

Sermon - 25th Week After Pentecost

Text: Mark 12:31

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord, Jesus Christ.
Amen.

“HOW MUCH IS YOUR CHRISTIANITY WORTH?”

I thought it would be appropriate to begin with a short discussion concerning the election. During each and every exchange of power in history, the hand of God has been at work. Elected officials are given power from God to do their tasks during the short time that they govern. Jesus teaches this to us in John 19:11 when Jesus spoke to Pilate before His crucifixion and said, **“You would have no authority over Me at all unless it had been given to you from above.”** The power and authority of God is greater even than the power and authority of earthly leaders. No matter how good or even how bad a leader could be in this nation or even in another nation, God is sitting on His throne in control over all the Earth.

Yet, on this side of eternity, there will be none who is perfect. There will only be some who do a better job than others at promoting biblical truths. The voices that shout against the Christian religion will still remain, and the multitude in our country who still claim to be

Christian; they allow themselves to be taken hostage by a lack of interest. They are left open to many attacks from the Evil One as he continues to whisper in their ears. He always whispers. It is not as if the whispering and temptations of the devil flee when we shut off the voice of God in our lives. In fact, when we no longer attend worship together and when we no longer devote time with our families to be in the Word then the whispers of the devil have grown the strongest so that truth is seen as falsehood. The way you live your life as a Christian matters.

There is a steadiness to the life of a Christian that is unmatched anywhere else or in any other lifestyle. Each of us desires to hold fast to our faith day in and day out. This daily struggle with sin now reminds us that we are nearing the end of the season of the Church which is marked with green on the altar and on the lectern and on the pulpit. During this time of the year, it is common that you may begin to feel as if worship is beginning to be mundane or stale, but the green paraments remind us of life. And the life of the Christian is not always easy. Sometimes it is a struggle to just get to another day under God's grace. This green season reminds us of this very struggle. It reminds us that the whole Christian

Could you even imagine giving all your money away and fully relying on God for your day to day needs? I couldn't even begin to think of the anxieties and stresses this would cause in your life, yet our Lord, Jesus Christ highlights that woman. A widow who had close to nothing, but she still gave it all to the Lord. So our Lord sees each of us also. He sees even the simple things we do each day to glorify Him and He rejoices over those things.

Now consider this. Our Lord doesn't need you to do anything for Him, yet our text is clear that He rejoices when you trust in Him with your whole life while all you have to live on. To be able to grab ahold of this with our minds, I have this question that I have been repeating, "HOW MUCH IS YOUR CHRISTIANITY WORTHY?" What would you be willing to do to live forever? What would be willing to do to inherit the greatest wealth? Well of course, we would be willing to do a lot if it was money that I spoke about.

However, I will now tell you exactly how much your Christianity is worthy. Your Christianity is worthy it so much before God in heaven that He gave up His only Son to die so that you may receive the riches of

“Many rich people put in large sums. And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins which make a penny. And He called His disciples to Him and said to them, ‘Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.’” Our Lord Jesus Christ, sat and watched what they people put in the offering plate. Indeed, He knows each of your hearts as you bring your offering to Him. He watched as the rich people brought in money out of their abundance, but He made no comment to His disciples even though I am sure in our present churches or in our synod these generous donors would receive great attention and thanksgiving and their names would be published for their generosity. However, Jesus does not mention these people. Not to say that these people were giving wrongly, but it was as if He was waiting for the disciples to see the widow who came and gave her two copper coins. We are told that this was all she had to live on.

Church throughout the world is full of people who are clinging to their faith and to the mercies of God which are new every morning.

So each of us struggles daily in the face of the whispering liar; Satan. We each grit our teeth and hold onto our Lord when we hear the new and invigorated voices who are trying to prove the untrustworthiness of Christians or of the Bible or of faith. Some of us even try to close our eyes and plug our ears and pretend like the struggle isn't there. In the face of all this, I ask each of you, "HOW MUCH IS YOUR CHRISTIANITY WORTH?"

In our Gospel reading, we see that there were some Pharisees who only enjoyed their faith because they were given special treatment: greetings in the marketplace, the best seats in the synagogues, and places of honor at feasts. Your Christian faith should not be something that you take so lightly that you only practice because you believe it makes you look better from an outward perspective. "HOW MUCH IS YOUR CHRISTIANITY WORTH?" Well, to now answer this question, we look at Mark 12:41 and following when Jesus sat down across from the treasury and watched people putting money into the offering box.

heaven; which are life, salvation and a kingdom which has no end. Your Christianity is worth it before that He died for you. Now let sing in our hearts together, “what shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits to me, I shall offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving and shall call on the name of the Lord, I shall pay my vows to the Lord now in the presence of all His people in the courts of the Lord’s house and shall call on the name of the Lord.”

Let us look to the widow in our reading to model her faith, let us also look to the widows in our church and let us care for them. With the holidays coming up, how many of you will have food to spare? Could you consider inviting someone over who may not have anyone to join at their table? Imitate God in Christ Jesus who gave His all for you so that you may know that your Christianity is worth all the riches in the world. Amen.