

## 28th Sunday OT Homily

We must give priority to God in our lives, not to our possessions. Today's readings remind us that we do not possess anything in our life that we refuse to surrender to the Lord. These things often possess us, for when we give our "things" top priority in our lives, we become the prisoners of our possessions. Thus, we violate the First Great Commandment, "You shall not have other gods beside me" which demands that we give absolute and unconditional priority to God.

The first reading advises us to use the God-given virtue of prudence in order to seek true wisdom, and to distinguish them from vanishing earthly realities, like riches or political and social influence. King Solomon chose Wisdom before everything else — and he received "everything else" along with it! Since Jesus is Wisdom Incarnate, when we put following Jesus ahead of everything else, we, too, receive "everything else" along with Jesus.

In the Responsorial Psalm of this Sunday (Ps 90), we beg God to teach us how to make proper judgments and choices in our lives that we may live with Him forever.

The second reading warns us that we are accountable to God for our use, or misuse, of His blessings, and that the "living and effective Word of God" must be our guide in evaluating our use of His blessings.

In today's Gospel (Mk 10:17-30), we find three sections: **a. a narrative about Jesus' encounter with a rich man, b. Jesus' sayings about wealth as a possible obstacle to discipleship, and c. Jesus' promise of reward for those who share their material possessions with the needy.** Reminding the rich man of the commandments that deal with relationships with other people, Jesus challenged him to sell what he had, and to give the money to the poor. The disciples were shocked by this challenge. But Jesus declared that true religion consisted in one's sharing one's blessings with others, and this is what we need to practice, just like the first community of the believers as it is said in the Acts of the Apostles.

We need to accept the invitation to share generously what we possess. Initially, Jesus gave us an example with His sacrificial offering, which is to testify His generous love. **God does not ask us to give up our riches, but He does ask us to use them wisely in His service, not allowing them to gain control over our hearts.** God gives us time, talents, health, wealth, and riches that we may use them as good stewards in the service of others.

Let us make a check list of our priorities and attachments, and give God top priority: Are anger, lust, gluttony, evil habits, addictions, jealousy, infidelity, or cheating among our habits as priorities? Let us invite God into our lives daily by praying for His strengthening grace and the anointing of His Holy Spirit so that we may give God top priority, keeping Bible as our guide.

We need to gain eternal life by living out our Faith in Jesus as our God and Savior, and, with God's strengthening grace, detaching ourselves from unnecessary attachments.