

- Many people have difficulties with this Gospel...but there really is no need for such.
- Jesus isn't saying that we should be dishonest in our dealings as was the bad steward; He is simply contrasting the worldly and the spiritual—that the worldly man often seems to be more clever and zealous in pursuit of HIS goal than the religious man is in his... going to far greater trouble and risk to obtain ill-gotten, worldly gains than devout, spiritual people do to obtain their eternal reward: life with God.
- I think most, if not all, of us are guilty of it to a degree. We concern ourselves with this world so much that we tend to neglect the next. This world is so immediate, and eternity seems so distant.
- But we must see things with clear vision...and thus Jesus reminds us today to use our worldly goods—whether time, talents or treasure—in charity and for the work of the Church to bring Christ to others.

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- Secondly today St. Paul writes: *“I ask that supplications, prayers, petitions and thanksgivings be offered for everyone, for kings and for all in authority....”*
 - Well...in our day that can make us grind our teeth. *“What? Pray for Hillary?!”* or, in the past: *“What! Pray for Trump?!”*
 - Absolutely. After all...one of them will most likely be our next President...and whether you love or loathe their politics, we are called to love their persons...and to pray that they be given wisdom and grace to lead us in a way which moves the world toward absolute Good and Truth.
 - And how can they do that without God's grace?

- And as Christ hated no one, we—His disciples—must not hate anyone...even if we are against what they may stand for.
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 - Both Paul and Peter in their letters are quite specific in teaching that prayers must go up for our political leaders...so that, as Paul says: “...*we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way.*”
 - And we are bound to obey legitimate authority. Paul writes the Romans (and, therefore, us): “*Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God... Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed...*” (Rom 13:1-2)
 - And Peter says in his first letter: “*Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor*” (1Peter 2:17) ... meaning whoever is in authority. Peter, who himself would undergo persecution by those same authorities.
 - And Jesus Himself says to Pilate: “*You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above...*” (John 19:10-11)
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 - This obedience and respect for authority was confirmed by the early Church as well. St. Justin the Martyr wrote to the Roman emperor and to the Roman senate: “*...to God alone we render worship, but in other things we gladly serve you, acknowledging you as kings and rulers of men, and praying that with your kingly power you be found to possess also sound judgment...every man will suffer punishment in eternal fire according to the merit of his deed, and will render account according to the power he has received from God, as Christ intimated when He said, "To whom God has given more, of him shall more be required."*”
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- In our day we see Christianity and Catholic principles—and therefore Truth—being increasingly restricted and even despised, even by political leaders, and so prayers are needed for them more than ever.
- Yes, there ARE unjust and evil laws—like any which elevates one class or race of people over another, or require us to break God’s law, or laws against innocent human life. These laws we are bound by God’s law NOT to follow.
- ...but simply because we may not like a law (like taxes) does not make a law inherently unjust, and we are bound to follow them.
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- Obviously this doesn’t mean that all rulers are good...but God allows both good and bad rulers...just as He allows both health and sickness in our bodies...and, in some way which may be inexplicable to us, but in His omniscience, He deflects evil so that the good that comes forth is even greater...such as martyrs dying for the faith, but in doing so, bring many TO the faith.
- We see this most starkly in the crucifixion of Jesus—the greatest of evils, and yet through it God brought about the greatest of Goods—our salvation.
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- So next time you get a nasty political e-mail ridiculing someone in office, instead of passing it on with some snarky comment, simply delete it and say a prayer for both the subject and the sender.
- And let us pray always for peace and truth, and for grace upon all of our leaders for wisdom and the desire to do the good...for no matter how hardened they may seem in positions which may be against life or charity or true good, we always remember what the Archangel Gabriel said to Mary: *“Nothing will be impossible with God.”*

Reading 1

[Am 8:4-7](#)

Hear this, you who trample upon the needy
and destroy the poor of the land!
"When will the new moon be over," you ask,
"that we may sell our grain,
and the sabbath, that we may display the wheat?
We will diminish the ephah,
add to the shekel,
and fix our scales for cheating!
We will buy the lowly for silver,
and the poor for a pair of sandals;
even the refuse of the wheat we will sell!"
The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob:
Never will I forget a thing they have done!

[Ps 113:1-2, 4-6, 7-8](#)

Responsorial Psalm

R. (cf. 1a, 7b) **Praise the Lord who lifts up the poor.**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

Praise, you servants of the LORD,
praise the name of the LORD.
Blessed be the name of the LORD
both now and forever.

R. **Praise the Lord who lifts up the poor.**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

High above all nations is the LORD;
above the heavens is his glory.
Who is like the LORD, our God, who is enthroned on high
and looks upon the heavens and the earth below?

R. **Praise the Lord who lifts up the poor.**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

He raises up the lowly from the dust;
from the dunghill he lifts up the poor
to seat them with princes,
with the princes of his own people.

R. **Praise the Lord who lifts up the poor.**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

[1 Tm 2:1-8](#)

Reading 2

Beloved:

First of all, I ask that supplications, prayers,
petitions, and thanksgivings be offered for everyone,
for kings and for all in authority,
that we may lead a quiet and tranquil life
in all devotion and dignity.

This is good and pleasing to God our savior,
who wills everyone to be saved
and to come to knowledge of the truth.

For there is one God.

There is also one mediator between God and men,
the man Christ Jesus,

who gave himself as ransom for all.

This was the testimony at the proper time.

For this I was appointed preacher and apostle
— I am speaking the truth, I am not lying —,
teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

It is my wish, then, that in every place the men should pray,
lifting up holy hands, without anger or argument.

[Lk 16:1-13](#) or [16:10-13](#)

Gospel

Jesus said to his disciples,

"A rich man had a steward
who was reported to him for squandering his property.

He summoned him and said,

'What is this I hear about you?

Prepare a full account of your stewardship,
because you can no longer be my steward.'

The steward said to himself, 'What shall I do,
now that my master is taking the position of steward away from me?

I am not strong enough to dig and I am ashamed to beg.

I know what I shall do so that,

when I am removed from the stewardship,
they may welcome me into their homes.'

He called in his master's debtors one by one.

To the first he said,

'How much do you owe my master?'

He replied, 'One hundred measures of olive oil.'
He said to him, 'Here is your promissory note.
Sit down and quickly write one for fifty.'
Then to another the steward said, 'And you, how much do you owe?'
He replied, 'One hundred kors of wheat.'
The steward said to him, 'Here is your promissory note;
write one for eighty.'
And the master commended that dishonest steward for acting prudently.
"For the children of this world
are more prudent in dealing with their own generation
than are the children of light.
I tell you, make friends for yourselves with dishonest wealth,
so that when it fails, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.
The person who is trustworthy in very small matters
is also trustworthy in great ones;
and the person who is dishonest in very small matters
is also dishonest in great ones.
If, therefore, you are not trustworthy with dishonest wealth,
who will trust you with true wealth?
If you are not trustworthy with what belongs to another,
who will give you what is yours?
No servant can serve two masters.
He will either hate one and love the other,
or be devoted to one and despise the other.
You cannot serve both God and mammon."

or

Jesus said to his disciples:
"The person who is trustworthy in very small matters
is also trustworthy in great ones;
and the person who is dishonest in very small matters
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