

# Ascension Lutheran Church

Pastor Godkin's Sermon for the week of June 27, 2010

## The Net Gain (Luke 9:51-62)

Grace, mercy and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. Our text is from the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke:

"Jesus said to the man, 'No one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.'"

This is the text.

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ, what is the most important to answer in a world where so many important concerns. But isn't comparing our spiritual life like comparing apples and oranges?

The Samaritans in our text could see no 'gain' in overnight. Samaria was the region north of Jerusalem and the Jews of Jerusalem, in the region of Judah did not accept the Samaritans as true Jews and people of God. Likewise, the people of Samaria despised the people of Samaria heard that Jesus was heading toward Jerusalem they were jealous and they despised Him. They thought they had no gain by welcoming Him.

On one occasion when the famous artist, Michaelangelo was pressured into doing a particular work of art, someone warned him, "It may cost your life." The great artist's response was, "What else is life for?" Had the Samaritans forgotten what life is for? Our life is going to be used up in some way. By the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it can be used for a divine, good purpose as we follow in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Saviour points out that the net gain for those who would follow Him is much different from what the world considers gain. In the market they say is to buy low and sell high. In the business world we measure net gain in terms of profits, in terms of dollars and cents, revenue minus expenses, that sort of thing. What the world considers gain is the accumulation of assets, basically too many possessions, or it can also be status such as one's job or position in society, etc.

But the gain for those who would follow Jesus is the opposite. St. Paul wrote to the Philippians in chapter 1, "To live is Christ and to die is gain." Now Paul is not advocating suicide by any means. But he underlines the fact that having Christ makes us richer than all the Rockefellers, all the Rothschilds and the world combined.

Paul went on to write, "I eagerly expect and hope that I will have sufficient courage so that now as always I may boast of Christ in my body." Paul wrote this while he was serving a prison sentence for his Christian faith. For Him, hardship might experience in his life. He saw that salvation and eternal life and deliverance from evil is the ultimate gain.

That's another "bottom line" to financial concerns.

That's another "bottom line" to financial concerns.

That's another "bottom line" to financial concerns.

That's another "bottom line" to financial concerns.

That's another "bottom line" to financial concerns.

That's another "bottom line" to financial concerns.



coming to the people of God. It will attempt to take Christ.

But our Lord promises ultimate victory over the world, death, and the devil. We have the Good Shepherd, the Lord Almighty on our side. Let's hold onto Him with all strength by the grace He provides.

Friends, the gain we have in Jesus outlasts anything in this world. The net gain is this: following Him in His grace. Jesus kept traveling until He offered His life as the sacrifice for the world's sins and ascended to heaven, which is also our final destination.

Friends, a terrible fire broke out in a large building. A mother rushed in to save her child, but the mother was terribly burned for the rest of her life.

After her daughter had grown up, she came home from college one day. Her name was Belle. When her disfigured mother came to meet her friends whispered, "Oh Belle, who is that horrid-looking woman?"

Belle could have said, "I don't know her," denying her (just like many people deny the Lord Jesus, who instead Belle smiled, raised her hand, and waved, a mother; low my life to her twice over!" In much and blessing from the wounded hands of Jesus. We owe Him our lives. Through Him God made us. And by His wounds He redeemed us and made us His beloved children. And so we also raise our hands in praise and thanksgiving to Him. That's our bottom line. Amen. The peace of God that surpasses all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

our freedom and the life we have in

Christ. We have the Good Shepherd, the Lord Almighty on our side. Let's hold onto Him with all strength by the grace He provides.

gone earth. It is more gain than anything in this world. The net gain is this: following Him in His grace. Jesus kept traveling until He offered His life as the sacrifice for the world's sins and ascended to heaven, which is also our final destination.

ing. A mother rushed into the flames and was terribly burned for the rest of her life.

college one day. Her name was Belle. When her disfigured mother came to meet her friends whispered, "Oh Belle, who is that horrid-looking woman?"

the mother who had risked her life for her child, but the mother was terribly burned for the rest of her life. Belle could have said, "I don't know her," denying her (just like many people deny the Lord Jesus, who instead Belle smiled, raised her hand, and waved, a mother; low my life to her twice over!" In much and blessing from the wounded hands of Jesus. We owe Him our lives. Through Him God made us. And by His wounds He redeemed us and made us His beloved children. And so we also raise our hands in praise and thanksgiving to Him. That's our bottom line. Amen. The peace of God that surpasses all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.