

## 18<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY ORD. (C)

### SEEK WHAT IS ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST IS

July 30/31, 2022

Is it wrong to work and to acquire wealth? Is it out of place to have possessions? These questions may arise in the minds of many people after listening to the readings. But the readings themselves give the answers. They are good but can be serious hinderances to salvation when they become the focal point of our life. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Job, and Judith, among others mentioned in the scriptures were all rich and wealthy, but they did not allow the wealth to be an obstacle between them and God.

Possessions or riches become a bad thing due to how they are acquired and how they are used. If they are gotten through evil or foul means, then it is wrong. If they are used selfishly, then that is also wrong.

The readings teach us how to use the things of the world. Qoheleth, the wise man tells us that all things are vanity. The reason is that after toiling and having sleepless nights, everything will be left, and one may not enjoy fully the fruit of his labor. So earthly things should be acquired and used prudently.

The gospel brings home what the first reading is talking about. In response to the one who told Jesus to ask his brother to share with him the inheritance, Jesus told those around that “a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions”. “As St. Paul also told Timothy: “The love of money is the root of all evil”. (1Tim.6:10). Jesus in the parable teaches what happens when all attention is focused on oneself and the accumulation of wealth without thinking about God and others. The rich man did not think about his soul. He was described as a fool. Do I want to be a wise person or a fool?

Without God, all things are vanity; they are of no value, that is why St. Paul is urging Christians to “seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God”. The Christian’s mind should be on things that are above, and not on things that are on earth. Why? Because earthly things are likely to lead to all kinds of evil deeds and way of life, some of which were mentioned in the second reading, immorality, impurity, passion, evil desires.

I am to set my mind on things above because through my baptism, I have died with Christ, and my life is hidden with Christ in God. Moreover, good things come from above including the wisdom of God. The wisdom of God

will enable me to know that everything I have is a gift and so I should share it with others as Jesus shared His life with me. Seeking the things that are above will help me to discipline myself and prudently use the things here on earth.

In our world today, people think about being rich in everything except the grace of God. We want a beautiful house, the newest car, the latest of everything so that we will be hailed and adored, forgetting about the end time and the soul. St. James warned the Christians: "Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we shall go to such and such a town, spend a year there, trading, and make some money.' You have no idea what kind of life yours will be tomorrow. You are a vapor that appears briefly and vanishes. Instead of this, you should say, 'If it is the Lord's will, we shall still be alive to do this or that'" (Jam.4:13-15).

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Without God, all is vanity, so "grow rich in the sight of God". As the Psalmist reminds us that we are like grass which is fresh in the morning and by evening it withers and fades. So let us pray with him: "teach us to number our days, that we may gain wisdom of heart. Return O Lord! How long? Have pity on your servants!"

## 18<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY ORD. (C)

### SEEK WHAT IS ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST IS

July 30/31, 2022

Is it wrong to work and to acquire wealth? Is it out of place to have possessions? These questions may arise in the minds of many people after listening to the readings. But the readings themselves give the answers. They are good but can be serious hinderances to salvation when they become the focal point of our life. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Job, and Judith, among others mentioned in the scriptures were all rich and wealthy, but they did not allow the wealth to be an obstacle between them and God.

Possessions or riches become a bad thing due to how they are acquired and how they are used. If they are gotten through evil or foul means, then it is wrong. If they are used selfishly, then that is also wrong.

The readings teach us how to use the things of the world. Qoheleth, the wise man tells us that all things are vanity. The reason is that after toiling and having sleepless nights, everything will be left, and one may not enjoy fully the fruit of his labor. So earthly things should be acquired and used prudently.

The gospel brings home what the first reading is talking about. In response to the one who told Jesus to ask his brother to share with him the inheritance, Jesus told those around that “a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions”. “As St. Paul also told Timothy: “The love of money is the root of all evil”. (1Tim.6:10). Jesus in the parable teaches what happens when all attention is focused on oneself and the accumulation of wealth without thinking about God and others. The rich man did not think about his soul. He was described as a fool. Do I want to be a wise person or a fool?

Without God, all things are vanity; they are of no value, that is why St. Paul is urging Christians to “seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God”. The Christian’s mind should be on things that are above, and not on things that are on earth. Why? Because earthly things are likely to lead to all kinds of evil deeds and way of life, some of which were mentioned in the second reading, immorality, impurity, passion, evil desires.

I am to set my mind on things above because through my baptism, I have died with Christ, and my life is hidden with Christ in God. Moreover, good things come from above including the wisdom of God. The wisdom of God

will enable me to know that everything I have is a gift and so I should share it with others as Jesus shared His life with me. Seeking the things that are above will help me to discipline myself and prudently use the things here on earth.

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