

Commentary on the Gospel for Wed, Oct 25th 2017

Luke tells the parable of the housemaster and the thief. If the housemaster knows a thief will try to break into the house, the valuables, and belongings will be locked up safely. The house and its contents will be protected.

Peter asks Jesus who this message is meant for. Jesus responds:

"Who, then, is the faithful and prudent steward
whom the master will put in charge of his servants
to distribute the food allowance at the proper time?

Blessed is that servant whom his master on arrival finds doing so.

Truly, I say to you, he will put him
in charge of all his property.

But if that servant says to himself,
'My master is delayed in coming,'
and begins to beat the menservants and the maidservants,
to eat and drink and get drunk,
then that servant's master will come
on an unexpected day and at an unknown hour
and will punish the servant severely
and assign him a place with the unfaithful.

That servant who knew his master's will
but did not make preparations nor act in accord with his will
shall be beaten severely;
and the servant who was ignorant of his master's will

but acted in a way deserving of a severe beating

shall be beaten only lightly.

Much will be required of the person entrusted with much,

and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more."

As I reflect on this reading, the word INTEGRITY comes to mind. There are many definitions of the word integrity. My favorite is attributed to several different writers, speakers, and to Anonymous as well. "Integrity is doing the right thing when nobody is watching."

Jesus describes the two scenarios. In one instance, the servant hears that the master's arrival will be delayed. The servant acts very irresponsibly, without integrity. I'm sure he had a great story as to why this behavior went on—it certainly couldn't have been his fault. The other scenario illustrates a trustworthy servant who goes about the work of the day regardless of when the master is coming. He is prepared at all times for the master to arrive. This servant acts with great integrity. He did the right thing whether the master was watching or not.

We can take some time to recall when we did the right thing no matter what. What about the times that doing the right thing was more difficult. Am I treating the world with care and respect? Am I compassionate? Am I patient? How do I treat my neighbor or coworker—even the one who tries my patience?

Our Lord has entrusted us with a beautiful world full of beautiful creatures—we are expected to provide care and concern for all of it—even though we are being watched over all of the time.

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