

20TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY 10/14/18

Mount Calvary, West View

AMOS 5: 6-15, HEBREWS 3: 12-19, MARK 10: 17-32

HYMNS: TAKE MY LIFE AND LET IT BE LSB #783,

THEE WILL I LOVE, MY STRENGTH, MY TOWER, LSB #694

SEEK YE FIRST LSB #712,

GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS LSB #809

THEME: POSSESSIVE POSSESSIONS

+ Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. AMEN +

Our Text is from the continuation of Saint Mark's Gospel, the 10th Chapter:

And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Sometimes there is a sermon that is so in tune to what is going on in the world that it sort of writes itself. This is one of those sermons. Sometimes there is a text, that forms into a sermon that you can take with you and help others that you meet every day. This is one of those sermons. Sometimes there is a sermon that speaks to the hearer in such a way that it makes me seem like I know what is exactly going on in your world and the sermon gives you peace to understand and live your life. This is one of those sermons. Sometimes there is a sermon that as I am writing it, I needed to hear it so that I can have peace in my days. This is one of those sermons. Pastor must be talking about pride or the necessity need to be humble. No, this is not particularly such a sermon, although it may come to that. We just have to listen and see.

No, today we are met with a person that wants to, by his own admission, inherit eternal life, and the answer is quite simple, by Jesus's own admission. ***õYou know the commandments: 'Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father***

and mother. 'ö What a simple list to inherit eternal life! Certainly, do not need that list of sins anymore!ⁱ Ah, but hear oní ***And he said to him, "Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth."*** Sound familiar? Every sinner believes he is not so bad, and has at the very least, kept the commandments as well as can possibly be, right? After all, you haven't murdered anybody, or cheated on your spouse, or disrespected your parents since leaving the house, right? ***And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.***

It was not easy for this young man, well he was young right? Well, Mark does not say, and we do not *need* to say, for it matters not if this is a young man or a seasoned citizen not unlike myself with my AARP card. If you want to inherit eternal life, you ögotsö to follow the commandments, and not have anything that stands in the way of following God. Yet the man had something stopping him ó great possessions.

Now I can sit up here and tell you, I have possessions, and many of them were on display at my Birthday party. I got all kinds of Monopoly® games, I have many more items of a Batman® nature, and sports memorabilia? Too many to count. Got an entire fixture from a K-mart that went out of business, eight points to hang from, that has already reached its capacity. One could make the case that I have much in the possessionø accumulation, perhaps even reached the amount of ögreatö as our dear kneeler. The difference is, my possessions may define me to this world, but not to the world to come.

How can I be so sure? As well as you may ask of yourself, öHow can I (that is, öyouö,) be so sure that my (that is, öyourö,) possessions do not control me?ö The example we have this week: I was given a message this week, that two dear friends, a married couple of over 50 years, who have been faithful Lutheran Church goers, who have finally reached retirement, and have settled down in Pensacola, Florida, and due to the hurricane, we called Michael, have lost everything. I mean *everything*. Naturally,

they are upset. I have expressed my condolences and offered any assistance I can give. But as I sit here in comfortable Pittsburgh, PA, and put myself in their shoes, can I say, that I would be upset if it was all gone in a moment of God's will? Can you? Perhaps some would say this is one of those times where you cannot know until you do, but I say yes, I can, for I have not lost everything. I have myself; and using my friends as an example, I have my wife. Their kids are safely in the Pennsylvania region, so they have family, and above all else, I have my Faith; God is with me, and I can endure all, because He is with me.

Amos shows us the world, and how it deals with people. They hate being corrected; they trample the poor, they take more than they need, and refuse to help unless it gives them something in return. The word here is selfish, and the world is certainly this. Proven by the fact that what it has, it tries to keep and get more. This was the man's problem. He just could not sell all he has to give to those less than him. He wanted to inherit eternal life by having the same life here.

The writer to the Hebrews also warns us, *“Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God.”* We can at any time fall into this worldly mindset that we have to keep our stuff, and gain still more, at the expense of others who need help. If we do not go downtown, we do not see the poor, and therefore, maybe we forget there are people in need? When we spend time with family, are we doing so at the expense of giving them Church and the opportunities to hear the Word, confess sins, receive forgiveness, and partake of the supper so that when bad things happen, we have a God to fall back on? The evil heart is the unbelieving heart that cares about this world more than the next. A good heart is one that has Christ and is working in this world to bring many to the next. When we offer Christ Crucified, we are not offering a history lesson. We offer the forgiveness won by the only GOOD thing in this world, God alone, and when He is offered at this table, with His body and blood, you receive the comfort of your soul.

My Florida friends will be just fine. They have each other, their friends, and most of all, our Loving Savior Who is mightier than the wind and waves. The things they had will be replaced, hey,

maybe they will finally have the style of today rather than the 70s for a change. What will never need to be replaced is their trust in God alone. May this be truly said of all of us. In our Triune God's Name, we pray. **AMEN.**

+ AND NOW MAY THE PEACE OF GOD WHICH SURPASSES ALL UNDERSTANDING
KEEP YOUR HEARTS AND MINDS IN UNION WITH CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD. AMEN+

There are only two days on my calendar...today and the day of judgment

ⁱ Refer to Sermon preached on September Second of 2018 for this list