



Introduction

The rich man who comes to ask Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life is a good man, sincere in his asking. Mark's gospel is alone in saying that Jesus looked on him and loved him. Out of love, not as judgment, Jesus offers him an open door to life: sell all you own and give it to the poor. Our culture bombards us with the message that we will find life by consuming. Our assemblies counter this message with the invitation to find life by divesting for the sake of the other.

Confession and Forgiveness

In the name of the Father, and of the ✙ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone.

Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sins in the presence of God and one another.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves.

We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone.

We have not loved you with our whole heart;

we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.

For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.

Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,

so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved.

In the name of ✙ Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven.

Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. **Amen**

Listen and sing along [here](#).

Prayer of the Day

Almighty and ever-living God, increase in us your gift of faith, that, forsaking what lies behind and reaching out to what lies ahead, we may follow the way of your commandments and receive the crown of everlasting joy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading: Amos 5:6-7, 10-15

Amos was a herdsman by profession and a prophet by God's call. During a time of great prosperity in the northern kingdom of Israel, the prophet speaks to the wealthy upper class. He warns his listeners that fulfilling God's demand for justice brings blessing, while corruption and oppression incur God's wrath.

Read the complete text [here](#).

Psalm: Psalm 90:12-17

- ¹²So teach us to number our days
that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.
- ¹³**Return, O LORD; how long will you tarry?
Be gracious to your servants.**
- ¹⁴Satisfy us by your steadfast love in the morning;
so shall we rejoice and be glad all our days.
- ¹⁵**Make us glad as many days as you afflicted us
and as many years as we suffered adversity.**
- ¹⁶Show your servants your works,
and your splendor to their children.
- ¹⁷**May the graciousness of the Lord our God be upon us;
prosper the work of our hands; prosper our handiwork**

Second Reading: Hebrews 4:12-16

We cannot hide our thoughts, desires, and actions from God, to whom we are completely accountable. Nevertheless, Jesus understands our human weakness and temptations, because he also experienced them. Therefore we can approach the throne of grace to receive divine mercy from Christ.

Read the complete text [here](#).

Gospel: Mark 10:17-31

Jesus has been teaching his disciples about what is most valued in God's eyes. Now, a conversation with a rich man brings his message home to the disciples in a way that is surprising but unforgettable.

Read the complete text [here](#).

Reflection on the Text

In ancient times, the Jews did not practice confession such as we do; instead, they were expected to make sacrifice to atone for their sin. Their priest led worship and accepted sacrifices. The high priests presided over these events and was the only one allowed into the inner temple – the Holy of Holies – to ask for forgiveness on behalf of the people – at least the ones who had come to worship and had presented their sacrifices.

The other priests serving in the temple assisted with worship and the collection of sacrifices but were not compassionate shepherds of the people. They were very legalistic and were mostly concerned with you bringing a sacrifice and paying your temple taxes.

In our second lesson, we hear that the “word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword...It is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.” This is a much more terrifying description than what we hear of the temple priest. The priests cared about legalities; the Word of God judges your heart – not your pocketbook (although they are often times tied together). Not only your heart, but the intentions of your heart.

For those who believe that they can do sinful things and get away with it because no one saw them, this changes things. The Word of God knows everything that you have done; even the things that you have thought about doing! We cannot say, “well no one saw me” or “no one can prove that I did anything wrong” or even that “I only thought about doing it – I never carried through.” The Word of God knows all – even those things that you only thought about – even if you never spoke them out loud! This makes God seem terrifying!

But – we have a great high priest – Jesus! We have a great high priest who knows what it is like to be human and to be tempted. Jesus, who as we heard last week was made for a while a little lower than the angels, knows the human condition.

We can be weak; we can be tempted; and sometimes, we fail. Of all the human beings who have ever been tempted, Jesus is the only one we know of that was able to resist all temptation – even the offer of Satan to rule the world!

Because we have such a high priest, we are assured that we may receive mercy and grace. By confessing our sin, we are granted forgiveness. Because we have a great high priest who understands our humanness, Jesus can sympathize with our weakness and because he sits at the right hand of God, he can intercede on our behalf.

This sermon we know of as Hebrews provides an understanding of Jesus as our great high priest, the one who knows our thoughts and intentions, and who can grant us grace and mercy to help in our time of need. While in Jewish thought, forgiveness only can be by keeping the law – by going to the temple and providing appropriate sacrifice. For us, we begin each worship service with confession, where we lay before God our sins – known and unknown, and we receive forgiveness for the sake of the one who died so that we might live.

We confess our sins because we know that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned in thought, word, and deed – even by those things we have left undone. We have not loved God sufficiently and we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We know that we are not worthy of God’s love or forgiveness. We are forgiven not by anything we have done, or any sacrifice we have made, but only by the grace of God who sent his only Son, and for the sake of Jesus, God has mercy on us and forgives us.

This great high priest knows us and has compassion on us, and for his sake, we are given mercy instead of condemnation, so that we might delight in God’s will and walk in God’s way – all the days of our life. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Hymn of the Day ELW # 705/LBW # 415 *God of Grace and God of Glory*

Listen and sing along [here](#).

Apostles' Creed

We profess our faith with the whole church in all times and places:

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

Made children and heirs of God's promise, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Uniting God, you call forth different gifts in those who follow you. Encourage us to welcome the diverse benefits and blessings of the whole church in teaching, preaching, prophecy, healing, and more. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Nurturing God, you bring forth crops from the soil and bounty from the trees. Increase the produce of the land and bless all who toil in fields and orchards. Provide for good working conditions and keep them safe. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Empowering God, you offer compassion for those who are overlooked or forgotten. Open the hearts of local, national, and world leaders to show such compassion and love for their neighbors. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Sheltering God, in Jesus you travelled among us without a place to lay your head. Provide safe places to sleep and rest for those who have no place to live. Sustain ministries that offer food, clothing, and peace of mind. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Loving God, you look upon your people with compassion. Heal those who are sick, comfort those who are lonely, and watch over those in need, especially those we name now. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Renewing God, you bring life out of death. Help us part with those things that are no longer beneficial to us and open our hearts to see where new life is budding in this congregation. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Eternal God, we thank you for the lives of those who have died. Make us confident in your promise of salvation and support us in our own journey of faith. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

Closing Hymn ELW # 632/LBW # 320 *O God, Our Help in Ages Past*

Listen and sing along [here](#).