

Sunday Sermon: October 14, 2018

Sermon Text: Mark 10:17-27

Sermon Theme: Trust in the Lord in All Things

<sup>17</sup> As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

<sup>18</sup> “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. <sup>19</sup> You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.’”

<sup>20</sup> “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.”

<sup>21</sup> Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

<sup>22</sup> At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.

<sup>23</sup> Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!”

<sup>24</sup> The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said 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 a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

<sup>26</sup> The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, “Who then can be saved?”

<sup>27</sup> Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.”

After church a man walked up to his elder. He had the letter that had been sent out to whole congregation in his hand. As he gestured with the letter he said, “I have a problem. Everyone is always asking for money: my wife, my kids, the schools, charities, seems like everyone has their hand out for my money. The only place I felt safe was my church because you’re not supposed to ask for money. But this week, I got this letter from you asking me for money. This is wrong. You shouldn’t be asking me for money too.”

There is one thing that we seem to hold onto and trust in much longer than other earthly things. We take a lot of time building trust in it, we work hard to keep it safe and defend it, and we don’t want to give it up. We place a lot of trust and hope in our money. Yet, isn’t it strange that even printed on money is the phrase *In God we Trust*.

As we look at the Bible Lesson of Jesus and the Rich Man we see that Jesus shows us that we have something much better to trust than money, he shows us we should trust in him for all things.

A well-known rich man runs up to Jesus and falls at his feet. This young man is religious and has come to Jesus with a religious question, “What must I do to be saved?” This sounds like a great question that we all need answered. And, it seems he has come to the right place in Jesus.

From the moment that the man walks up to him, Jesus knows what’s in his heart. He knows how deeply this sin runs and how deeply ingrained in this man the sin is. This is not the jailer at Philippi who was waiting for Paul and Silas to tell him about salvation when he called out, “**What must I do be saved?**” This was a young man who had come to a rabbi to have his good works verified.

Jesus answer is simple. Obey the Law. There is no hint that this man was lying or that there was excessive pride when he answered Jesus. **All these I have kept since I was little.** He gave what he thought was a truthful answer because he did not yet see his sin was not one against his neighbor, but against his God.

The young man only saw his sin when Jesus asked him to completely trust in him, “**Go and sell everything you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.**”

The young man’s sin was not a sexual sin, a sin of greed, a sin of lying, or a sin against his family. His sin was a sin of trust. The young man trusted in his money more than his God. He could not give it up even if it meant saving his soul.

Just as Jesus knew this man’s heart, he also knows the hearts of all men. People have trusted in things more than God. Cain’s first sin was not in murdering his brother Abel, it was that he did not trust in God to bless him with more good crops, instead he trusted in himself wanted to keep the best for himself.

In our Old Testament reading, we have no indication that Elisha and Gehazi were living a poor and meager existence, but Gehazi still was greedy, he wanted the rich things that Naaman offered as payment, even though Elisha said no.

Martin Luther said, "That upon which you set your heart and put your trust is properly your god." Simply, an idol is anything that you trust in more than God.

Jesus said, "**How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!**"

<sup>24</sup> **The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said 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 a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."** Jesus made it clear to his disciples that it was not money that was the sin, it was trusting in that money.

By itself money is just a thing, it is a tool that God gives to us. In our society, this is a tool that is important and practical. We use a system of money. We cannot go to the cell phone company or the cable company or any other company that bills us and offer to work off our bill or trade our bill for some other good. In our society, the process is pretty simple. You want something, you have to pay for it.

Because money is so important, we often fear that we will not have enough money to pay for things that we really want. If we run out of money what will happen to the family, the car, the house? If we don't save enough money what will happen in retirement or old age? Instead of looking at how the Lord takes of us, we place our trust in the amount of money we have to give us security and safety, peace and happiness, comfort and convenience.

We should not look to money for these things, but to God. It is not the money that bought these things for us. It is God who has blessed us with all we need in order to live in this world. It is God who blesses us with another day of life. It is God who blesses us with abilities to use. It is God who blesses us with a job to go to make money. It is God who gives us this tool or money to use so that he can provide what we need for ourselves and for our family from day to day.

It is very sad when we do not see God's gracious hand of blessing providing for us. God doesn't just work through miracles to provide for us, God works in all ways and through many things, even through the natural and ordinary ways of life to preserve and protect us and give us what we need from day to day.

He provides for us through the animals, plants and trees that give us food. He provides for us through the gifts and talents of others so that we have cars, houses and medical care. He uses the tool of money so that we can buy and sell goods. Even though it is not a miracle when we lay down the cash or swipe the debit card, it is still the gracious hand of God preserving us with a gracious gift to make it through our days.

Even though we trust in these things more than we should, Jesus does not abandon us. He did not say that it was impossible for those who are rich to be saved, he said that it was difficult. But the disciples understood just how much this sin infects us, "**Who then can be saved?**"

Jesus shows us what is impossible for man to do alone, is only possible through faith in him. "**With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.**"

It is impossible for us to gain heaven through money. It is as impossible to work our way to heaven as it is to eradicate sin from lives. Sin lives in us, it infects us. On our own, it is impossible to escape the ultimate punishment and payment that God gives for sin.

How many times have we thought, that guy or girl deserves what they got? But have we ever thought that about ourselves? What do we deserve because of our sin? And then what God gives to you.

On our own, we deserve punishment. Our sin earns death and hell. We deserve to be punished because we disobey and defy God every day.

But what God gives to us is something different. He does not punish us as our sins deserve. He gives us something that we do not deserve. But God has done something for us that is amazing and improbable. God has sent Jesus to make heaven possible for us, not through our own works, but through his. Jesus trusted in his Father completely and walked this earth perfectly, obeying all the commandments. He was never greedy or envious of another's money. He never trusted in it or coveted it. He trusted in his Father and his Father provided for him.

Jesus did this because it was impossible for us to do. It was also impossible to pay the price for our sins. Jesus also did the improbable by sacrificing himself in place of all of us who deserved that punishment.

We receive forgiveness and eternal life. We receive love and comfort. We receive earthly blessings that not only help us today, but that God gives us day after day.

God reminds us every day that he is the one that we should trust and not in anything else. It is only through faith that we see the great love that God has already shown to us. It is only through faith that we can fight the temptation to trust in money more than God. It is only through faith that we can trust in God's promise, **Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you** and know that with him watching over us we have no need to trust in anything else.

The elder thought about it for a moment and said. "I understand where you are coming from. God doesn't want your money, he wants your heart; a heart that thanks and follows him and that's what we are asking for too. When our hearts are right with God, our offerings will be too."

When the money says *in God we trust* it is not talking about trusting God over money. But it should be. God doesn't want our money he wants our hearts. He wants to free us from the worry that often surrounds our lives and the fear that comes when we trust in money. He wants to replace that fear and worry with peace and trust in him.

We trust in God for all things. For our forgiveness and salvation and for all the things we need for our todays and tomorrows.