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HOMILETICS

Outlines on the Standard Gospel Series

(Except for the extended study of the text for the Eleventh Sunday after Trinity, which is by the Rev. Robert H. Smith, Chappaqua, N. Y., the outlines which follow were abstracted and translated from C. F. W. Walther's *Evangelien-Postille* by Prof. Alex W. Guebert, St. Louis, Mo. The notes on the "Hymn of the Week" are by Arno Klausmeier, St. Louis, Mo.)

THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

LUKE 18:9-14

By Robert H. Smith

I

An amateur psychologist reading the story of the Pharisee and the publican, surprised at the interpretation Jesus puts on it, would be taken aback by its ending. It seems at first sight to our hypothetical psychologist that the Pharisee is mentally healthier than the publican. He is better adjusted, has more self-respect, confidence, poise. These are the attributes a psychologist loves to see in a man: good adjustment to self and life. The Pharisee is robust, outgoing, makes friends easily. He stands up and speaks out like an honors graduate of a Dale Carnegie course.

In the psychologist's view the publican is too morbid, brooding, introspective, and scrupulous. He has few friends, for he has little humor, is joyless and gloomy. He is in a state of conflict with himself. His ego is badly damaged and needs instant repair. He is a first-century organization man who is aware that he is caught up in the rat race but cannot or dare not extricate himself. He is disturbed and should see a doctor.

To our psychologist it is more than a little surprising that Jesus commends to us the publican as the one who left the temple

justified, right with God. It is the opposite of his expectation. It offends his notion of respectability, of manhood, of religion.

We might look at these men from another point of view, this time from the traditional religious standpoint. In Sunday schools and churches today "pharisee" is a synonym for hypocrite, impostor, vain braggart, boaster, pretender. We have a picture of a man who eagerly laps up every drop of praise and admiration, basking in the sunlight of compliment.

And when we hear the word "publican," we think of a person who is "touchingly and sentimentally humble," someone unassuming and lovable. But this is stereotype, caricature, and misrepresentation. Where does the truth lie?

Actually the publicans in general were coarse scoundrels who fleeced their own countrymen in collecting the hated Roman taxes and meanwhile lined their own pockets. They were collaborators, in cahoots with the enemy, and living high on the hog at the expense of their fellow Jews. Every pious Jew despised the publicans as the scum of the earth, the dregs of society, leeches of humanity.

The Pharisees were in dead earnest about serving God. They were laymen, not clergy, but they were those laymen who really practiced their religion. They could not be faulted for loose living. Two things demonstrate their sincerity. In the first place they gave a tithe of all they acquired. This was far beyond the demand of the Law. In the second place they fasted twice weekly. They were willing to be hit in their pocketbooks and in their bellies for the sake of their religion.

What was wrong with the Pharisee, that he has borne such a blackened name down through the centuries? And the publican — what is right about him?

II

It is generally believed that the word "Pharisee" (φαρισαῖος) is derived from the Hebrew word פָּרֻשׁ, "separated." The Pharisees were separatists or, as we might call them, pietists. Sometimes the rabbis used פָּרֻשׁ as a synonym of קָדֵשׁ, holy. A Jewish commentary on Numbers offers this parallel motive for abstaining from unclean animals: "As I am holy, so be ye also holy; as I am separate פָּרֻשׁ, so be ye also separate, פָּרֻשִׁים." (G. F. Moore, *Judaism* [Cambridge: Harvard, 1927], I, 61). The whole nation was summoned to separate itself from idolatry and its abominable concomitants in the days of the Exodus (Ex. 19:6; Lev. 19:2; 20:7, 26) and again after the Exile. (Ezra 6:21)

"Pharisees" evidently became the name of a Jewish sect late in the second century B. C. In the days of the Seleucids the Hellenizing high priests Jason and Menelaus (175—165 B. C.) sought to reinterpret and reorganize Judaism as a Syro-Hellenic religion. Many Jews of every class and station were outraged by this phase of the Hellenistic drift of Judaism and closed ranks behind the Maccabees. But when the Jews achieved political independence under Simon (143 B. C.), the old rupture between the aristocratic conservatives and the more progressive representatives of the people opened anew. Henceforth the parties were called Sadducee and Pharisee respectively.

The Pharisees separated and dissociated themselves, on the one hand, from the aristocratic Sadducees, who were glad enough to accommodate themselves to the powers that be, and, as the inheritors of the Chasidic tradition, from those zealous Jews who were

primarily interested in political independence. And on the other hand, they separated themselves from the doing of the Law and the practice of all the commandments and traditions of the elders. This meant separation from the ignorant and indifferent masses of the אֱמֹתָא דְּיִשְׂרָאֵל (the people of the land). Pharisaism therefore means both separation and consecration, both dissociation and dedication. (W. D. Davies, *Introduction to Pharisaism* [Brecon, 1954], p. 7)

A different interpretation, describing Pharisaism in terms of its ideas rather than its practices, has been proposed by the late T. W. Manson. He advanced the theory that φαρισαῖος is Greek for the Aramaic פָּרֻשִׁי, or Persian. He believed that a number of distinctively Pharisaic beliefs were Persian in origin. In contrast to Sadducean belief in absolute personal autonomy the Pharisees held that the divine activity shapes men and events and leads history forward, although they were not determinists as the Essenes were. While the Sadducees held the doctrine of Sheol as recipient of all the dead, the Pharisees affirmed the resurrection of the body and final Judgment, with rewards and punishments. The Sadducees rejected the Pharisaic developments in the sphere of angelology and demonology. And while the Sadducees recognized the Pentateuch alone as binding, the Pharisees also promoted the rest of Scripture but especially held the oral tradition as equally binding. (*The Servant-Messiah* [Cambridge University Press, 1953], pp. 17 ff.) These are the chief differences between Sadducees and Pharisees, but T. W. Manson has found few who are willing to subscribe to his belief that Pharisaic theology is primarily a product of Persian influence.

Whatever their origin and whatever the ultimate derivation of their name, the Pharisees by New Testament times were known primarily for their devotion to the Law, written and unwritten, which they defined minutely and followed scrupulously, working

to bring the rest of the population to a like observance. The Sadducees were not libertines. They bowed to the written Law and were indeed more severe than the Pharisees with transgressors. Thus the chief distinguishing feature of the Pharisees was their zealous espousal of the unwritten Law. (Moore, I, 66 ff.)

III

V. 9— If this pericope has any connection at all with its context beyond the matter of prayer, it is that it deals with the coming of the Kingdom. In rabbinic theology keeping the Law prepares the way for the kingdom of God, and therefore the doer of the Law was self-conscious about his observances (K. H. Rengstorf, *Das Evangelium des Lukas* [Göttingen, 1952], p. 206). He had confidence in himself and believed that his manner of life proved him just. He thought all lesser men (τοὺς λοιπούς and v. 11, οἱ λοιποὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων) were of no account (ἐξουθενοῦντας). So the separated one not only separated himself from the impiety of others but separated himself from fraternal fellowship with men less righteous than himself, whom he despised and held in contempt.

V. 10— "Two men went up" (ἀνέβησαν, regularly used of ascending the hill on which the temple stood). They both purposed to keep the hour of prayer in the Court of Israel. Standing (the normal posture for prayer) in a conspicuous spot, the Pharisee did not speak his prayer aloud, but uttered it silently, to himself (πρὸς ἑαυτόν).

V. 11— Alfred Plummer (*Gospel According to S. Luke* [T. & T. Clark, 1922], p. 417) goes too far in his attack on the prayer of the Pharisee. But he eloquently represents a common interpretation:

There is no prayer, even in form; he asks God for nothing, being thoroughly satisfied with his present condition. And only in form is this utterance a thanksgiving; it is self-congratulation. He glances at God, but con-

templates himself. Indeed he almost pities God, who but for himself would be destitute of faithful servants.

A more charitable judgment might be that the prayer is not much worse than simply, "There but for the grace of God go I."

The Pharisee thanks God (εὐχαριστῶ σοι) that he has refrained his hand from violent and evil acts, that he has not lived "like this tax collector." Lumping tax collectors together with extortioners and adulterers and their ilk was not uncommon. The Mishnah says, "If taxgatherers entered a house all that is within it becomes unclean. . . . If thieves entered a house, only that part is unclean that was trodden by the feet of the thieves." (*Toboroth* 7:6.) *Nedarim* 3:4 discusses vows made to "murderers, robbers, or taxgatherers."

V. 12— The virtue of the Pharisee is not merely negative. He has been actively pious. He fasts twice a week (Monday and Thursday). The disciples of John the Baptist also "fasted often" (Luke 5:33). He gave tithes (set aside a tenth, ἀποδεκατεύω) on all his income (ὄσα κτῶμαι), not merely on the legally prescribed foodstuffs for the support of the Levites and priests and for the poor (Num. 18; Deut. 14:22 ff.). Because these tithes were very seldom paid in full by the average Israelite, the Pharisee in paying them at all might have felt he had done a work of supererogation. In exceeding them, he was pleased to think he had performed an extraordinary feat. Like another proud man, the Pharisee says, "All these I have observed from my youth." (Mark 10:20)

V. 13— The tax collector does not even presume to strike the ordinary attitude of prayer with hands uplifted and eyes gazing calmly to the skies. Before God he shrinks back and averts his eyes. He feels the weight of his transgressions and is conscious that they condemn him. And all the while he

continually beats (ἐτύπτε) his breast and says, "God, be merciful (λάσθητι) to me a sinner!" In the New Testament *λάσσομαι* is used only here and in Heb. 2:17, where it refers to Jesus' action as our "merciful and faithful High Priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people," the deed of Jesus by which He nullified our sin and turned aside the wrath of God. A prayer similar to the publican's is in Ps. 79:9, "Deliver us [ῥύσαι], and forgive our sins [λάσθητι] for Thy name's sake" (cf. Dan. 9:19).

V. 14 — In effect the tax collector calls God just, while the Pharisee calls himself just. In Jesus' commendation of the publican we see one of the beatitudes in action: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5:3)

The Pharisee is man under the Law. Outwardly he keeps God's commands, but his service is that of a slave. He serves not from love but for the reward. The Father says to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours" (Luke 15:31). To be with the Father is the joy and reward of the son. But the slave wants a fatted calf and merrymaking with his friends. The Pharisee lacks love toward God and therefore also love toward the brother. For him the sinful brother is only the dark background on which his own relative righteousness shines all the more brightly. He resents the goodness of the Father toward the sinner. Therefore he stands in awful contradiction to our God, who desires mercy and not sacrifice. The sin of the righteous Pharisee is not as crude, but it is finally deeper than that of the tax collector. He sins not only against the Law, but with the help of the Law (L. Goppelt, *Christentum und Judentum* [Gütersloh, 1954], pp. 50 f.). The Pharisee, who stands in fundamental opposition to the mercy of God, is less righteous than the tax collector, who lets God be God.

Let's Not Be Pharisees

The Pharisee is no mere hypocrite. He was zealous for the Law and the traditions of the elders. But he tried to use the Law to pry favors out of God, and his righteousness led him to despise rather than pity the sinner.

- I. As we pray and worship this day, Pharisaic thoughts and attitudes easily insinuate their way into our heads. We are not always as humble as the publican, bowed by the knowledge of our sin, thrilling at God's mercy. Especially we "good" Christians, regular in contribution and attendance, think God is lucky to have us, and play the deadly game of self-congratulation and neighbor assassination through ugly thoughts and unkind gossip. The more successful we are at being good, the greater the danger we are in.
- II. The Kingdom of God, forgiveness, and salvation are present as gifts for us in Jesus Christ. Jesus is the presence of God's kingdom. He who speaks the parable challenges us to find our salvation in Him, to turn to Him, and have confidence in His sacrifice as the covering for our sin. We men of Pharisaic bent want salvation as our just desert and are sorely tempted to reject the gift. The obvious rake finds it easier than the good man to acknowledge his emptiness and sin. But God does not accept the good man for his goodness or the humble man for his humility. He accepts both for the sake of Jesus Christ.
- III. Humble confidence in God's mercy leads to a new life for every man. When we stop fooling ourselves about ourselves, when we cease trying to justify ourselves before God, we can be absolutely certain of the mercy of God in Jesus the Crucified. And we can begin really to love our neighbor; for no longer are we

driven by the compulsion to tear others down. We can rejoice in their good fortune and sympathize in their distress. Where Jesus is recognized as Savior, good and bad, strong and weak, dwell together as brothers.

The Hymn of the Week: "From Depths of Woe I Cry to Thee," *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 329.

The well-known Gospel of the Pharisee and the Publican, Paul's "by the grace of God I am what I am," the humble petitions of the Collect, and the spirit of trust in Introit and Gradual all find expression in Luther's versification of Psalm 130. This psalm was termed "Pauline" by Luther, as were Ps. 32, 51, and 143. Julian, the hymnologist, ranks this as the best of Luther's treatments of Psalms. After its first appearance in *Etlich cristlich lider* and *Ein Enchiridion* in four stanzas in 1524, it was reworked into its present five-stanza form, appearing in the 1524 *Geystlich gesangk Buchleyn* and in the 1542 *Christliche Geseng zum Begrebnis*. Although its inclusion in a collection of funeral hymns and the fact that it was sung at the funeral of Elector Frederick the Wise in 1525 give it associations with death, its sober balance of Law and Gospel stamps it with the sort of realism which makes it ideal for the 11th Sunday after Trinity (as well as any other time, of course).

The tune, which may well have been written by Luther, appeared with the hymn in the five-stanza form in 1524, and it breathes the solemnity of the text. The downward fall of the first two notes of the first and third lines (which in our *Hymnal* happily coincides with the words "depths" and "down,") reinforces the text symbolically. The fine translation, which even retains this sort of coincidence of original words reinforced by musical symbolism, is by Catherine Winkworth.

THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

MARK 7:31-39

The Gospel for last Sunday told us how the publican was justified before God and assured us that God is ready to forgive and receive the greatest sinner. Some people grossly abuse the teaching of justification by grace through faith by despising the great sinner whom God accepts. Others suppose they can postpone repentance until the hour of death because they have heard that a man is not justified before God through his good works. The Gospel, however, is a teaching for souls troubled by sin (cf. Is. 26:10). Since I preached to you last Sunday on justification by grace alone, through faith in God, I want to let you see today that a justified Christian leads a holy and godly life. On the basis of our text I shall talk about

The Daily Sanctification of a Justified Christian

- I. This sanctification is genuine
- II. This sanctification, however, never becomes perfect in this world

I

A. Sanctification as well as justification is an important doctrine as Scripture points out to us (Heb. 12:14; 2 Cor. 5:17). Sanctification is not something that may be present or absent in our lives. No one can be a Christian without it. Do not say that sanctification cancels out justification or that sanctification is unnecessary because man is justified by faith.

B. It is eternally true that our salvation does not depend on our works. It is a gift from God. When Scripture speaks of sanctification, it is talking about the way a justified Christian should live. Today we are not asking what the publican had to do to be justified, but how he conducted himself after he returned home as a justified man.

C. This point becomes very clear when we look at the deaf and dumb man in our text. In his great distress he is a picture of every unconverted sinner. When he is brought to Jesus for help, Jesus receives him as a friend. So a man is justified before God. In his sin man is miserable, deaf to the Word of God, with no word of praise for God. When the Word of God touches him and he cries out for mercy, Christ at once receives him, frees him from his sin, puts His cloak of righteousness on him, and takes him in as His child. This is justification.

D. In vv. 33-35 we have a picture of sanctification. After graciously receiving the deaf and dumb man, Jesus freed him of his defects. So He also applies to every person that has found grace in Him His healing process. When a person is justified by God, he is also reborn and receives the Holy Ghost. Now he no longer loves sin but God and His Word, and he would like to live a pious and godly life. He becomes a different person. He places the Word of God above everything else in the world. He is an enemy of sin and guards against it with all his might. He finds all his joy in the Lord. He spends his life in serving God and his neighbor.

E. This is the way the new heart and the new life manifest themselves. There are few among us that do not consider themselves justified. But let me ask you: Are you also a changed person with a new heart? Is a new spirit operative in you? If it be the will of God, are you ready to walk the way of the cross? Is your heart warmed by the fire of love?

F. Many who consider themselves Christians are deceiving themselves. Without sanctification no one can see the Lord, for he who heartily receives the grace of Jesus Christ is sanctified by the Spirit of Christ. (Cf. Zaccheus, Luke 7:36-50)

II

A. The comfort of the article of forgiveness and salvation by grace may deceive people into thinking that they need not be in earnest about their sanctification. But it is also true that there are such as despair of their salvation because of their imperfect response to God's grace. They must be assured that the sanctification of the justified Christian is genuine, but will never be complete in this world.

B. Our text, no doubt, intimates that the friends of the deaf and dumb man were justified and that the Holy Spirit had begun the work of sanctification in their hearts. Yet they ignored Christ's word not to speak to anyone about this miracle (vv. 36, 37). Although they had good intentions in publicizing the miracle, their deed was stained by self-will and disobedience. What they did was the result of weakness.

C. Let us remember that justification takes place in the twinkling of an eye. As soon as a sinner sees his sin and repents, God speaks a word in heaven by which justification is accomplished and is complete. Sanctification is not instantaneous. It is a matter of slow growth from the time justification takes place until the Christian dies. It never reaches perfection in this world. After justification all Christians are equal, but in their sanctification there are great differences. Every Christian does not reach the degree of sanctification of Paul, Job, Peter, John, Daniel, Abraham, or the holy martyrs. Yet all of these must repeat Paul's words in Phil. 3:13, 14.

D. Some doubt whether they are really clothed with the grace of God, because they see so much sin in their heart. Since they do not feel this grace, they believe they are not overcoming sin. To keep the Christian, especially the beginner, from becoming secure and proud, God sends affliction to keep

him humble and train him to pray and earnestly seek peace in God's gracious Word.

E. You who are in this struggle, continue in it courageously. Do not depend on your own strength, but on God's power in the grace of Christ, and so be sure of victory.

The Hymn of the Week: "My Soul, Now Bless Thy Maker," *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 34.

This Sunday's Introit seems to continue the previous Sunday's emphasis of penitent yet confident reliance on God's mighty acts in Christ through the power of the Spirit. But there is a different direction. The Epistle outlines the advantage of grace which we in the New Testament have over those who lived under the "ministration of death." In the Gospel the Kingdom is proclaimed to be present in the Messiah, who heals the sin-ruptured body in the full power of the Creator. In the Gradual we join all God's faithful people, with the reckless, spontaneous abandon of the crowd which saw the Gospel miracle, in praising God, who creates and re-creates.

How fitting, then, that the hymn of the week interprets a leaf from the prayerbook of the Old Testament people of God in seeing God's paternal care "in the face of Christ Jesus"! Johann Gramann's versification of Psalm 103 has historical contact with several important Lutherans. Martin Chemnitz states that the hymn was written on request for Margrave Albrecht of Brandenburg-Ansbach; it was reputedly the first hymn sung when Augsburg was restored to the Lutherans under Gustavus Adolphus in 1632; it was sung in Osnabrück, Westphalia, in 1648, at the close of the Thirty Years' War. The translation is another fine product of the pen of Catherine Winkworth.

The tune appeared in Augsburg in 1540. It was composed either by Gramann or by Johann Kugelmann, in whose collection, *Concentus Novi*, it was included, although

this information is highly hypothetical. But for a bit of fortunate inspiration the tune might have become a waltz; occasional shifts in the rhythm, however, add freshness without disturbing the tune's unity.

THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

LUKE 10:23-37

"Do what is right, and fear no one" is the motto by which many people live, even some who claim to be Christian. The fear of God, however, plays no role in their life. Though they make contributions to various charitable institutions, they are not motivated by real love for the neighbor, but seek to satisfy their own self-interest, pride, and vanity. Where there is no love of God, there is no genuine love of the neighbor. If salvation depended on fulfilling the commandment to love one's neighbor, no one could be saved, for no man fulfills this commandment. Christ holds this important truth before our eyes in the Gospel for today. Let me show you on the basis of this text that

The Commandment to Love One's Neighbor Cannot Justify a Man Before God and Save His Soul

It cannot do so because

- I. The commandment demands that you love your enemy as well as your friend
- II. It demands that you should be willing to express your love in great sacrifices for your neighbor
- III. It demands that you do not grow weary in expressing love for the neighbor

I

A. If you ask a man today, "Do you hope to be saved?" the usual answer is yes. Some of the reasons for this answer are: "I give each man his due; no man can raise any accusation against me; I have offended no

child; I have cheated no one; I live peacefully with my neighbor; I give to the poor. Why should I have doubts about my salvation?" But salvation based on good works is a false hope, because the commandment to love one's neighbor as God wants such love expressed can never be fulfilled.

B. The lawyer who came to Jesus thought he had fulfilled the commandment of neighborly love. In the parable of the Good Samaritan Jesus showed him how miserably he had failed. Jesus is very decisive in pointing out that neighborly love reaches out to the enemy as well as to the friend. Here we see how impossible it is for a man to keep the commandment of neighborly love.

C. Many a man has indeed shown consideration for his enemy, but where is the man who loves his enemy as his friend? Who can say that he never harbored thoughts of wrath, even murder, against his enemy? The commandment of neighborly love demands that we be concerned about our enemy's temporal and eternal welfare. (Cf. Luke 6:32, 33; Matt. 5:44)

D. Jesus Christ is the only One who loved His enemy with a perfect love. No human being can fully follow Jesus' example. The commandment of neighborly love clearly shows that no man can justify himself before God and so save himself.

II

A. The commandment of neighborly love also demands that a man show his love for the neighbor by bringing the greatest sacrifices for the neighbor if such should be necessary. Many suppose they have fulfilled the obligation of neighborly love when they give each one what is due him, when they help the neighbor, as long as it does not inconvenience themselves too much, or when they use some of their surplus to help the poor.

B. All these people deceive themselves. True love demands incomparably more. The Good Samaritan was different from the priest and the Levite. Without hesitation he gave the injured Jew first aid, took him to an inn, and paid for all the medical care he needed. He sacrificed much in expressing neighborly love.

C. True love always acts like this. It is never satisfied to ask what others are doing. It is ready to sacrifice money, health, honor, even life, if this should be necessary to help a neighbor. (Cf. Ex. 23:5; 1 Cor. 10:24; Gal. 6:2; 1 John 3:16b)

D. Where is the man who leads such a life of love? Christ alone did. True Christians make a beginning toward it, but never reach the level of perfection.

III

A. The commandment of neighborly love finally demands that a man should not grow weary in expressing such love. The Good Samaritan knew he had not fulfilled his obligation when he had brought the injured Jew to the inn. He promised to stop by upon his return and pay any further bills. Before God only that love toward the neighbor is perfect which never grows weary.

B. But where is the man whose love toward the neighbor is always aglow? Who does not easily grow tired when needy people crowd around him daily, when he sees that his charity is not appreciated, or when he forgives and immediately is insulted again?

C. Christ is the only One who did not grow tired of loving. He loved His friends (John 13:1a) and His enemies (Matt. 26:47-50). Full of love He came into this world, and amidst the cursing and mockery of His enemies He died for the world with words of love and forgiveness on His lips.

D. Let no one depend on his love for the neighbor as a means of saving himself. Let each see how much he lacks the love that

God demands. There is only one love that saves us. That is the love of God in Christ. Whoever despairs of his own love and takes refuge in the love of Christ, will indeed begin to give evidence of love in his life. If he persists in this love, he will share in the perfect love and bliss of eternal life.

The Hymn of the Week: "Lord of Glory, Who Hast Bought Us," *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 442.

Both the Epistle and the Gospel for the day emphasize the difference between the two covenants—the Epistle argues the insufficiency of the Law as either means or motivation for the Christian life, the Gospel directs the Christian to his neighbor as the object of Gospel-motivated charity. Both Introit and Gradual stress the Christian dependence on God, who initiates His covenant with men. Through the Law He gives us the obligation, and through the Gospel He gives us the power, to live in a lateral covenant with our neighbor and to increase in faith, hope, and charity so that we "love that which [He] command[s]" (Collect).

The author of the hymn, Mrs. Eliza Sibbald Alderson, was the sister of Dr. John Dykes (who composed many hymn tunes, including *Nicea* ["Holy, Holy, Holy"]). Although it was written in support of what many consider an oversimplified approach to stewardship (tithing), this hymn bears the stamp of the finest feminine concern and sympathy for others, yet avoids maudlin sentimentality by its saturation with Scriptural allusions, and puts the proper emphasis on the obligation and motivation of stewardship without quoting percentages.

The Welsh tune *Hyfrydol* was written by a lay musician of the highest order, Rowland Hugh Prichard (1811—87), a loomtender's assistant, who led the singing in his church on Sundays. It was published in 1855 for the text *Halelwiab Drachefn* ("Hallelujah Again"), and is extremely and almost uni-

versally popular. The limited range (five notes) makes it ideal for congregational singing (even men!), and its pleasant flow makes it a joy to sing, even if it takes some initial effort to learn.

THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

LUKE 17:11-19

Unthankfulness is regarded even by non-Christians as one of the most despicable vices. We feel the enormity of this sin when a man whom we have befriended turns against us and abuses us. But not all expressions of gratitude to human benefactors are necessarily evidence of a truly grateful heart. Such a heart is filled, above all, with thankfulness to God, the Source of all that is good. Where such a wholehearted attitude to God is lacking, a person's acts of gratitude to his fellowman do not measure up to the divine demand of thankfulness. Even Christians are not immune to this sin but must admit to slipping into unthankfulness repeatedly. The Gospel for today holds the sin of unthankfulness before our eyes. Let me talk to you about

The Great Unthankfulness of the Human Heart Toward God

- I. The unthankfulness by which the non-Christian reveals himself
- II. The unthankfulness still found in Christians

I

A. The lepers in our text were exceedingly happy on hearing that Jesus was in their vicinity. They determined to appeal to Him for help (v.13). He sent them to the priest (v.14). Only one, a Samaritan, returned to thank Him for being healed. (Vv. 15-17)

B. True thankfulness consists in recognizing the benefit received, in praising the benefactor, and in using the gift in accord with

the wish of the donor. All men are surrounded by myriads of benefits from God,—body, soul, reason, atmosphere, weather, soil, food, minerals, water, forests. Most people do not recognize these treasures as gifts of God. They receive them as a matter of course and fail to thank Him for them. Neither do these same people see the enormous benefit God has prepared for them through the redemptive work of Christ. They fail to use and appreciate Word and sacraments. They have no word of thanks to God for His love and concern for them.

C. There are indeed some benefits for which most people will show some appreciation. They are thankful when they escape injury, are restored to health, are no longer despised and rejected, are freed from the terrors of death. They may turn to God momentarily. But as soon as they breathe easier, they forget the Giver of the benefits like the nine lepers in our text. What an outrage! Not even animals sink that low. (Cf. Is. 1:2,3.)

D. Many people increase their sin of thanklessness by abusing God's gifts. Through vanity, gluttony, drunkenness, immorality, and greed they ruin themselves, others, and the natural resources that God gave them. Such people do not belong to Christ. They are dead in sin and members of the kingdom of Satan.

II

A. To be a true Christian and not to be thankful to God is impossible. In every true Christian there exists the sincere desire to lead a life of thankfulness for all the benefits that flow from the love of God in Christ. (Cf. Ps. 50:23)

B. As long as man is not converted and is blind to God's unspeakable gift in Christ Jesus, he cannot have a truly thankful heart. But conversion opens the stopped-up well-springs of the heart. From now on flows

the steady stream of thanksgiving and praise. (Cf. Ps. 103:1-5)

C. Though a true Christian has begun to thank God, he still finds reasons for complaining about his ungrateful heart. He still is a man of flesh and blood who cries out to God in trouble but forgets his obligation to thank God after his trouble is removed. He fails to express his thanks particularly for the cross he bears, for his sickness, poverty, the reproaches of men, which are also God's gifts as well as good health, prosperity, and honor.

D. There are similarities in the forgetfulness of the non-Christian and the true Christian. Yet there is a great difference. A Christian recognizes his unthankfulness as the product of his sinful flesh. But he asks for forgiveness also of this sin. He longs for the time when he can join the angelic choir in never-ending praise and thankfulness.

E. Let those of you who have no thankful heart go to Christ like the lepers and ask for mercy. Remain in close communion with Christ and your fellow Christians. Let those of you who are truly thankful continue to exercise yourselves in praise and thanksgiving, until your praise and thanksgiving to the Triune God will be perfect in the life to come.

The Hymn of the Week: "From God Shall Naught Divide Me," The Lutheran Hymnal, 393.

The Christian, under the sign of the cross, must daily take up his cross. The Epistle stresses the active crucifixion of the old man and the activity of the new man "in the Spirit." The Gospel of the thankful Samaritan leper underscores his confidence in God's saving, healing power; the note of gratitude in the Gospel is reinforced by the Gradual; the Collect beseeches God's perpetual mercy for His covenant people, the church.

It was pestilence, not leprosy, that struck Erfurt in the early 1560s. Ludwig Helmbold, conector of the *Gymnasium*, wrote

this hymn to reassure his family and the family of Rector Pancratius Helbich when Helbich was about to flee the epidemic, leaving his friend to carry on the work. The hymn includes the leper's penitent dependence on God and also his response of confidence and gratitude. Once again we are in the debt of Catherine Winkworth for the translation, slightly altered in our *Hymnal*.

The tune, now wedded to this text, was possibly a *contrafactum*, a tune "made over" into a religious tune from the hunting song "Ich ging einmal spazieren." Originating in a period when one could not properly speak of a distinction between "sacred" and "secular" musical styles (as opposed to the wide breach between the two extremes today), the melody carries and reinforces the words admirably. If it is unfamiliar it will richly repay the time invested in learning it.

THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

MATT. 6:24-34

In the Old Testament the Children of Israel were often guilty of worshiping idols. Many people believe idol worship has been overcome by education in our modern world. But I must maintain that idol worship is more prevalent today than ever before. Mammon, the god of money, has set up huge altars and rules over endless hosts of devotees. No one remains untouched by the allurements of this idol. Because of his universal appeal and destructive power, Jesus warns us against mammon in our Gospel for today. Let me talk to you about

The Destructive and Damnable Worship of Mammon

I shall show you that

- I. Mammon is actually the god whom the world serves
- II. The worship of mammon brings destruction now and damnation in the hereafter

I

A. Whatever man considers as his greatest and highest good is his god. For most people this is mammon. Men in all walks of life serve this god. Rich and poor alike worship at his altar. They sacrifice anything and everything to him. Health, joy, rest, conveniences, friendship, honor, a good name, virtue, a good conscience, even life itself, are readily devoted to him. What do men fear more than the loss of the favor of this god? Whom does the world trust more than this god? There is no doubt about it. Mammon is the god the world loves, fears, and trusts above all things.

B. Yet the worship of mammon is not always easily recognizable. Thousands serve this god but are not aware of it. This god stalks around in all kinds of disguises and under many different names, so man will not recognize him. He poses behind frugality, industry, devotion and dedication to a cause, concern for loved ones, satisfaction to have enough for daily subsistence. But Christ rips the mask away and exposes the various forms of the worship of mammon (vv. 31, 33a). His Word is sharp and contains a frightening judgment.

C. Only those who do not set their heart on money, but use it to help others, who work according to God's will and do not worry about food and clothing, who put the kingdom of God first and temporal things second, who have a real concern for the grace of God and the salvation of their soul, these people are no worshipers of mammon.

D. Often such as do not want to be rich but desire only enough money to be carefree, nevertheless make the little sum of money which they crave their idol. Others say that since they are satisfied with meager possessions, they are free from greed. Yet this small amount turns out to be their comfort and god. Still others are concerned about the kingdom of God, pray, go to church and

Communion, look upon themselves as Christians and separate themselves from the world. Yet when they worry about their business, they, too, worship mammon. Again some do not seek riches, because they fear that would be a futile endeavor, but are elated at the thought that such good fortune could be theirs. Mammon is their god too. Many persons contribute as little as possible—just enough to save face—and all the while they drive hard bargains and do not pay just wages. They also worship at the altar of mammon.

E. It is impossible to mention all the forms in which the worship of mammon appears. By nature all of us are worshipers of mammon. Man must have a god. After the true God has been forced out, the god of this world steps in. Often when the gracious work of the Holy Ghost has cleansed a heart of greed for money, the god of mammon enters that heart again.

II

A. Scripture points out the destructiveness and damnableness of mammon worship in 1 Tim. 6:10a. Mammon is the source of all self-love, lovelessness against the neighbor, hatred, envy, indifference toward Christ, His Word, and His grace; enmity against God, despising of all heavenly riches, deceit, murder, hardening of the heart. In v. 24 Christ refers to the basic evil involved in mammon worship. Love of money squeezes out love of God. Frequently a mammon worshiper wants to follow Christ. But when he realizes that Christ must have first place in his heart, he turns away. The gate is too narrow, the way too small, the condition too onerous.

B. The lot of the mammon worshiper is sad. Here he is hounded by worry, unrest, and dissatisfaction. The thought of death increases his restlessness. His despair in the hour of death is just a foretaste of what is awaiting him in eternity. God will tell him to seek salvation in the gods he worshiped

during his life. It is not just the evil that was done, but also the good that was left undone, that damns.

C. Let everyone dread the worship of mammon. It leads to grief here and to horror in eternity. Here it deprives men of rest and peace of mind. In eternity it separates from God and salvation. Let everyone ask himself earnestly, "Are you serving God or mammon?" Seek God and His grace. Taste and see how good He is! Open your heart wide for Him to enter. Then there will be no room for the god of mammon.

The Hymn of the Week: "In God, My Faithful God," *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 526.

This Sunday's Epistle, in a series of axioms, applies the gift of the Spirit to the various daily duties and relationships of Christian life, and the Gospel teaches that the life of the Spirit, rather than material things, is the important thing in life. God, who gives His Spirit and who gave His Son, will give us what we need—but in His fatherly wisdom. Thus the Introit and Gradual are confessions of our dependent trust in the Lord and of our thankfulness to the God of "continual pity." (Collect)

Although the text has been ascribed to Sigismund Weingärtner and dated around 1600, recent research tends to discredit this ascription, chiefly on strength of the surmise that the earliest printed form was in Low German in Lübeck, whereas Weingärtner was from South Germany. An interesting symbolical touch in the original is the acrostic formed by the first letters of the stanzas: stanzas one and five begin with the letter "A" and the middle three with the letter "O," a reference to the Alpha and Omega of Rev. 1:8. It bespeaks the Gospel's emphasis on trust (stanza one), through Christ's merit (stanza two), even to death (stanza three—"which is today and tomorrow is cast into the oven" [Gospel]), since we are sons of the Kingdom (stanza four), and so

can pass "each day" in the various daily duties and relationships in the power of the Spirit (Epistle), all under the rubric of the eschatological hope. (Stanza five)

The melody is another "secular" tune made over into a hymn, so that "the devil doesn't" have "all the good tunes" (Luther). It was written in 1574 by Jakob Regnart to the text "O Venus, you are blind, and so is your son [Cupid]." The associations with this plaint of disillusioned love have since passed, and the tune as we have it was joined to our hymn by Melchior Vulpus in 1609, with Johann Hermann Schein giving the tune its present form by altering Regnart's original in 1627. Used only once in our *Hymnal*, it may be unfamiliar, but the advantages of learning it outweigh the inconvenience of the process.

Texts of Sermon Outlines 1962—1963

<i>Date</i>	<i>Day</i>	<i>Text</i>			
Dec. 2	1 Advent	Joshua 3:1-6	March 3	Invocavit	2 Cor. 6:1-10
Dec. 9	2 Advent	1 Cor. 1:4-9	March 10	Reminisc.	Matt. 15:21-28
Dec. 16	3 Advent	Rom. 2:12-16	March 17	Oculi	Luke 11:14-28
Dec. 23	4 Advent	1 John 1:1-4	March 24	Laetare	John 6:47-57
Dec. 24	Chris. Eve	Luke 1:30-33	March 31	Judica	Matt. 27:28-31
Dec. 25	Christmas	1 John 3:1-5	April 7	Palm S.	John 12:12-19
Dec. 30	S. a. Chris.	Rev. 14:1-5	April 11	M. Thurs.	Matt. 26:26-29
Dec. 31	N. Y. Eve	Ps. 102:27, 28	April 12	Good Fri.	Gal. 2:20
Jan. 1	New Year	Rom. 8:24-32	April 14	Easter	John 11:23-26
Jan. 6	Epiphany	Matt. 3:13-17	April 21	Quasimodo.	John 6:35-40
Jan. 13	1 a. Epiph.	John 1:35-42	April 28	Miseric. D.	John 10:11-16
Jan. 20	2 a. Epiph.	John 1:43-51	May 5	Jubilate	John 9:1-12
Jan. 27	3 a. Epiph.	John 4:5-14	May 12	Cantate	John 15:1-8
Feb. 3	Transfig.	John 5:39-47	May 19	Rogate	John 14:1-7
Feb. 10	Septuages.	Matt. 11:25-30	May 23	Ascension	Acts 1:1-11
Feb. 17	Sexages.	John 12:27-33	May 26	Exaudi	1 Peter 4:7-11
Feb. 24	Quinquages.	Rom. 2:4	June 2	Pentecost	Acts 2:1-13
Feb. 27	Ash Wed.	Luke 23:32-34	June 9	Trinity	Acts 4:32-37
			June 16	1 a. Trin.	Acts 4:16-24
			June 23	2 a. Trin.	Matt. 5:1-6
			June 30	3 a. Trin.	Rom. 5:6-10
			July 7	4 a. Trin.	1 Peter 3:8-15
			July 14	5 a. Trin.	2 Cor. 4:6-10
			July 21	6 a. Trin.	Rom. 8:12-14
			July 28	7 a. Trin.	John 21:15-19
			Aug. 4	8 a. Trin.	James 1:12
			Aug. 11	9 a. Trin.	James 2:8-10
			Aug. 18	10 a. Trin.	Rom. 14:1-9
			Aug. 25	11 a. Trin.	Zech. 7:4-9
			Sept. 1	12 a. Trin.	Ex. 33:17-23
			Sept. 8	13 a. Trin.	Ps. 1
			Sept. 15	14 a. Trin.	Prov. 9:1-6, 9, 10
			Sept. 22	15 a. Trin.	Is. 62:6-12
			Sept. 29	16 a. Trin.	Jer. 8:4-9
			Oct. 6	17 a. Trin.	Is. 40:26-31
			Oct. 13	18 a. Trin.	Rom. 6:19-23
			Oct. 20	19 a. Trin.	2 Peter 3:17, 18
			Oct. 27	20 a. Trin.	Jer. 6:16-21
			Nov. 3	21 a. Trin.	Luke 19:11-27
			Nov. 10	22 a. Trin.	Phil. 1:12-21
			Nov. 17	23 a. Trin.	1 Peter 2:9
			Nov. 24	24 a. Trin.	1 Cor. 3:21, 22