

The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 20)

Year of the Lord 2019

Luke 16

**“Holy Spirit, Light Divine, shine upon this heart of mine;
Chase the shades of night away; turn the darkness into day!”
“Let me see my Savior’s face; let me all HIS beauties trace!
Show those glorious truths to me which are only known to
Thee!”**

Luke 16:1–15 [Jesus] also said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his possessions.

And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.’ And the manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.’ So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ He said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’ Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ He said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’ **The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light. And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings.**

“One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own? **No servant can serve two masters, for 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 God and money.” The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him. And he said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God.**

In the Name of Jesus:

Dearly beloved:

Don't...be...all...SUPERIOR...to...the...Pharisees! That's THEIR gig: superiority! And they were sincere about it; their superiority. So much so, that the majority of their fellow Israelites would COMMEND these men, for the care they took of their lives. 'If you wanna earn yer way to heaven, these are men to imitate!'

So, then, WHOM does the master COMMEND?! A 'child of light?' Or a 'child of THIS WORLD?'

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

THAT is where this STORY leaves us, my fellow children of light! Praying as the Church has taught her children to PRAY!

Leaving-be 'shrewdness'—the serpent's talent—and basking in the LIFELONG THEME of today's story-TELLER: 'The healthy do not need a physician; the sick do. I have NOT come to call the righteous to repentance, but sinners.'

My dear ones: there was a connection between righteousness and the STUFF of this world—in...the...Old...Covenant. It was baked into the contract between the LORD God and Israel: He gave them loads of good, created, this-world STUFF; then, in the thanksgiving of obedience, they were bound to BE GOOD, as ALL men should BE GOOD, but ARE NOT.

And if you would separate one group of Jesus' opponents from the other—the Pharisees and the Sadducees—it was the Pharisees who held sort-of a view of this life, sort-of like Christians: a life of the world to come, the home of righteousness. As far as I can tell—and I am NOT being anti-Semite here; just trying to understand people!—most modern Jewish people, many of whom I love and adore and call 'friend,' are of the Sadducee type. There are no

angels, no heaven, no life of the world to come. Religion is a ‘baked-in’ part of the culture of such religious people. But don’t press them on who or WHAT this ‘G-d’ thing is....

The Pharisees ridiculed Jesus. The Sadducees put him to death.

That was their thing; NOT...HIS! Until the end, Jesus tried to call even the Pharisees to repentance; to teach them that He had come to heal THEM too. They are God’s chosen nation, until the End.

These words are meant—FIRST!—for THEM: ‘Make friends with worldly wealth; those friends will then not groan to see you at the resurrection.’ This is just good ol’ Old Testament stuff! Use the stuff of this world that gets you nowhere with God; to get somewhere with other poor sinners.

What response did Jesus receive?

“You cannot serve God and money.” The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him.

My dear ones: pennies and nickels are the LESSER things, the CASTAWAY gifts and treasures of heaven, which life can have or not have because they ARE....NOT...LIFE!

TRUE treasures—to whom will anyone entrust them? The NEW COVENANT reveals! Keep reading, the Gospel according to Saint Luke:

¹⁴ And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him. ¹⁵ And he said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. ¹⁶ For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” ¹⁷ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, “Take this, and divide it among yourselves. ¹⁸ For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” ¹⁹ And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁰ And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. ²¹ But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. ²² For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!” ²³ And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this.

²⁴ A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. ²⁵ And he said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. ²⁶ But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. ²⁷ For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? **But I am among you as the one who serves.**

²⁸ “You are those who have stayed with me in my trials, ²⁹ and I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, ³⁰ that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

³¹ “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, ³² but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.” ³³ Peter said to him, “Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death.” ³⁴ Jesus said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me.” ¹

Treasure.

My dear ones: you're barking up the wrong tree, if you catch me after church and ask THIS POOR MAN to EXPLAIN the rich

¹ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 22:14–34). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

master's COMMENDATION of the man who stole from him, then stole more! My place in this world has been proven over and over to be the place of the sap, the one who gets conned and taken advantage-of.

All I can see is that the master saw that his unfaithful manager was very good at taking care of himself. As the world thought of the Pharisees.

And THIS POOR MAN's job is not to figure out all the designs and schemes of this world, or the shrewdness learnt from the world's master, the devil.

I do have a job though, a calling. To tell you, dear children of light, that any good you do to the world is bread cast on the water; from which you, in faith, in joyful expectation of the future, in love: waiting for A 'RETURN' on your investment—that's just the snake calling you back to this dark world.

You do good—heavenly good!—when your YOU rule your STUFF, and offer it to God, through the needy; rather than leaving your STUFF to rule YOU!

And you have TRUE TREASURE, when you pray:

'Forgive us, dear Father, all our DEBTS! For WE have ALREADY cancelled every debt owed us! Even men's sins!'

Pray that with confidence, my dear ones: for Christ was baptized as one of you.

Pray that prayer with every expectation of a happy reception into a home that lasts! For Christ and His Kingdom are worthless to this shrewd world. But heaven holds it all precious.

‘Today I, the King, pledge that you will NOT just be remembered, or let slide INTO My Kingdom. You, poor pray-ing man, will be with me in My Special Garden, where my dearest ones belong!’

To WHOM did Jesus pour out such treasure?

‘THIS MAN has done nothing wrong! WE are getting WHAT...WE...DESERVE....!’

Lord Jesus, remember us in your Kingdom and teach us to pray.
Amen.