

25th Sunday of Ordinary Time – Year C

Let's be clear about something upfront and from the beginning...

God is not talking out of both sides of his mouth!

He is not on one hand berating the Hebrew people for being cheats, who can't wait for the Sabbath Day to be over in order to begin to swindle the poor and the honest. And at the same time applauding the dishonesty of the steward, who has squandered the Master's property.

Let's be clear, God is never on the side of sin, nor is Jesus.

Let also admit that the meaning of the Gospel is less than transparent regarding its true meaning.

Some background might help. In the custom of the day the rich man may have been an absentee landlord who had a steward to see to his day-to-day affairs. So, the steward could act in the owner's name. Following this custom the steward/manager could lend his master's property to others, with his own commission added on as a fee. The steward would keep the commission and give the master the principal. Thus, it may have been the steward's own commission that he reduced from what the debtors owed.

As we hear the parable unfold, if things went as we would expect, the exposed awful steward would suffer his just punishment. But that's not how parables work; the parable catches us off guard.

The parables do their job and force us to seek the deeper meaning..

How can Jesus hold up such improper behavior to his disciples? Well, if the steward were eliminating his commission to pave the way for himself once he left his master's employ, that would be shrewd planning. Jesus not praising fraud, but his shrewdness.

The **steward fits the description of what Jesus calls the "children of this world."** They know how to evaluate a situation and quickly act for their own good.

The challenge Jesus offered in today's parable is directed at us, the "children of light." The steward used his personal skills and material resources to save himself.

How do we, the "Children of Light", use our resources to save ourselves? Jesus, says to use [money to have friends to welcome us into eternity](#). As the dishonest steward used his wealth to gain friends, we use our wealth to gain friends. This comes in the form of almsgiving! Giving to the poor. This, I would suggest in very pleasing not only to the poor, but pleasing to God. St. Peter writes in the book of Acts (10:4), "[that charity covers a multitude of sins](#)"

Jesus is saying that as the steward was assuring his salvation in this world, the Children of Light should spend as much time and energy assuring our salvation in the eternal.

[How do we become resourceful for good and for the light.](#) An example –

Several years ago, in a parish long ago, one of the employees came to me [before Christmas...she came to my office door and said, Can we sell goats for Christmas?](#)

I burst into laughter...thinking she was kidding, I said sure, why not.

And so Zippy, yes that is her name, began to sell goats at the door of the church in order to provide protein to the people of our sister parish in El Salvador, both milk and meat. We sold the goats for \$90. The 1st year we sold \$12,000, the 2nd year \$15,000, the third and fourth year \$17,000.

The project still goes on today. On my first trip to El Salvador, there were no goats to be seen. On my last trip there were goats in the parish on every hillside. I asked a parishioner in our sister parish, if the goats made a difference. A father of 3 children stood up, with tears in his eyes, and said..."This is the first time in my life I have been able to give my children milk to drink".

From Zippy's simple idea and that which I thought was a joke, A goat coop has been formed and is a model for the entire country of El Salvador . \$10,000 was donated by an anonymous parishioner to build a new coral for the goats, 2,000 will be used to purchase a "super Goat" for breeding from Mexico.

So much excess milk is being produced that 100 women and their children are now receiving the excess goat milk from the herd, to provide nutrition which is so very needed, in a women's prison.

If the steward, can be astute in the ways of the world, and win the acknowledgement of Jesus...then certainly as Children...who have the power of the Light...we can be even more ingenious, because we are lead and empowered by the Light of Jesus and His Holy Spirit.

What are you doing with your light...with your gifts and talents...are you focusing all you energy of the things of the world? Or on the things of the Kingdom?

All power in Heaven and Earth has been given to me...

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.

Go therefore and be Light for his world

Amen.