

Lessons for Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost

October 20, 2024

Psalm 119:9–16 ~ *Advice for a young man: keep your life free from immorality by following God's word.*

Ecclesiastes 5:10–20 ~ *We hoard the things that are hardest to give up until we find greater satisfaction in God.*

Hebrews 4:1-13 (14-16) ~ *God's rest has been prepared for us by his own Son, Jesus, who completed our work.*

Mark 10:23–31 ~ *When our heart is fixed on riches, it is impossible to embrace the wealth of the Kingdom.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: When Things Disturb Your Rest

God rested after He created this world. We can rest in Him because Jesus has finished our work of redemption. Unfortunately, our lives are often so busy with possessions that, like a troubled insomniac we find no rest at all. As King Solomon observed, "Whoever loves money, never has enough." But Jesus pointed out that with God, even the rest of His Kingdom is possible for those who otherwise cannot enter His rest. When the love of God in Christ possesses us, it displaces the love of all those other things. "Come follow Me, . . . and you will find rest for your souls."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: Gracious and loving Savior, give me a joy in following You that is greater than my love for all the things in my life. Then I will rejoice in sharing Your blessings and Your love with those who are oppressed and lost. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: God calls us to follow Jesus who used all the earth at His disposal to accomplish the work of our salvation and open the door of His eternal rest to us. We cannot rest until all have heard Christ's invitation: "Come, follow Me."

OFFERING PRAYER: O Lord, our lives are filled by all the things we love the most,
And often they crowd out the love we owe to You alone.
Grant that the call to follow You may be our humble boast,
And blessings greater far than gold or jewels, will be our own. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: When we measure the worth of our lives by the amassing of fortune, we find ourselves restlessly striving for wealth and possessions in this world. Our greatest worth and wealth is found in being possessed by God's love in Christ Jesus. Because He has purchased us with His life's blood, we can rest comfortably in His grace, and spend our live – and our fortunes – joyfully, in sharing the wealth of the Gospel with others.