

Stewardship Emphasis 2024

Next Sunday is Reformation Sunday and Pledge Sunday. Please continue using this guide as a review of this past Sunday's readings and in preparation for next Sunday's texts.

Monday, October 21—Mark 10:23–31

First...last; last...first. Jesus loves to turn the thoughts of man upside down. While he doesn't condemn earthly possessions, he warns us against putting our trust in them. Read Matt. 6:19–21.

Tuesday, October 22—Ecclesiastes 5:10–20

The Bible can speak positively of possessions. What does Solomon say is good to do in v. 18? How can greed sneak into our hearts to spoil our enjoyment of life? How might St. Paul's words to the Philippians sharpen our perspective (Phil. 4:11–13)?

Wednesday, October 23—John 8:31–36

The Greek word for "abide" or "remain" occurs some three dozen times in John's Gospel. The greatest concentration is found in John 15:1–11. How does the image of a branch being joined to the vine speak of our abiding in Christ?

Thursday, October 24—Romans 3:19–28

Paul's "but now" in v. 21 is a crucial turning point in his epistle. For nearly three chapters he has hammered hard on our sinful nature. How does he summarize our standing before God in v. 20? We can offer nothing to appease God's wrath. "But now..." What has God done apart from the Law?

Friday, October 25—John 8:31–36

Jesus says that knowing the truth sets us free. From what? Read Rom. 6:17–23 for Paul's extended commentary on Jesus' words. Note that though Christ has set us free from slavery to sin, we are still slaves.

But now to whom? What fruits of this slavery do we enjoy (v. 22?)

Saturday, October 26—Romans 3:19–28

Notice the blunt contrast that Paul sets forth in vv. 23–24. That word "gift" is obviously important. The history of mankind is littered with attempts to appease God's wrath—our self-made offerings to please God. But it won't do, will it? How does God rectify the situation? *Whom* does he give for us? If it's all the work of Christ, then what are we not permitted to do (v. 27)?

From the Large Catechism

This is the greatest calamity: that the world believes nothing of God's promises, because it sees that those who trust in God and not in money suffer care and want in this life, and the devil opposes and resists them; that they have neither money, favor, nor honor, and besides can scarcely support life. On the other hand, they think that those who serve money have power, favor, honor, possessions, and every comfort in the eyes of the world. For this reason, against such appearances, God's invitation to trust in him above all things must be grasped; and we must remember that his promises do not lie or deceive, but will prove true.

Prayer

Read the Collect of the Day on the reverse side every day! Then conclude with this prayer:

Gracious Father in heaven, though our sinful flesh continually wars against Your will, You have promised grace and every blessing for all who trust in You. Put away from us all forms of self-love, that, trusting You above all things, we may learn to live in humble service to our neighbor; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

A prayer before you fill out your pledge card:

Lord Jesus, in Your boundless love You laid down Your life so that I might not die but live eternally. Teach me to love You above all things and to set aside all earthly gain, that I might know the eternal treasures that You have prepared for me and all who trust in You. Bless our congregation as well as those in our community and in our lives who do not know You, that together we may forever dwell in Your presence, together with the Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.