

MID-WEEK REFLECTION 9

“At Our Savior’s Way Lutheran Church, we value returning God’s blessings.”

GETTING STARTED:

“If you could give a gift to make the world a better place what would you give.”

DIGGING DEEPER:

Ecclesiastes 5:10-11 *Whoever has money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless. As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owner except to fest his eyes on them.*

Ecclesiastes 5:15 *Naked a man comes from his mother’s womb, and as he comes, so he departs. He takes nothing from his labor that he can carry in his hand.*

Matthew 6:19-21 *Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is there your heart will be also.*

Matthew 6:24 *No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.*

Question: What is it about money or possessions that is addictive? Why do we crave money and possessions if they do not stop our cravings? What makes a person truly happy?

Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Explain your answers.

“It is not what we get, but what we become, what we contribute. That gives meaning to life.”
- Anthony Robbins

“We make a living from what we get. We make a life by what we give.” - Winston Churchill

“The love you give away is the only love you keep.” - Elbert Hubbard

APPLICATION:

Matthew 6:25-27 *Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you shall wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?*

Question: What worries you about the future? What is Jesus' response to our worrying?

Matthew 6:33-34 *But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*

Question: What does "his kingdom" mean and how do we seek it?

We are not owners of the earth or the things of this earth, God is. We simply get to use the things of God for the purposes of God while we are here on earth. It is God's job to take care of our needs and our job to care for others and care for God's creation. Our giving reflects our understanding of God's love for us and our trust in Him, and what we do with our lives reflects our love for God.

CHALLENGE:

In management there is a basic principle, "Keep It Simple." Stewardship begins at looking at what God has given to us and making the most of these gifts to express our love to God and help others. One of the challenges facing each of us is to simplify our life styles. Here are some things you might consider:

Give away what you do not need. Go through your home and if you have not worn some clothing items or used items in your home during the last year consider giving them to someone in need.

Give away your praise. Look for and recognize the good in others and let them know you appreciate them.

Let go of the past. Forgive those who have hurt you or harmed you. Stop carrying any anger that is stealing your joy in life.

Give away a tithe of your income and make a difference in the lives of others.