

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Wicker Park Lutheran Church

Rev. Jason S. Glombicki

September 22, 2019

Why do we bother with preaching?

“Preaching brings God’s word of law and gospel into our time and place.” The preacher interprets and proclaims the texts that have just been read so that we may come to trust in God, turning in faith toward our neighbors in service, witness, and love.

While ordained people aren’t the only ones who preach, the preacher has the dual task of speaking the truth about the human condition—sin, loss, failure, violence, death—while also bearing witness to the grace freely given by God in Christ, which give the possibility of hope and life. Generally, the preacher will begin us with the human condition and leave us filled with God’s grace.

Today’s gospel is one of the more mysterious parables. Yet, the final sentence gives us a glimpse of the difficult truth, namely, that we cannot serve God and wealth.

In our world where profits seem to hold more sway than people, this is easy to understand. We cannot serve a God of love and justice, and then, demand more for less. More work – less pay. More production – less cost. More money – less environmental responsibility. For, the scriptures consistently and clearly indicate that people, animals, and nature are gifts from God to love and nurture, and they are not to be used as a means to stockpile wealth at the cost of another.

Yet, throughout the gospel of Luke, our God gives us a different way. A vision where all are equal as God's children. A vision that embraces the well-known statement of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. that "no one is free until we are all free." And this ideology, this Christian belief, is good news for us. It's good news that no one will be left behind, and that when we feel underpaid, underappreciated, and undervalued, our God responds.

We see God's response in our stand for justice. As God's people, we hold the truth that how we use our money and how we gain out wealth clearly indicates our beliefs, our priorities, and our alignment with God's vision. So, when an estimated 4 million people took part in Friday's climate strike to call for a global response to the greed and complacency, God is at work.¹ For, God works among us and through us.

Today gospel reveals our God who puts the collective as the center. Our God who invites us to turn towards God's gift of love. Our God who promises that all have a place at God's table. Amen.

¹ <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2019/09/21/global-climate-strike-estimates-crowd-size-millions-worldwide/2401672001/>