

28th Sunday Ordinary Time- B '2018
Wisdom 7.7-11///Hebrews 4.12-13///Mark 10.17-30

→recently some television game shows have reappeared on TV at night...such classic games as “To Tell the Truth”... “Match Game”... “\$100,000 Pyramid” to name a few

→and one of the characteristics of game shows ...besides trying to give away fabulous prizes and money to contestants...is that almost every game show has certain tag line...a certain phrase that becomes known to everyone and becomes almost the essence of the game show...

→ “I’d like to buy a vowel...the survey says...the actual retail price without going over...open the case” are all phrases and lines that at the height of popularity becomes part of our culture and part of our life....

→well that happens in today’s gospel reading as well because as I reflected on this week’s passage, I was reminded of that famous tag line Regis Philbin made so popular just a few years ago from the game show... “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire”..... “is that your final answer?”

→because very similar to that game show where ordinary people were asked questions in the hope of winning a million dollars, today we hear about one of the followers of Jesus ...asking him....a million dollar question“what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

→and Jesus...gives his final answer ...a very straightforward, precise, and challenging answer.....*"You are lacking in one thing....go, sell what you have, and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me."*

→so what does actually mean for you and me.....

→well in essence [I believe]...the final answer that Jesus gives.....is basically.....that for someone to gain eternal life..... they need to live simplify their life and live according to the gospel message

→...and then later on as we hear.....when he is pressed by the disciples...in particular Peter, saying that they had already given up much to become his followers...Jesus replies by saying that no one has given up their house or families, or land for my sake who will not receive 100 times more for the sake of the gospel

PAUSE

→I think it is very safe to say.... that life in today's world can become very complicated at times

→[and] it seems as if the longer we live the more complicated, it becomes

---and so, as a result.....simplicity is an appealing idea

→however accomplishing THIS simplicity...“a simple life” is more difficult than it seems

→our lives are **busy** these days....crammed with all kinds of things to do....and less time to get them done

→and so, a simple life sounds good doesn't it

→[I mean] ...think for just a moment how complicated and complex things have gotten these days

→I think of our schools today

→30 years ago, the major student behavioral problem teachers faced in the classroom were gum chewing and talking w/out permission

→today, we deal with lock-downs and active shooter drills, students coming to school intoxicated or on drugs, carrying weapons and thinking about suicide.

[and this is just one instance of how things have become so complicated]

→last week I was in Atlanta attending a meeting, and by coincidence on the flight home I came across an article in a magazine entitled "THE SIMPLER LIFE," which had as its premise the quest for a simpler life these days

→the article went on to say, how today we are inundated with a bewildering array of choices each and every day with almost everything we do....of how we live in a BASKIN ROBBINS SOCIETY where everything comes in at least 31 flavors and how SIMPLICITY, A LESS COMPLICATED LIFE SEEMS MORE DESIREABLE....

→that many of us seem to be yearning for a quieter calmer existence...

PAUSE

→[now]...the point of all this..... is that there is a similarity between you and me and the people of long ago

→because in the gospel today, we see a young man approaching Jesus asking the same question that we often ask

----"what must I do to be happy and feel fulfilled!"

→and the answer Jesus gives.....if looked at more closely.....is an instruction to simplify our lives.

PAUSE

→I believe the point of this gospel passage and the message that J. is trying to get across to the young man, AND TO YOU AND ME is that

.....fulfillment in life comes from living simply, and that is ultimately rooted in God

→and so, if we desire fulfillment, we need to be mindful of all those things that block us from God and begin to clear away all the clutter.

---i/o/w/ we need to simplify our lives

PAUSE

→now I don't think that means that we need to get rid of everything we have or all of our possessions but I think it DOES MEAN....THAT IT IS IMPORTANT for us TO KEEP THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE....and in balance

. i/o/w....to keep our priorities at the forefront of our mind and hearts

→the fact of the matter is that all of us have toys, and possessions...we all have busy schedules and active lives....and that's fine [OK], that's not the argument

→however... it is all too easy to let the toys, and the possessions, our activities and schedules to overcome our lives, and consequently cause us to lose sight of what is really important...what really is our priority....and consequently cause us to lose sight of Christ and his message in our lives

PAUSE

→and so I believe that the challenge that Christ is putting before us is to simplify our lives.....

----and part of the simple life is being able to distinguish between having what we need as opposed to always having to have what we want

----the simple life that Christ is talking about is being content with our blessings and talents rather than always over- achieving or desiring an overabundance

----the simple life is being able to remember and live the presence of Christ here and now with one another instead of being only concerned about what needs to be done...or what's next on our list

----**and the simple life** that Christ speaks of and challenge us TO ...if lived and embraced to the best of our ability will indeed END with everlasting life for each of us in heaven

→and that... in reality.... REALLY IS the final answer