

GOSPEL LESSON—Luke 16:19-31

Rich people don't automatically go to hell, poor people don't automatically go to Heaven. This parable is much deeper than platitudes. The rich man loved only his money. (He did not have a name. In standing before God he is without identity.) He loved money so much that even though a needy man was "laid" at his gate. The rich man couldn't see himself parting with the crumbs that fell from his table. Jesus made the rich man reprehensible to His listeners. There are allegories of talking with Abraham about his plight (not God) and asking to have someone sent from the dead. Jesus told this parables for the benefit of the saved, not for the lost. This parable is an explanation of the fact, that even when Jesus rose from the dead people refused to believe.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

¶ O Lord God, You are always faithful. You have not failed in one word of all Your exceedingly great and precious promises. We thank You for the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ Your Son. We thank you for all the promised grace we have received through Him. In the brightness of His glory we have received knowledge of Your glory. In the truth, goodness, and tenderness embodied in Him we have learned Your will. In His obedience unto death on the cross we have been granted cleansing pardon for all our sins. In His Resurrection we have the promise of life everlasting. In His ascension to the right hand of Your majesty we have the assurance of His intercession for our ever necessity.

Preserve Your Church from false or faithless teachers. Keep us obedient and steadfast in what You have made known to us in the Holy Scriptures. Give all believers the refreshing of Your Spirit, that in fellowship with Jesus Christ we will proclaim Your truth with living power, preach Your Gospel in all the world, and accomplish all our work in love to meet the needs of all people.

Grant to all the nations peace and tranquility. Allow Your people to live without fear. Preserve them from oppression, wrong and cruelty. Be the strength of the sick and the weary. Visit the tears of the sick, troubled and sorrowful with Your divine comfort.

Support our nation in righteousness and destroy all wickedness. As there is no strength in material prosperity, preserve us from the decay of moral corruption. Raise up for us leaders of holy courage and conscience. Be with our troops, showing them the Love and comfort that only You can give. Protect us against every peril, and give us Your blessing.

Hear us as we bring to You our private petitions. (**Time of silent prayer.**)

All this we are bold to ask in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

© Amen.

PROPER TWENTY-ONE

Chant Tone



Introit

Let Your steadfast love | comfort me*
according to Your promise to Your
—servant.

Your hands have made and
—fashioned me;*
give me understanding that I may
learn Your com—mandments.
Those who fear You shall see me | and
rejoice,*
because I have hoped | in Your Word.

I know, O Lord, that Your just decrees
are —righteous,*
and that in faithfulness You have
af|flicted me.

Let Your mercy come to me, that | I
may live;*
for Your law is | my delight.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy —Spirit;
as it was in the be—ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. —Amen.

Let Your steadfast love | comfort me*
according to Your promise to Your
—servant.

(Antiphon, Psalm 119:76;
Psalm 119:73-75, 77)

Collect of the Day

O God, You are the strength of all who trust in You, and without Your aid we can do no good thing. Grant us the help of Your grace that we may please You in both will and deed; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

Gradual

He will command His angels con | cerning you*
to guard you in | all your ways.
Bless the Lord, | O my soul,*
and all that is within me, bless His | holy name!

(Psalm 91:11; 103:1)

ENTRANCE PRAYER: Lord God, heavenly Father, to You we lift up our souls, in You we put our trust. We are mindful of Your mercies; throughout our lives, You have shown us Your steadfast love. You have provided for our eternal salvation by sending us Your Son Jesus Christ. For these, the countless gifts of Your Love and mercy, accept our adoration, praise and thanksgiving. Empower us by Your Holy Spirit to show true love and empathy. Give us the spirit of Christ, Who humbled Himself and became obedient unto death for our sake. Give us the will and the discipline to fulfill our promises. In the name of He Who is our salvation. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

LAST WEEK WE LEARNED HOW WE ARE MANAGERS OF THE GOODS GIVEN US BY GOD. This week we see that our abundance or lack of material goods is not what is important; it is what we do with our goods and our faith in the Resurrection of Jesus. The rich man did not believe in Jesus. He lived his life in the here and now. His life was consumed by his wealth. Lazarus, who had nothing in this life, gained everything in Heaven. The bottom line in the parable has very little to do with poverty or wealth. The parable spoken by Jesus tells us that one thing will ensure our eternal salvation; faith in the One Who returned from the dead and has now ascended into Heaven to prepare a place for us; even Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

THEME OF THE DAY:

Faith or Failure

INTROIT—(Antiphon, Psalm 119:76;) Psalm 119:73-75, 77
Psalm 119 was probably written by David. Some think it was a lifetime work as there are 22 sections (one for each letter of the Hebrew Alphabet.) Today's reading is brought to us by the letter, "yodh." We are reminded that doing the right thing (believing in God,) is the greatest comfort.

COLLECT

Without God we only do that which is wrong. With God's grace we are able to do the right thing, keeping the commandments.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON—Amos 6:1-7

There was a time of peace and prosperity in the kingdom. The leadership decided it was necessary to indulge themselves. The nation found it was necessary to indulge themselves. The problem was that (as with last week), they were falling away from the plan and the purpose God had for them. They were turning to human alliances, (doing things the wrong way) rather than depending on God (the right way.) They were looking to their national wisdom, rather than consulting God in matters of faith and life. They were falling away and God told them they would be the first to go into exile. Which even when it was fulfilled, didn't cause repentance. Even after the Northern kingdom was taken into captivity, the Southern kingdom continued to fall away.

GRADUAL—Psalm 91:11, 103:1

Psalm 91 and 103 were written by David. 91:11 was used by Satan to suggest that Jesus should test the will of God. David intended that we would know (as from our Collect,) the mercy and pity of God. The world hates us and will attempt to harm us, but the love of God is shown in the fact that the angels were created to serve the believers. For that reason we bless the Lord with all our soul.

EPISTLE LESSON—1 Timothy 6:6-19

There aren't many wealthy Pastors, and the ones who seek wealth are following the wrong path. The letters to Timothy were written by a Pastor and for a Pastor. We sometimes do them damage when we try to apply this message otherwise. The point of Timothy, is that there is only one pursuit that will serve us eternally, the pursuit of things eternal, the things of God, the right things. We cannot buy Heaven. A Pastor's vocation is to make a confession of Jesus to the people of the world. The vocation of the members of the congregation does involve making money. The balance then, is to remember that we are all only managers of the gifts that have been given to us by God. We are not owners. What we have belongs to God and should be used for His purpose.