

# Daily Walk on the Rock



St. Paul Lutheran Church

“Your Refuge from the Storm”

**Date: November 26, 2023**

**Text: 1 Chronicles 29:14-17; Matt. 25:14-30**

**Theme: Generosity...Management**

## **Day 1: Monday—“A Trust, O Lord, from Thee”**

Yesterday we closed by praying William How’s lyrics, “We give Thee but Thine own, whate’er the gift may be; all that we have is Thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from Thee.” Think about this prayer and the words, “all that we have”; does that include us; do we ourselves actually belong to God; are we merely stewards, even of our own lives? Consider what Paul says about the Macedonians (*2 Corinthians 8:5*) and to believers in all times and places (*Romans 12:1*). Ponder your relationship with the Lord, who is both Creator and Redeemer, as you read Psalm 24:1 and 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Pray about what these words mean for you, today. Offer yourself to the Lord.

## **Day 2: Tuesday—A Matter of the Heart**

Read our theme texts, 1 Chronicles 29:14-17 and Matthew 25:14-30, considering that our relationship with God and our stewardship of all with which we have been blessed or entrusted are matters of the heart. How is that reflected in these texts? Do you trust God’s intentions; do you believe that God knows what will bring you the most joy, the surest security, and the greatest blessing? Do you trust enough to risk taking God at God’s word or do you see God as the servant with one talent saw him (*Matthew 25:24-25*)? Read 1 John 4:9-10; pray you will trust God’s heart.

## **Day 3: Wednesday—The Joy of Generosity**

We can better understand our theme verses from the Hebrew Scriptures if we read the texts that surround them. Try to picture the scene as you read 1 Chronicles 28:2-3,6,9-11,20 and 29:1-20 (*for more about the temple dedication, see 2 Chronicles 5:1-13; 7:1-3*). Glance over these texts again; do you sense the people’s and the king’s eagerness to give? Did you notice the joy? How can forfeit-ing wealth bring such deep, abiding satisfaction and pleasure? Is this something you have experienced? What is the foundation of your joy? Is it rooted in temporal things or in the One who alone gives lasting joy? Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-5,9 and 9:7-15. Now pray aloud 1 Chronicles 29:10-13.

## **Day 4: Thursday—Stewards Manage on Behalf of Others**

Do you think in terms of “mine” as you survey all that is around you (my home, my yard, my car, my money...)? How do we move toward the realization that God is owner of everything, and we are simply those who manage or care for it on God’s behalf? Read

Psalm 24:1 and Matthew 25:14-30. For those hearing Jesus tell the parable, the setting was familiar: wealthy landowners often left their estates or property in the hands of trusted servants. If we view things as belonging to God instead of as “mine,” how do we react; do we manage wisely the life and resources which have been entrusted to us? Do we ever squander or hoard them? Think on this and pray honestly.

## **Day 5: Friday—For God’s Purpose, Mission, and Pleasure**

Over a century ago, a speaker at a missionary convention, whose name has been forgotten, said, “Most people are not satisfied with the permanent output of their lives. Nothing can wholly satisfy the life of Christ within His followers except the adoption of Christ’s purposes toward the world. Fame, pleasure, and riches are (nothing) in contrast with the boundless and abiding joy of working with God for the fulfillment of His eternal plans” (*quoted in the Parables by Gary Inrig, p. 91; 1991, Discovery House Pub.*). Read Luke 9:24-25; John 13:34-35; Acts 1:8; and 1 Timothy 6:17-19. Think about God’s priorities; pray you will use what has been entrusted to you to live into God’s mission.

## **Day 6: Saturday—Who Is First in Our Lives?**

Read 1 Chronicles 29:14-19; note the eagerness and joy of the king and the people as they prepare to build God’s temple in Jerusalem (*this happens about 970 BC; in 586 BC, the temple is destroyed*). Now read Haggai 1:2-11; 2:8 (*about 520 BC*); notice what the people’s priorities are and what God, through Haggai, has to say about this. What does God say about ownership and stewardship? How does this relate to Jesus’ words in Mark 12:29-31 and Luke 12:22-34? Who is first in your life; what do you treasure most? In prayer, tell Jesus you want to love him more.

## **Day 7: Sunday—Privilege and Responsibility**

How much time do we spend longing for what we do not have as opposed to delighting in what God has put into our hands to manage as faithful stewards? Do we serve the Master and delight in pleasing him, or do we seek to please ourselves and treat God as the one who serves us? Consider what a privilege and responsibility it is to serve the King of kings and Lord of lords; and we serve as beloved children and heirs (*Romans 8:15-17*)! Read again 1 Chronicles 29:14-17 and Matthew 25:14-30. Notice the commendation given in Matthew 25:21,23; the blessed words come not because of great works but because of faithful stewardship. Pray you will be a good steward.

# LifeGroup Study

**Date: November 26, 2023**

**Text: 1 Chronicles 29:14-17; Matt. 25:14-30**

**Theme: Generosity...Management**

**Belong** When we think of management we often think of either that nameless group of people that make decisions for a company in order to guide the running of the business or organizing and directing a set of tasks to accomplish something. In both cases to manage is to focus on accomplishing tasks with the end result being the accomplishment of a specific goal. To manage something is to control, direct, and handle it.

When it comes to generosity, management seems a little out of place since we see generosity as something that comes from the heart and not something to be accomplished. We typically don't hear someone say that they are "good at generosity management" or "managing their acts of generosity." That seems a little sterile. However, there is an intersection where generosity and management meet and that's when we are able to connect to what God has placed deep within us and allow it to motivate us to acts of compassion toward others. It's within those selfless acts that we come to know generosity and when our generosity is focused and directed in a way that aligns with what is on our hearts, the results can be astonishing and life-giving.

**Prayer...** Heavenly Father, we desire to generously give what we've been given but find roadblocks in our lives that get in the way. Help us connect to the love and compassion you've given so that, through you, we may have the confidence to generously give of ourselves to others. Amen.

**Beleive** Read 1 Chronicles 29:14-17. Prior to this text, we learn that David had made plans to build a house for the ark of the covenant, but God had other ideas and revealed to David that God didn't want him to build it since David was a warrior and had shed blood. God told David that it would be his son, Solomon, who would get the honor of building the temple. David may have been disappointed but, instead of sulking, he chose to encourage and support Solomon by providing the financial resources needed to build the temple.

- *What does David's prayer reveal about his heart toward God?*
- *How does David feel about his possessions? How do you feel about the things you own?*
- *What do you think motivates David's actions?*

Read Matthew 25:14-30. The Parable of Talents is the third of a series of parables in Matthew where Jesus is telling what it will be like when he returns.

- *Why do you think each servant was given a different number of talents?*
- *Which man do you think is most like you?*

- *Why do you think the man with one talent hid it?*

When the wealthy land owner returned, he wanted to meet with the people with whom he entrusted his wealth to see how they had handled it. The first two servants took the trust the wealthy man had in them and returned it by not only giving back the talents they were given but also the additional talents they had gained. That trust between them had allowed the servants to have the confidence to manage what was given them by placing trust in others to help make it grow. The wealthy man was pleased and promised them that they would be trusted with more.

- *How do you think the first two servants felt about the wealthy man? How do you think they felt about themselves?*
- *What do you think motivated their actions?*

Now it was time for the third servant to meet with the wealthy man. The servant explained his fear of the wealthy man based on what he had witnessed the man do so he decided to play it safe and make sure he didn't lose what he was given. In a sense he was frozen by fear into inaction.

- *Of what was the servant fearful? Has fear ever caused you to not do something you wanted to do? How did you feel about yourself?*

The wealthy man reacts with anger to what the servant had told him. You almost think his anger is frustration with the man for doing nothing with what was given to him. This servant stands in stark contrast to the other servants who embraced the trust placed with them. Each was given an amount the wealthy man felt they could handle, yet the one who allowed fear to overwhelm him was unable to trust either himself or the wealthy man.

- *Why was the wealthy man angry? Who does he represent?*
- *How do you think placing trust in God influences how we manage our lives? How does it influence our generosity?*

**Become** The Parable of the Talents at first glance can give us the impression that God will be judging us on what we accomplished in life and that if we don't measure up to expectations we will find ourselves on the outside looking in. However, when we go deeper we find this parable helps us understand how generosity is realized through our outward acts of love. That as we place our trust in God, we move from living lives which are focused inward trying to protect and maintain what we have to outward looking for ways to share the abundance that has been given to us.

Our lives begin to transform when we begin to understand that all we have comes from God and realize the trust God has in us to use what God has given us. We want to give what we've been given, not out of duty but from a deep desire to generously share with others the most precious thing God has given us, ourselves.

**Prayer...** Lord God, we are thankful for all you have given us and grateful for the trust you have in us to use what we've been given. We desire to reflect your love and generosity so that others may come to know you through us, knowing that in our acts of selfless generosity we find life. Amen.