



WELCOME TO WORSHIP!

God became man and lived life in our place. Christ lived the perfect God-lived life. Living as a Christian, a little Christ, we have the privilege of demonstrating what God looks like in how we live our lives, in living lives that show God. This is the final of four months where God's Word will be challenging us, and we'll be challenging one another to live a God-lived life.

While stewardship of our finances isn't the only part of stewardship, it is a part of it. Today God's Word encourages us to use all of the financial gifts God has given us with an eye on our purpose. May God grant us grace to use money for what really matters!

This month, we focus on wise ways to use the resources God has given us for the greatest good.

- Month One: A Life of Being a Disciple
- Month Two: A Life Lived for Others
- Month Three: A Life of Hospitality
- Month Four: A Life Lived Shrewdly

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Lord God, in coming to hear your Word this morning, you have planted us like trees beside streams of water. Grant that we may ever delight in your Word and yield abundant fruit in our lives, through Jesus Christ, your Son our Lord. Amen.

ORDER OF SERVICE

M: We begin our worship in the same way we were baptized: In the name of the Father and of the Son ☩ and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

M: Heavenly Father, every good and perfect gift comes from you, including the physical gifts you pour out into our lives. You intend these treasures to be used for your glory and in service to our neighbors. We repent for being selfish in the use of the treasures you have given. Forgive us and let your peace rule our lives.

C: ♪ **May the peace of God my Father Rule my life in everything,
That I may be calm to comfort Sick and sorrowing. (CW467:3) -CW93**

M: Dear Savior Jesus, though you were rich, yet for our sakes you became poor, so that through your poverty we might become rich. All too often we have been rich toward ourselves instead of rich towards you out of thanks for our forgiveness won for us by your cross and empty tomb. Forgive us and let your love fill our lives.

C: ♪ **May the love of Jesus fill me As the waters fill the sea,
Him exalting self abasing – This is victory. (CW467:4)**

M: O Holy Spirit, you have worked faith in our hearts and you cause us to produce good fruit. We are sorry that our financial stewardship often fails to qualify as good fruit motivated by your love. Forgive us and live within us.

C: ♪ **May his Spirit live within me As I seek the lost to win,
And may they forget the channel, Seeing only him. (CW467:6)**

M: As a called servant of the Triune God, I announce to you his grace and forgiveness. On behalf of and by the command of our Savior Jesus Christ, I forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son ☐ and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

C: ♪ **May the mind of Christ my Savior Live in me from day to day,
By his love and pow'r inspiring All I do or say.**

**May the Word of God dwell richly In my heart from hour to hour,
So that all may see I triumph Only through his pow'r. (CW467:1-2)**

M: We pray:

Almighty God, you have brought us into the body of Christ by your grace and mercy. Help us to imitate the example of your Son and of our brothers and sisters who have gone before in humble and willing service to you full of faith, hope and love, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

C: ♪ **May I run the race before me, Strong and brave to face the foe,
Looking only unto Jesus As I onward go. (CW467:5)**

OLD TESTAMENT READING

2 Kings 4:8-17

*A godly woman uses her resources for what really matters.
She wasn't giving to get, she was giving to support ministry.*

⁸ One day Elisha went to Shunem. And a well-to-do woman was there, who urged him to stay for a meal. So whenever he came by, he stopped there to eat. ⁹ She said to her husband, "I know that this man who often comes our way is a holy man of God." ¹⁰ Let's make a small room on the roof and put in it a bed and a table, a chair and a lamp for him. Then he can stay there whenever he comes to us."

¹¹ One day when Elisha came, he went up to his room and lay down there. ¹² He said to his servant Gehazi, "Call the Shunammite." So he called her, and she stood before him. ¹³ Elisha said to him, "Tell her, 'You have gone to all this trouble for us. Now what can be done for you? Can we speak on your behalf to the king or the commander of the army?'" She replied, "I have a home among my own people."¹⁴ "What can be done for her?" Elisha asked.

Gehazi said, "She has no son, and her husband is old."

¹⁵ Then Elisha said, "Call her." So he called her, and she stood in the doorway. ¹⁶ "About this time next year," Elisha said, "you will hold a son in your arms."

"No, my lord!" she objected. "Please, man of God, don't mislead your servant!"

¹⁷ But the woman became pregnant, and the next year about that same time she gave birth to a son, just as Elisha had told her.

PSALM OF THE DAY

The congregation will sing Psalm 16 (CW93).

Refrain

I will walk in the pres-ence of the Lord,
in the land of the liv - ing.

Psalm tone

Keep me safe, O God,*
for in you I take refuge.

I said to the LORD, "You are my Lord;*
apart from you I have no good thing."

I have set the LORD always before me.*
Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

Refrain

My heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;*
my body also will rest secure,

because you will not abandon me to the grave,*
nor will you let your Holy One see decay.

You have made known to me the path of life;*
you will fill me with joy in your presence.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Refrain

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GOSPEL

Luke 16:1-15

Jesus tells a parable about a shrewd manager to make the single point that a God-lived life uses its resources for God's purposes.

Jesus told his disciples: "There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. ² So he called him in and asked him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.'

³ "The manager said to himself, 'What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I'm not strong enough to dig, and I'm ashamed to beg— ⁴ I know what I'll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.'

⁵ "So he called in each one of his master's debtors. He asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?'

⁶ "Nine hundred gallons of olive oil,' he replied.

"The manager told him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred and fifty.'

⁷ "Then he asked the second, 'And how much do you owe?'

"A thousand bushels of wheat,' he replied.

"He told him, 'Take your bill and make it eight hundred.'

⁸ "The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light. ⁹ I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.

¹⁰ "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. ¹¹ So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? ¹² And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?

¹³ "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."

¹⁴ The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus.

¹⁵ He said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of others, but God knows your hearts. What people value highly is detestable in God's sight."

M: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise be to you, O Christ!

HYMN OF THE DAY

WHAT IS THE WORLD TO ME | CW(21)717

1. What is the world to me With all its vaunted pleasure
When you, and you alone, Lord Jesus, are my treasure!
You only, dearest Lord, My soul's delight shall be;
You are my peace, my rest. What is the world to me!
2. The world seeks after wealth And all that money offers,
Yet never is content Though gold should fill its coffers.
I have a higher good; Content with it I'll be;
My Jesus is my wealth. What is the world to me!
3. The world is like a cloud and like a vapor fleeting,
A shadow that declines, swift to its end retreating.
My Jesus shall remain, though all things fade and flee,
My everlasting rock. What is the world to me!
4. What is the world to me! My Jesus is my treasure,
My life, my health, my wealth, My friend, my love, my pleasure,
My joy, my crown, my all, My bliss eternally.
Once more then I declare: What is the world to me!

SERMON

Luke 16:1-15

NOW WHAT SHALL I DO?

1. Live for the now?
2. Live for the new.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

Apostles' Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

Amen.

OFFERING

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

M: Almighty Father, you are my Lord; apart from you I have no good thing. You give us time, energy, talents, and treasures. Because of you we can say with the psalmist, "the boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places." Your Word teaches us of your great love for us and how to love our neighbor. Give us wisdom in using your gifts in God-pleasing ways. Lord in your mercy:

C: Hear our prayer.

M: Lord Jesus Christ, you tell us that "what people value highly is detestable in God's sight." Help us to recognize our true treasure in you, our Savior and our God. Protect us from the devil who would have us marvel at insignificant things as a treasure, while neglecting the great gifts you give us in your Word and Sacraments. Give us wisdom in cherishing you and your greater gifts in God-pleasing ways. Lord, in your mercy:

C: Hear our prayer.

M: Holy Spirit, you have set us apart and made our bodies your temple. You live in us. Your Word teaches us who we really are by the grace of God and through the innocent suffering and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. Give us wisdom to see that godliness with contentment is great gain and grow in us the fruit that is pleasing to you Lord, in your mercy:

C: Hear our prayer.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

M: Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent prayer.

M: Accept our prayers for the sake of Jesus our Savior. Help us to not be arrogant nor put our hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but help us put our hope in you, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment, for Jesus, our Savior's sake. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

BIBLE STUDY

1 TIMOTHY 6:6-19

⁶ But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷ For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. ⁸ But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. ⁹ Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

¹¹ But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. ¹² Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³ In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you ¹⁴ to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶ who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

¹⁷ Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. ¹⁸ Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. ¹⁹ In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

INTRODUCTION

The apostle Paul says, "Godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Timothy 6:6). The writer of Proverbs 30:8-9 prays, "Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, 'Who is the LORD?' Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God." Consider how this is a great example of—and a test for— "godliness with contentment."

INTO THE TEXT

1. Verse 10 is one of the most misquoted verses in the Bible. Many say, “Money is the root of all evil” instead of “the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.” Those two statements say two very different things about money.
2. In verse 11, Paul tells Timothy to flee from “all this” (i.e., the love of money) and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness. How does each help a person flee from “all this” and acquire contentment?
3. In verses 13ff, Paul alludes to Jesus’ second coming. In what ways is this motivation to “flee from all this?”
4. In verses 17-19, Paul lists some of the dangers when God blesses someone with wealth and then describes the best way to use your wealth. Identify the dangers and how one should use their wealth.

APPLYING IT

1. Why will a person who loves money never be content?
2. Jesus said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” (Acts 20:35) Explain the truth of Jesus’ words when it comes to our spending priorities like gifts to the Lord, paying taxes, providing for family, and the poor, etc.

BLESSING

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace.
Live in harmony with one another.
Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give ☩ you peace.

C: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

CROWN HIM WITH MANY CROWNS | CW (21)511

1. Crown him with many crowns, The Lamb upon his throne;
Hark how the heav’nly anthem drowns All music but its own.
Awake, my soul, and sing Of him who died for thee,
And hail him as thy matchless King Through all eternity.
2. Crown him the Lord of love—Behold his hands and side,
Rich wounds, yet visible above, In beauty glorified.
No angel in the sky Can fully bear that sight,
But downward bends his wond’ring eye At mysteries so bright.
3. Crown him the Lord of life, Who triumphed o’er the grave
And rose victorious in the strife For those he came to save.
His glories now we sing Who died and rose on high,
Who died eternal life to bring And lives that death may die.
4. Crown him the Lord of heav’n, Enthroned in worlds above;
Crown him the King to whom is giv’n The wondrous name of Love.
Crown him with many crowns As thrones before him fall;
Crown him, ye kings, with many crowns For he is King of all.