

28th Sunday Ordinary Time- B '2021
Wisdom 7.7-11///Hebrews 4.12-13///Mark 10.17-30

→recently some television game shows have reappeared on TV at night...classic games as “To Tell the Truth”... “Match Game”... “\$100,000 Pyramid” to name a few

→and one of the characteristics of game shows ...besides trying to give away fabulous prizes and money to contestants...is that almost every game show has certain tag line...a certain phrase known to everyone that becomes almost the essence of the game show...and some even **become part** of our everyday nomenclature

→“I’d like to buy a vowel”... “the survey says”...“the actual retail price without going over”... “open the case” ...“is that your final answer” are all phrases....that at the height of popularity became part of our culture and life....

→which leads us to the episode we just heard in today’s gospel reading

→similar to a game show where ordinary people are sometimes asked various questions in the of hope winning a large amount of money....today we hear about one of the followers of Jesus ...**asking him**....a million dollar question“*what must I do to inherit eternal life?*”

→and Jesus...gives his final answer ...a very straightforward, precise, and challenging response....he says....“*You are lacking in one thing....go, sell what you have, and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.*”

→a difficult response to hear...and probably not the one the man was anticipating....and it is equally challenging when we try to understand what those words actually mean for you and me in today’s world.....

→in essence [I believe]...the final answer that Jesus gives.....is basically.....that for someone to gain eternal life..... they need to live simplify their life and live according to the gospel message

→...and then later on as we hear.....when he is pressed by the disciples...in particular Peter, saying that they had already given up much to become his followers...Jesus replies by saying that no one has given up their house or families, or land for my sake who will not receive 100 times more for the sake of the gospel

PAUSE

→I think it is very safe to say.... that life in today's world can become very complicated at times

→[and] it seems as if the longer we live the more complicated, it becomes...certainly the last year things have been complicated beyond our imagination.....

→and so, as a result.....simplicity is often an appealing idea

→however accomplishing THIS simplicity...“a simple life” is more difficult than it seems

→our lives are **busy** these days....crammed with all kinds of things to do....and less time to get them done

→and so, a simple life sounds good doesn't it

→[I mean] ...think for just a moment how complicated and complex things have gotten in recent times....

→in our schools ... → 30 years ago, the major student behavioral problem teachers faced in the classroom were gum chewing and talking w/out permission

→today, we deal with lock-downs and active shooter drills, students coming to school intoxicated or on drugs, carrying weapons and thinking about suicide.

Let alone...all the confusion and complications we have all dealt with in recent months because of the virus.

PAUSE

→this past week flying home from the west coast I came across an article entitled "THE SIMPLER LIFE," which had as its premise the quest for a simpler life these days

→the article went on to say, how today we are inundated with a bewildering array of choices each and every day with almost everything we do...of how we live in a BASKIN ROBBINS SOCIETY where everything comes in at least 31 flavors and choices...//... and **how** SIMPLICITY, A LESS COMPLICATED LIFE SEEMS MORE DESIREABLE....

→that many of us seem to be yearning for a quieter calmer existence...

PAUSE

→[now]...the point of all this..... is that there is a similarity between you and me and the people of long ago

→because in the gospel today, we see a young man approaching Jesus asking the same question that we often ask

----"what must I do to be happy and feel fulfilled!"

→and the answer Jesus gives.....if looked at more closely.....is an instruction to simplify our lives.

PAUSE

→I believe the point of this gospel passage and the message that J. is trying to get across to the young man, AND TO YOU AND ME is that

.....fulfillment in life comes from living simply, **and that** is ultimately rooted in God

→and so, if we desire fulfillment, we need to be mindful of all those things that block us from God and begin to clear away all the clutter.

---i/o/w/ we need to simplify our lives

PAUSE

→now I don't think that means that we need to get rid of everything we have or all of our possessions but I think it DOES MEAN....THAT IT IS IMPORTANT for us TO KEEP THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE....and in balance

. i/o/w....to keep our priorities at the forefront of our mind and hearts

→the fact is that all of us have all kinds of possessions and belongings...we all live busy lives and have active schedules....and in and of itself that is not a bad thing.

→however... it is also just as easy to let the toys, the possessions, our activities and schedules overcome and rule our lives, causing us to lose sight of what is really important...to lose sight of our priorities....which in turn can cause us to lose sight of Christ and his message in our lives

PAUSE

→and so I believe that the challenge that Christ is putting before us is to simplify our lives.....

----and part of the simple life is being able to distinguish between having what we need as opposed to always having to have what we want

-----the simple life that Christ is talking about is being content with our blessings and talents rather than always over-achieving or desiring more than what is necessary

-----the simple life is being able to remember and live the presence of Christ here and now with one another instead of being only concerned about what needs to be done...or what's next on our list

----**and the simple life** that Christ speaks of and challenge us TO ...if lived and embraced to the best of our ability will indeed END with everlasting life for each of us in heaven

→and that.... in reality.... REALLY IS the final answer