

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

A Good and Faithful Master

November 15, 2020

AS WE GATHER

We read today about three servants. All three received a good and gracious gift from their master. Two were good and faithful. One was evil and faithless. Two reflected the goodness and faithfulness of their master. One refused to act like his master and was punished for his insolence. Consider Jesus, our good and faithful Master, and all that He has done for us and our salvation. As we follow Him, we reflect His goodness and faithfulness.

HYMN “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” [LSB 338]

1 Come, Thou long-expected Jesus, Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us; Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, Hope of all the earth Thou art,
Dear desire of ev'ry nation, Joy of ev'ry longing heart.

2 Born Thy people to deliver; Born a child and yet a king!
Born to reign in us forever, Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit, Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all-sufficient merit, Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, You are our good and faithful Master. Thank You for the abundance of blessings You have poured into our lives. Strengthen us by Your mighty power, that we might serve You well and faithfully; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 25:14–30*

¹⁴“For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. ¹⁵To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. ¹⁷So also, he who had the two talents made two talents more. ¹⁸But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.’ ²¹His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. ^[c] You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ ²²And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.’ ²³His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ ²⁴He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, ²⁵so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.’ ²⁶But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown

and gather where I scattered no seed? ²⁷ Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸ So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. ²⁹ For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. ³⁰ And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Matthew 25 has several stories about what faith alone can do. It is by faith in Jesus’ death and resurrection that we receive the forgiveness of our sins and the promise of eternal life. Through faith comes forgiveness, only can be given, for these are gifts of God alone. This is clearly exhibited by the parable of the talents. In the parable the talents clearly belong to Master and are given into the care of the servants. Two make use of the talents and one does not. This is important when we understand that the Master is a depiction of Jesus and the servants are mankind. It becomes evident that the talents represent faith. Hebrews 12:2 references where faith comes from, “Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.” The two servants receive the faith and live in that faith. The other servant rejects the faith offered. What is important to understand is everyone has the opportunity to believe. The gift of faith and through faith forgiveness and eternal life is available to everyone. Only those who reject faith in Jesus do not enter into the joy of the Master. Faith in Jesus assures us that what Scripture promises is true. We are forgiven and we will live with our Master, Jesus, forever.

LORD’S PRAYER *Matthew 6:9–13*

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace. Amen.