

Sermon followed by Service

March 10, 2024

Mark 10:17-31

You know what this (stethoscope) is for. It helps us listen inside, but it doesn't do much to help us see inside, does it? So when I, as a 10-year-old genius, went sledding through the woods and broke my arm, they gave me a chest x-ray. And when my heart was feeling funky, they gave me an ultrasound. Then when I turned fifty-ish, they gave me whole different view of my insides. And when I turned sixty-ish and woke up to a red bowl, they gave me yet another view of things inside. Some day, if I'm like many of you, I'll get an MRI, a CAT-scan (done!), and a PET-scan, too. Why? What are all those tests and tools and scans for? To check the health of our insides. And that's what our lesson is about today.

In our lesson, we meet a young man. He looks healthy, healthy with God. Why? It sure looks like the things of God are important to him. He isn't too busy for God or the things of God. When he hears that Jesus is nearby, he just has to meet him. He runs to meet Jesus. And when he catches up - it doesn't matter that he's a somebody, even a rich somebody - he falls to his knees before Jesus. He looks healthy, healthy with God.

And he sounds healthy, too. He doesn't sound like the Pharisees. He's not trying to make himself sound good and smart. He's not trying to trip and trap Jesus in his words. No, this young man asks the most important question anyone could ask Jesus: **"What must I do to inherit eternal life?"** Eternal life - that's what it's all about. And that's why the young man chased Jesus down. Looking at the young man, listening to him - he looks healthy with God; he sounds healthy with God.

But Jesus knew better. Jesus knew: “Something’s not right up there.” So Jesus runs a brain scan. Here’s how. The young man runs up to Jesus, falls to the ground, addresses Jesus: “**Good teacher ...**” Here’s where Jesus runs his first brain scan: “**Why do you call me good. No one is good – except God alone.**” And what did the brain scan show? No reaction. Not good. So Jesus runs a second brain scan - “**You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.’**” This time, Jesus gets a reaction. Not a violent reaction. Not a defensive reaction. No blaming, no excusing. Just clueless - “**All these I have kept since I was a boy.**” He’s not really lying; he really thinks he’s kept the commandments. A brain scan, two brain scans - Jesus sees something wrong, but the young man doesn’t get it.

So Jesus switches from a brain scan to a heart scan. Why? Sometimes when Jesus tests us we think Jesus is against us. Sometimes when Jesus pokes us and prods us we think that Jesus is looking to get back at us, to hold us down, to hold us back, to keep us from enjoying life. But look at why Jesus tested the young man in our lesson. Mark tells us: “**Jesus loved him.**” Just as God loves the world, Jesus loved that young man. Just as God wants life for the world, Jesus wanted life for that man. But there was something inside in that young man’s heart, something getting in the way of God’s love, getting in the way of eternal life. So Jesus tested him, not to get back at him, not to hold him back, not to keep him from enjoying life. Jesus tested him to show him what was getting in the way of real life. Why? Because Jesus loved him. And because Jesus loves us, Jesus tests us.

But first, the man in our lesson: “**Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.**” And what does the test show? The young man’s love of stuff was greater than his love for God. His love of the world was greater than his hope of heaven.

That young man had a godless hole in his heart. And now that it was exposed, he went away sad.

I wonder how long he was sad. Did his money and stuff cheer him up? Did he turn angry and bitter - "all God wants is my money"? Did he try to pay God off with a little bit here and a little bit there?

I suppose the more important question would be: "What would I have done?" "What would you have done?" What do we do when Jesus pokes and prods and tests our hearts? **"You cannot serve both God and Money."** **"Seek first the kingdom of God"** **"Excel in the grace of giving."** When Jesus pokes and prods and tests our hearts, what do we find? The stuff of this world has a strong pull, doesn't it? If Jesus were to test our hearts and audit our books and call us out - "Your budget is out of whack; you're giving God short-shrift...." "You've been misappropriating funds that God gave for his work; you've been stealing from God to feed your restaurant fix, to scratch your spending itch, to line your comfy nest." If Jesus were to say: "Friend, I've blessed you to love with me and work with me, but when I look into your heart and in your books, I see you're more interested in doing your thing than my thing." If Jesus were to poke us and prod us like that ... if Jesus were to test our hearts and audit our books and call us out like that ... what would we do? Would we walk away sad? Would we storm off bitter and angry? Would we try to pay God off a little bit here and a little bit there?

Can I be honest with you? Here's where I want Jesus to say something soft and easy. Here is where I want Jesus to let me off the hook. But what does Jesus say? **"How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!"** The disciples didn't want to hear that. We don't want to hear that. So what does Jesus do? He doubles down! **"Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."**

It sounds impossible, doesn't it? And when my heart is feeling sore from Jesus poking and prodding and testing my priorities, it seems even more impossible. But Jesus didn't come to poke and prod and test; he came to cure and to save. Jesus didn't come to get, to line his pockets, to better himself. No, Jesus came to sacrifice and let go. When Jesus said: **"Go, sell everything you have ..."** Jesus had already let go of his house and home. He had already let go of the glory and comfort, the riches of heaven. And here in this world, Jesus had already let go; he had no place he could call his own. Soon, he would be going to Jerusalem - not to take a vacation, but to give his life; not to get cozy and comfortable, but to sacrifice himself and get killed. Soon he would be nailed to a cross to take our place as thief and swindler before God. And soon, he would shout: **"Tetelesthai! It is finished!"** Your debt, the world's debt to God is finished! Your account with God is settled. Today and forever, you get to hear Jesus: "You are forgiven, forgiven for life right with God!"

And not just forgiven. Today, you are made rich for life with God. **"You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor so that you through his poverty might become rich."**

"That you might become rich." That has a nice sound to it, doesn't it? Following Jesus isn't just a life of sacrifice and letting go. Following Jesus is a life of gain, a life of trading up. We let go of the world, and Jesus gives us heaven. We sacrifice time here, and Jesus gives us forever. We let go of our money and stuff here - or better, we use God's money with God's heart - and Jesus gives us the riches of heaven. That promise isn't just for heaven. Jesus promises you for today: **"Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and everything you need will be given you as well."** He promises you for today: **"My God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus!"** He promises you for today: **"God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that**

in all things at all times, having all you need, you will abound in every good work!"

What does that mean? We get to live rich with God! So what do we do? We let Jesus test us. And we test ourselves. We check our hearts. We check our books. And instead of walking away sad or angry, we answer his call: "Come, follow; follow me!" knowing this - when we're following Jesus, we're set for life! Amen.

March 9 & 10, 2024

THE SERVICE

IN OUR WORLD TODAY ... it is so easy to lose sight of reality, to get so caught up in living the life of the world, that we don't see that we have stopped living our values. It is so easy to get caught up living the Neighbor-Lived Life that we don't realize we are leaving the God-Lived Life.

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... Jesus gives a dose of reality, possibly a painful dose of reality, a dose of reality that sets us up to take hold of the life that is truly life!

OPENING HYMN

"See This Wonder in the Making"

Hymn 646 vs. 1-3

See this wonder in the making: God himself this child is taking
as a lamb safe in his keeping, his to be, awake or sleeping.

Miracle each time it happens as the door of heaven opens
and the Father beams, "Belovèd, heir of gifts a king would covet!"

Far more tender than a mother, far more caring than a father,
God, into your arms we place him, with your love and peace embrace him.

HOLY BAPTISM (SUNDAY)

CW p. 151

**+ Theodore James Villiard +
Son of Jack and Stacey Villiard**

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

CONFESSION

Our Savior Jesus Christ commanded Baptism when he said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

All of us are born into this world with a deep need for Baptism. From our parents we inherit a sinful nature; we are without true fear of God and true faith in God and are condemned to eternal death. But while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. He took away our sin by giving his life on the cross. In Baptism, he clothes us with the robe of his righteousness and gives us a new life. We recall what Baptism means for our daily lives:

Baptism means that the sinful nature in us

**should be drowned by daily sorrow and repentance,
and that all its evil deeds and desires be put to death.**

It also means that a new person should daily arise

to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

As baptized children of God, we confess our sins:

Holy God, gracious Father,

I am sinful by nature

and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.

I have not loved you with my whole heart;

I have not loved others as I should.

I deserve your punishment both now and forever.

But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins

with his innocent suffering and death.

Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Silence for meditation and reflection

God saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit and united us to the death and resurrection of Jesus. Every day God forgives your sins, removes your guilt, and strengthens you to defeat Satan's power. His promise is for you and your children, and he will never forsake you. Your sins are forgiven. You are clothed with Christ. You are at peace with God now and forever.

Amen.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

The Gospel according to St. Mark:

People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.

Theodore James Villiard, I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Receive the sign of the cross on the head and heart T to mark you as one redeemed by Christ the crucified.

The almighty God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has given you the new birth of water and the Spirit and has forgiven all your sins. May he strengthen you with his grace all the days of your life. Peace be with you.

Let us pray.

We give thanks, most merciful Father, that you have received *Theodore* as your own *child* and made *him* a member of Christ's body, the church. Now, we pray, grant to *him* and to all your church on earth that, being dead to sin, we may live to righteousness and, being buried with Christ into his death, we may also share in his resurrection, so that, with all your saints, we may inherit eternal life; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

HYMN

"See This Wonder in the Making"

Hymn 646 vs. 4

Here we bring a child of nature; home we take a newborn creature,
now God's precious son or daughter, born again by Word and water.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God, in your infinite love, you have entrusted to us the knowledge of your truth and the gifts of your goodness. Help us use them as good stewards, giving generously, praying urgently, and working diligently, that we may share in bringing others to your truth and hasten the coming of your kingdom; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

FIRST READING

Ecclesiastes 2:1–11

I said to myself, “Come now, I will test you with pleasure to find out what is good.” But that also proved to be meaningless. “Laughter,” I said, “is madness. And what does pleasure accomplish?” I tried cheering myself with wine, and embracing folly—my mind still guiding me with wisdom. I wanted to see what was good for people to do under the heavens during the few days of their lives.

I undertook great projects: I built houses for myself and planted vineyards. I made gardens and parks and planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. I made reservoirs to water groves of flourishing trees. I bought male and female slaves and had other slaves who were born in my house. I also owned more herds and flocks than anyone in Jerusalem before me. I amassed silver and gold for myself, and the treasure of kings and provinces. I acquired male and female singers, and a harem as well—the delights of a man’s heart. I became greater by far than anyone in Jerusalem before me. In all this my wisdom stayed with me.

I denied myself nothing my eyes desired;
I refused my heart no pleasure.
My heart took delight in all my labor,
and this was the reward for all my toil.
Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done
and what I had toiled to achieve,
everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind;
nothing was gained under the sun.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalm 73A

Refrain



God is the strength of my heart and my por-tion for-ev - er.

Tone



As for me, my feet had / almost slipped;
 I had nearly lost my / foothold.
 For I envied the / arrogant
 when I saw the prosperity of the / wicked.
 It troubled me deeply till I entered the sanctuary / of God;
 then I understood their final / destiny. *Refrain*

You guide me with your / counsel,
 and afterward you will take me into / glory.
 Whom have I in / heav'n but you?
 And earth has nothing I desire be- / sides you.
 My flesh and my / heart may fail,
 but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for- / ever.

**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
 and to the Holy / Spirit,
 as it was in the be- / ginning,
 is now, and will be forever. / Amen. *Refrain***

SECOND READING

1 Chronicles 29:10-18, 20

David praised the LORD in the presence of the whole assembly, saying,
 "Praise be to you, LORD,
 the God of our father Israel,
 from everlasting to everlasting.

Yours, LORD, is the greatness and the power
and the glory and the majesty and the splendor,
for everything in heaven and earth is yours.

Yours, LORD, is the kingdom;
you are exalted as head over all.

Wealth and honor come from you;
you are the ruler of all things.

In your hands are strength and power
to exalt and give strength to all.

Now, our God, we give you thanks,
and praise your glorious name.

“But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand. We are foreigners and strangers in your sight, as were all our ancestors. Our days on earth are like a shadow, without hope. LORD our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a temple for your Holy Name comes from your hand, and all of it belongs to you. I know, my God, that you test the heart and are pleased with integrity. All these things I have given willingly and with honest intent. And now I have seen with joy how willingly your people who are here have given to you. LORD, the God of our fathers Abraham, Isaac and Israel, keep these desires and thoughts in the hearts of your people forever, and keep their hearts loyal to you. ...

Then David said to the whole assembly, “Praise the LORD your God.” So they all praised the LORD, the God of their fathers; they bowed down, prostrating themselves before the LORD and the king.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

2 Corinthians 8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. You know the commandments: 'You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.'"

"Teacher," he declared, "all these I have kept since I was a boy."

Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.

Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!"

The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."

The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, "Who then can be saved?"

Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God."

Then Peter spoke up, "We have left everything to follow you!"

"Truly I tell you," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise be to you, O Christ!**

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY

"Where Your Treasure Is"

Hymn 828

Refrain

Where your treasure is, there your heart shall be.
All that you possess will never set you free.
Seek the things that last; come and learn from me.
Where your treasure is, your heart shall be.

What do you gain from all your worry,
what you should eat or what to wear?
There is no peace in stress or hurry.
Do you not know that you are held within God's care? *Refrain*

Look at the ravens high above you.
They do not work their whole life through,
and yet God feeds them and protects them.
So how much more will God protect and care for you? *Refrain*

Behold the lilies in their splendor.
In grace and beauty are they dressed,
and yet so soon their bloom is faded.
So how much more will those who look to God be blessed? *Refrain*

O little flock, do not be frightened; yours is the kingdom of the Lord.
Give your possessions to the needy;
obtain a treasure in God's heaven safely stored. *Refrain*

SERMON

Mark 10:17-31

HYMN

"God, Whose Giving knows No Ending"

Hymn 749

God, whose giving knows no ending, from your rich and endless store:
nature's wonder, Jesus' wisdom, costly cross, grave's shattered door —
gifted by you, we turn to you, off'ring up ourselves in praise;
thankful songs shall rise forever, gracious donor of our days.

Skills and time are ours for pressing toward the goals of Christ, your Son:
all at peace in health and freedom, races joined, the church made one.
Now direct our daily labor, lest we strive for self alone;
born with talents, make us servants fit to answer at your throne.

Treasure, too, you have entrusted,
gain through pow'rs your grace conferred:
ours to use for home and kindred, and to spread the gospel word.
Open wide our hands in sharing, as we heed Christ's ageless call,
healing, teaching, and reclaiming, serving you by loving all.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Lord God, from whom all blessings flow, we praise you for everything you provide to sustain our lives. Lead us every day to be thankful for your gifts and content with what you have given. Today we pray that you would guide us to manage your blessings wisely for the good of your kingdom.
As we use your gifts to meet our needs, move us also to support the ministry of the gospel with our offerings.

Before your Son ascended to your throne, he called us to preach the good news to every creature. In grace you created the public ministry so that we may answer his call by sending others in our place. Impress on us the immense importance of the task you have given us to proclaim your Word to the world.

In our words and in our offerings, move us to be faithful witnesses of your grace.

Work in our hearts so that our gifts do more than support a cause or meet a need. Move us to give out of love for you, our King and Redeemer.

Lead us to bring our gifts first to honor you, the Giver of all things.

Teach us to give as an ongoing part of life since the work of the gospel continues every day. Forgive us for the sins of apathy and carelessness and for giving that reacts only to urgent pleas or crises.

Help us see the wisdom of planning our offerings as a regular routine of our faith.

Teach us determine our offerings in view of your blessings to us. The widow's coins were meager, but they were all she had. Move us to believe that to whom much is given, much is also expected.

Give us courage to bring gifts that reflect your gifts to us.

Teach us to give our offerings as a cheerful response of our faith in you and your Son. Spare us all feelings of obligation or resentment as we give.

Help us to see our offerings as the vehicle that carries the gospel to the lost, and lead us to rejoice with the angels of heaven over every sinner who repents.

Help us to balance our duty to give with the joy of giving.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

Precious Lord, all our blessings come from you. Lead us again and again to thank you and then move us to be wise and faithful stewards of your gifts. May our gifts and offerings bring souls here and far away to the gracious gift of Jesus and his love.

Lord, hear us and grant us this blessing. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Blessed Lord, you have given us your Holy Scriptures for our learning. May we so hear them, read, learn, and take them to heart that, being strengthened and comforted by your holy Word, we may cling to the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

"Be Thou My Vision"

Let All the People Praise You - A Songbook

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that thou art.
Thou my best thought in the day and the night;
Waking and sleeping thy presence my light.

Be thou my breastplate, my sword for the fight;
Thou my whole armor and thou my true might;
Thou my soul's shelter and thou my strong tower.
Raise thou me heav'n ward, great Pow'r of my pow'r.

Riches I need not, nor man's empty praise;
Thou mine inheritance now and always;
Thou and thou only the first in my heart;
High King of heaven, my treasure thou art.

High King of heaven, my victory won,
May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heav'n's Sun.
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

OFFERING

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Challenge #2

Commit to a gift or new level of giving in our new era of ministry

- God has answered our prayers for a new Principal / Staff Minister of Outreach. Thank you, Lord! Now, how will we respond to God's answer to our prayers?
- Our Illinois Invest in Kinds tuition scholarship program has come to an end. How will we meet the opportunities God brings to us?

The God-Lived Life is not first or most about money for ministry (as good as money for ministry is). The God-Lived Life is first and foremost about encouraging the hearts of God's people to think and to live in the promises of God with the heart of God. With God's heart, we see God blessing us and stretching us with a new era in ministry. How will we respond?

Challenge #3

Create/update my will, perhaps include support of God's work

- Do you have an estate plan or will? If you don't and you have no family and no stuff, an estate plan may not be a priority. But if you do have family or earthly possessions, then an estate plan could possibly save your family distress, and turn your possessions into blessings for people and/or ministry you care about.
- Do you already have an estate plan? When was the last time you reviewed it? Is it still up-to-date? Have you considered including Jesus in your estate plan?

Challenge #4

Join us for our Estate Planning Workshop on March 17

On Sunday, March 17, our WELS Giving Counselors will be at St. John for a Planned Giving and Estate Planning Workshop. Not only are they helpful in arranging estate plans and tax-wise giving to the Lord, but they are also very helpful in arranging estate plans that look out for our loved ones. They aren't looking to get for themselves or anyone else; they are looking to help us give and provide with the heart of our Father. Please, bring your questions.

Let's Check our Financial Self-Awareness and "Intentionality"

A Two-Number Test

- #1 - How much money is God entrusting to you this year? _____
(Salary, retirement funds, ...) (Not sure about this year? Use last year's numbers.)
- #2 - How much money are you giving back for the Lord's work? _____
- Bonus # - What percent is that? ($\#1 \div \#2$) _____

Thinking of what God is giving you, what would you expect God to say to you?
Why?

"Well done, good and faithful servant!" - Matthew 25

"Excel, stretch, grow in the grace of giving!" - 2 Corinthians 8

"Repent, and see if I don't throw open the flood gates of heaven." - Malachi 3

Another Two-Number Test

- #1 - How much money are you giving back for the Lord's Work? _____
- #2 - How much money do you spend on entertainment? _____

Thinking of what God is giving you, what would you expect God to say to you?
Why?

"Well done, good and faithful servant!" - Matthew 25

"Excel, stretch, grow in the grace of giving!" - 2 Corinthians 8

"Repent, and see if I don't throw open the flood gates of heaven." - Malachi 3

A Comprehensive Check for Self-Awareness and Intentionality

Create / Review your Budget (Giving / Saving / Spending Plan)

We have paper forms available for tech-less freedom. You can find other tools, forms, and apps through your financial institution or Financial Peace University at RamseySolutions.com.

(Continues on previous page.)

The God-Lived Life - A Life Lived Shrewdly Manage with Intention

The God-Lived Life is a Challenge.

- For some, it may be a challenge to change, a challenge to repent and live the new life God has for us.
- For some, it may be a challenge to step out and live differently than the rest of their world.
- For all of us, it is a challenge to grow in living with the heart and mind of our God!

Over the past year, we have heard God challenge us to live in his Word, to serve his church and his world, to love beyond family and friends. Now we hear God challenge us to A Life Lived Shrewdly, a life where we manage God's blessings with intention and attention with the heart and mind of Christ! Below are four challenges. Which will you accept?:

Challenge #1

Commit to Financial Self-Awareness and "Intentionality"

- Do we know where "our" money is going, or even how much money God is entrusting to us?
- How do we determine how we will spend, save, use the money God is entrusting to us?
 - Do we rely on our "feel"?
 - Do we simply respond to our "needs," wants, whims?
 - Do we put God's money to work with intention and attention to the wonderful life-saving, life-changing, life-enriching purposes God has for the money he gives us?

(Continues on previous page.)