

Do *Something*

I don't know about you, but when I am faced with a large task, sometimes I freeze and cannot do anything. I become so overwhelmed that I move into panic mode and then lapse into inactivity. Have you ever been like that when you go watch TV instead of getting to the task at hand? Or you find yourself sorting socks, playing a game on your phone, putting the silverware into the correct spots in your way, or, quite frankly, anything other than the major, daunting task before you?

This could very well be what happened to the manager in the parable we read today in Luke's Gospel. This manager was a "bad" manager because he did nothing. Maybe he felt so overwhelmed by the work at hand that he finally broke down and started to do something to keep his job as well as his reputation intact. He proceeded to collect at least part of what was owed to his master instead of collecting nothing. The master was pleased that something had been done in order to bring his accounts up-to-date and get some of the money that was owed to him.

Jesus explains that those who do *something* demonstrate that they are capable of doing a job to completion, while others who do nothing show that they are incapable of anything at all. Now, this translation is mine; however, when he compares this to being faithful or dishonest. If you are faithful with what doesn't belong to you, who will give you something of your own?

This reading concludes with Jesus telling them that they cannot serve two masters. You have to choose between God and wealth. Do we devote our time to worshipping God, or do we devote our time to the area of finances? We have to break this down for it to make sense to us. How many of us worry about our finances? I'd venture to say that most of us do. If we're retired, we have planned and budgeted for pensions, Social Security, 401 (k) s, and any other funds available to live securely. Or, if we are still raising a family, you have a whole other host of things about which to worry. Can we pay the mortgage or rent? Do we have food? What happens if I get sick, the kids get sick, the dog gets sick? Have we paid for our utilities? Will the refrigerator last until we get our tax refund?

These things are important and are worthy of our attention.

However, if we give them all of our attention, we find ourselves serving the finances and forgetting to worship God. If we're paying more attention to other things than we are to our relationship with God, are we trying to serve two masters? Almost two thousand years later, we are still grappling with some of the same issues that the first hearers of this Gospel had. But theirs went a bit further.

Luke's Gospel was written primarily for the Gentile world. We know it is the longest of the Gospels because Luke answered many questions that these non-Jewish followers of "The Way" had about Jesus. They were also beginning to convert from worshipping pagan gods to worshipping one God. That could be another look at the serving two masters line. It is also the underlying message anytime the Apostle Paul writes to a local church or church leader, such as Timothy. Timothy and those ministering with him had to preach the concept of "monotheism" (the worship of one God) over "polytheism" (worshipping more than one god; the prefix "poly" means "many.")

I bring this to the surface as we can sometimes get caught up in being polytheistic ourselves, in that we worship our belongings and our finances more than we worship God. We have to be certain that we are indeed serving God and doing something about it. If we haven't been serving God, then do something about it. Make a change in your life. If you are serving God, can you take it to the next level? Instead of donating food, can you actually go out and serve food? Instead of simply acknowledging that we need greeters, couldn't you actually serve the people of God as a greeter at our worship services?

There is so much going on in our country right now. People right here in the greater Westfield and Southwick areas are affected by decisions that have been made. We see the increase at the Food Truck, Food Pantry, and those who come up to me, as they now know that I am the pastor. This could be our time to do *something*—anything—to help spread that Gospel message to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, comfort the afflicted, welcome the stranger, or assist the needy. These things will give them the ability to not only hear the Good News but also join us as we seek to bring the Reign of God on earth into reality.