

25<sup>th</sup> Sunday  
in Ordinary  
Time

# Sunday Bulletin

Year C

## Communion Antiphon ‡ Psalm 119 (118): 4-5

You have laid down your precepts to be carefully kept; may my ways be firm in keeping your statutes.

**Commentary (continued).** He's not suited to any other way of making a living, and as a slave he has no estate of his own. He's been use to socializing with his master's peers, although he is not truly their social or legal equals.

So he pulls off a kind of "white collar crime." Calling in his master's debtors, he has them manipulate their receipts to "erase" a significant portion of their debt. Then they will be in this steward's debt after he is fired, and "owe him one."

Eventually, when the master found out what the steward had done, he "commended" him. This probably means, he acknowledged (grudgingly) how cunning his former employer had been.

*"For the children of this world  
are more prudent in dealing with their own generation  
than are the children of light."*

Non-religious people frequently have more "street smarts" in manipulating others than those who practice a faith. That's why it's best for Christians to stay out of the "rat race" rather than try to compete in it.

*I tell you, make friends for yourselves with dishonest wealth,  
so that when it fails, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.*

This is perhaps the key teaching of this entire Reading. The world encourages an attitude in which we *use people to gain things*. Jesus reverses this: *use things to gain people*. If spending money and giving goods can open others to friendship with the Church and ultimately Christ Himself, then spend the money, give the goods. Pagan religion in the ancient world tended to be a semi-magical way to manipulate the spiritual realm (the realm of the "gods") in order to gain material wealth.

Christianity is precisely the reverse of this. It is a religion in which we sacrifice material in order to gain spiritual wealth.

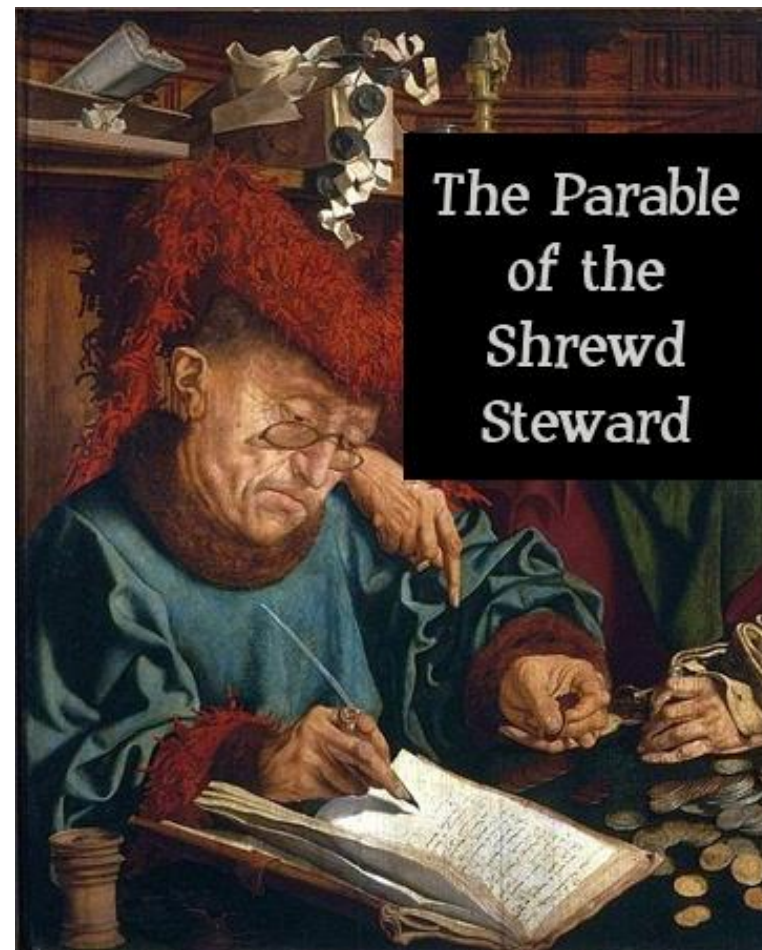
That is one reason why the "health and wealth Gospel" is such a perversion. Periodically one can hear a radio or TV evangelist preaching Christ as a means to the "good life" — this is a return to paganism, a subordination of the spiritual to the material. It does not lead to true conversion, because as long as Jesus is a means to an end — and not the end itself — one is not yet a Christian.

Two tax collectors,  
Marinus van  
Reymerswaele,  
1540s, oil on panel,  
National Museum of  
Warsaw, Poland



## Entrance Antiphon ‡

I am the salvation of  
the people, says the  
Lord. Should they  
cry to me in any  
distress, I will hear  
them, and I will be  
their Lord for ever.



## The Parable of the Shrewd Steward

## First Reading ‡ Amos 8:4-7

*The Lord God spoke against those who buy the poor for money.*  
Listen to this, you who trample on the needy  
and try to suppress the poor people of the country,  
you who say, 'When will New Moon be over  
so that we can sell our corn,  
and sabbath, so that we can market our wheat?  
Then by lowering the bushel, raising the shekel,  
by swindling and tampering with the scales,  
we can buy up the poor for money,

and the needy for a pair of sandals,  
and get a price even for the sweepings of the wheat.’  
The Lord swears it by the pride of Jacob,  
‘Never will I forget a single thing you have done.’  
*The word of the Lord.*  
**Thanks be to God.**

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### **Responsorial Psalm † Psalm 112:1-2, 4-8**

#### **R. Praise the Lord who lifts up the poor.**

Praise, O servants of the Lord,  
praise the name of the Lord!  
May the name of the Lord be blessed  
both now and for evermore! **R.**

High above all nations is the Lord,  
above the heavens his glory.  
Who is like the Lord, our God,  
who has risen on high to his throne  
yet stoops from the heights to look down,  
to look down upon heaven and earth? **R.**

From the dust he lifts up the lowly,  
from the dunghill he raises the poor  
to set him in the company of princes,  
yes, with the princes of his people. **R.**

### **Second Reading † 1 Timothy 2:1-8.**

*Let prayers be offered to God for everyone; he wants all people to be saved.*

My advice is that, first of all, there should be prayers offered for everyone — petitions, intercessions and thanksgiving — and especially for kings and others in authority, so that we may be able to live religious and reverent lives in peace and quiet. To do this is right, and will please God our saviour: he wants everyone to be saved and reach full knowledge of the truth. For there is only one God, and there is only one mediator between God and mankind, himself a man, Christ Jesus, who sacrificed himself as a ransom for them all. He is the evidence of this, sent at the appointed time, and I have been named a herald and apostle of it and — I am telling the truth and no lie — a teacher of the faith and the truth to the pagans. In every place, then, I want the men to lift their hands up reverently in prayer, with no anger or argument.

*The word of the Lord.*  
**Thanks be to God.**

### **Gospel Acclamation † 2 Corinthians 8:9**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

Jesus Christ was rich but he became poor,  
to make you rich out of his poverty.

**Alleluia!**

### **Gospel † Luke 16:1-13**

*You cannot be slaves both of God and of money.*

Jesus said to his disciples, ‘There was a rich man and he had a steward who was denounced to him for being wasteful with his property. He called for the man and said, “What is this I hear about you? Draw me up an account of your stewardship because you are not to be my steward any longer.” Then the steward said to himself, “Now that my master is taking the stewardship from me, what am I to do? Dig? I am not strong enough. Go begging? I should be too ashamed. Ah, I know what I will do to make sure that when I am dismissed from office there will be some to welcome me into their homes.”

‘Then he called his master’s debtors one by one. To the first he said, “How much do you owe my master?” “One hundred measures of oil” was the reply. The steward said, “Here, take your bond; sit down straight away and write fifty.” To another he said, “And you, sir, how much do you owe?” “One hundred measures of wheat” was the reply. The steward said, “Here, take your bond and write eighty.”

‘The master praised the dishonest steward for his astuteness. For the children of this world are more astute in dealing with their own kind than are the children of light. ‘And so I tell you this: use money, tainted as it is, to win you friends, and thus make sure that when it fails you, they will welcome you into the tents of eternity. The man who can be trusted in little things can be trusted in great; the man who is dishonest in little things will be dishonest in great. If then you cannot be trusted with money, that tainted thing, who will trust you with genuine riches? And if you cannot be trusted with what is not yours, who will give you what is your very own? ‘No servant can be the slave of two masters: he will either hate the first and love the second, or treat the first with respect and the second with scorn. You cannot be the slave both of God and of money.’

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!**

### **Commentary on the Gospel by John Bergsma**

<http://www.thesacredpage.com/2013/09/god-and-mammon-25th-sunday-in-ordinary.html>

The role of steward in a large household was one of great responsibility, but also wealth and prestige. It went to the master’s most trusted male slave. As a result, enterprising young freemen in the Roman empire sometimes sold themselves as slaves to wealthy men in order to become stewards of their households.

Since the stewardship was an administrative position in which one lived in physical comfort, the steward realizes he is in great trouble when the master wishes to fire him.

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