and be generous. Live a life with true concern for others. Then you will have treasure in heaven.”

The man grieves at this response. “For he has many possessions.”

But, in giving this man this response, and what he adds to it, Jesus begs the question, for him and for us, what it means to follow Jesus! Jesus doesn't stop at “sell everything and give it to the poor.” He goes on!

“Then come, follow me.”

To follow Jesus is to live a generous life. Yes, generosity with our resources, but also our time, skills, and perhaps even more importantly, our care and compassion for OTHERS. This rich man was hugely concerned with himself and himself alone. He was grieved to hear that he must also care for others as much as he cared for his possessions.

This was likely unsettling for the disciples as well. They tell us as much. “We have left everything and followed you.” You see, in their understanding of how the world works, to be wealthy would be a sign of God's blessings. They hear as much in Proverbs. Their ancient texts tell them so. Jesus, again, as he so very often does, turns this worldview upside down.

Be wealthy. Great. Follow all of the commandments. Wonderful. But, if you don't follow Jesus, if you aren't generous towards other people, then the rest is for nothing.

Jesus gives them the easy to understand imagery of how difficult it will be for those who cling to their possessions. “It would be easier for a camel to pass through the eye a needle, than for one who clings to their possessions to enter the Kingdom of God. It is neither true nor false that there was a passageway into the city that Jesus is referring to with this analogy. It was small, about the size of a camel with a rider on top. No extra room. Certainly no room for belongings. Whether this is true or not, it is imagery that the hearers would have understood.

In giving us this imagery, Jesus is giving us an alternative to what he has recently been preaching. Going back to Mark 9, or the past three Sundays, Jesus has been preaching about the Kingdom of God being for those that society deems INsignificant.

“Let this child come to me.”

“What is wrong with someone who is not one of us doing the work we do?”

“Do not stop this child.” - in the context of preaching on divorce and other topics that carry with them a certain stigma in dominant culture.

These are all things that Jesus has been preaching. The Kingdom of God belongs to ones such as these.

Today is different. He goes from lifting up those whom dominant culture has deemed insignificant to casting down those who carry with them a heightened sense of status.

But, Jesus does not condemn the man. Jesus does not tell the man that he won't inherit eternal life. He tells the man that in Christ, eternal life is promised to us. We just need to live like it. But the man doesn't hear that. He only hears that he can't cling to his possessions.

Jesus calls this man to repent. Lay down all that would get in your way, care about others, then come and follow me.

Jesus calls us to repent, too. To inherit the Kingdom of God is a promise that has been given to you, in Christ. Part of knowing that, thinking back to the child that doesn't care what you say and knows that it is for them, is to repent of those things that would keep you from it.

The rich man couldn't do it. You can.

Thanks be to God. Amen

**Song of the Day**

**“Take My Life, That I May Be”**

**#583**

**Apostle's Creed**

**Prayers**

Made children and heirs of God's promise, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

Uniting God, you call forth different gifts in those who follow you. Encourage us to welcome the diverse benefits and blessings of the whole church in teaching, preaching, prophecy, healing, and more. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Nurturing God, you bring forth crops from the soil and bounty from the trees. Increase the produce of the land and bless all who toil in fields and orchards. Provide for good working conditions and keep them safe. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Empowering God, you offer compassion for those who are overlooked or forgotten. Open the hearts of local, national, and world leaders to show such compassion and love for their neighbors. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Sheltering God, in Jesus you travelled among us without a place to lay your head. Provide safe places to sleep and rest for those who have no place to live. Sustain ministries that offer food, clothing, and peace of mind. We pray especially for the ministries of Ruby's Pantry, Shepherd's Closet, the Chippewa Valley Street Ministry, Weekend Kids Meals, and more. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Renewing God, you bring life out of death. Help us part with those things that are no longer beneficial to us and open our hearts to see where new life is budding in this congregation. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

God of compassion, be with those living in the unknown, those awaiting results, those in the midst of treatment. We pray especially for Peyton, Kathy Smith, Matt Miller, Bob Hodges, Bob Kries, Jim and Sandy Nelson, Joe Christensen, Bill and Bonnie Kuehn. Eternal God, we thank you for the lives of those who have died. Make us confident in your promise of salvation and support us in our own journey of faith. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## **Offering**

### **Offertory Prayer**

God of abundance,  
you cause streams to break forth in the desert  
and manna to rain from the heavens.

Accept the gifts you have first given us.  
Unite them with the offering of our lives  
to nourish the world you love so dearly;  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

### **Words of Institution – We invite you to find bread and wine or juice and partake in this Holy Meal.**

(Holding the bread) In the night in which we was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread and broke it, gave thanks and gave it for all to eat saying, “This is my body broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

(Holding the cup) Again after supper he took the cup, and after giving thanks he gave it for all to drink saying, “this cup is the new covenant in my blood shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sins. So often as you do this, remember me.”

Once you’ve taken the elements say, “Wellspring of joy, through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts. Satisfy the hunger still around us, and send us as joyful witnesses, that your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **Lord’s Prayer**

### **Communion Prayer**

#### **Sending Song**

**“What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine”**

**#774**

### **Blessing**

People of God,  
you are Christ’s body,  
bringing new life to a suffering world.

The holy Trinity, † one God,  
bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

Go in peace. The living Word dwells in you.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Announcements**

### **Bells**

If you are interested in playing with the Bell Choir, you are invited to join them on Tuesdays at 6:15 p.m. in the Sanctuary. If you have questions, you can reach out to Sue Kramer.

**Shepherd's Closet is in need of boots and snow pants if you know anyone whose kids have outgrown theirs.**

**Shepherd's Closet will be collecting cloth items for their Nov. 11 fundraiser. Bring items in white or black bags, marked SAVERS, and leave them in the Shepherd's Closet bin.**

### **Trunk or Treat/ Fall Festival 2021**

Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 30 from 2-4 p.m. for our third annual trunk or treat! AND this year we will also have some other fun Fall festival activities. A sign-up to decorate your vehicle trunk is available on the Faith Formation bulletin board outside the Sanctuary or [online](#).

### **2nd annual Neighbor to Neighbor/Vecino a Vecino**

A ministry thrift sale happening October 15 (8 a.m. - 5 p.m.) and 16 (8-noon), at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Eau Claire. Proceeds from the sale will once again be used to provide scholarships for Latin American students at UW-Eau Claire. Check it out!