

12 October, 2025

18th Sunday after Pentecost

Commonsense as well as devotion are needed for the service of God

2 Kings 5.19b-27, Psalm 39.1,3-7, 1 Timothy 6.6-19, Luke 16.1-12

Key Verse: *“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.”* Luke 16:10

As followers of Christ, we are called to serve God with all our heart, soul, and mind. While devotion to God is essential, commonsense and practical wisdom are equally necessary in serving God faithfully. The Scriptures today remind us that spiritual devotion without practical discernment can lead to failure. We are to serve God with a balance of both devotion and common sense, allowing our faith to guide our actions with wisdom. Our reflection will focus on the lessons from 2 Kings 5:19b-27, Psalm 39:1, 3-7, 1 Timothy 6:6-19, and Luke 16:1-12. These passages provide insight into how both devotion and practical wisdom must guide us in living a life of integrity, discernment, and faithfulness in the service of God.

1. Gehazi's Failure: A Lack of Commonsense and Integrity (2 Kings 5:19b-27)

The story of Gehazi in 2 Kings 5 is a powerful reminder of how a lack of commonsense and integrity can ruin one's devotion to God. Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, saw an opportunity to enrich himself after Naaman, the Syrian commander, was healed of leprosy by the prophet. Although Naaman had offered gifts, Elisha refused them, showing that God's grace and power cannot be bought or sold. However, Gehazi's greed got the better of him. He ran after Naaman and deceitfully obtained the gifts for himself. His actions were foolish and dishonest, as he thought he could hide his sin from Elisha

and from God. But Elisha, being a prophet of God, knew what had happened. As a result, Gehazi was struck with the very leprosy that had left Naaman. Here, Gehazi's lack of commonsense in understanding the spiritual principles of integrity and his failure to consider the consequences of his actions led to his downfall. Devotion to God cannot be separated from moral discernment. When we serve God, we must do so with both a pure heart and wise, thoughtful actions.

2. The Brevity of Life and the Importance of Wisdom (Psalm 39:1, 3-7)

Psalm 39 reminds us of the fleeting nature of life and the need to live wisely before God. The psalmist reflects on how brief and fragile human life is, saying, "Surely everyone goes around like a mere phantom" (v.6). The psalmist urges us to be mindful of our words, actions, and decisions because our time on earth is short. In verses 1 and 3, the psalmist speaks of guarding his tongue and thinking carefully before speaking. This shows the importance of exercising commonsense in our speech and actions. Our devotion to God must be reflected in wise, thoughtful behaviour that honours Him. Whether it's in how we speak to others or how we live day-to-day, commonsense coupled with godly devotion allows us to make meaningful decisions that reflect God's character. In serving God, we must remember that life is short, and we are called to be wise stewards of the time, talents, and resources God has entrusted to us. Commonsense dictates that we prioritize what truly matters - our relationship with God and our service to others in love.

3. Contentment and Godliness in the Pursuit of Righteousness (1 Timothy 6:6-19)

Paul's letter to Timothy in 1 Timothy 6 provides us with a valuable lesson about the balance of commonsense and devotion in the pursuit of righteousness. Paul writes, "Godliness with contentment is great gain" (v. 6). He warns against the dangers of greed and the desire for wealth, which can lead people away from faith. The passage highlights that true devotion to God is not about accumulating riches but about cultivating contentment, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness (v. 11). Paul urges Timothy to fight the good fight of faith and to take hold of the eternal life to which he was called. Here, commonsense plays a role in helping us discern what is truly valuable in life. While devotion leads us to pursue godliness, commonsense helps us avoid the traps of greed and materialism that can distract us from our spiritual calling. It teaches us to be content with what we have and to focus on what truly matters - our relationship with God and the pursuit of righteousness. In serving God, we

must prioritize spiritual wealth over material wealth, recognizing that true riches come from a life of faith, love, and good works, not from worldly possessions.

4. The Parable of the Shrewd Manager: Wisdom in Stewardship (Luke 16:1-12)

In Luke 16:1-12, Jesus tells the parable of the shrewd manager, a story that underscores the importance of commonsense in managing resources wisely. The manager, facing the loss of his job, shrewdly reduces the debts of his master's debtors in order to gain favour with them. While his actions were ethically questionable, Jesus commends the manager's shrewdness - his ability to think ahead and act decisively. The lesson here is not that we should be dishonest, but rather that we should use the same level of wisdom and foresight in managing the resources God has entrusted to us. Jesus says, "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much" (v. 10). This applies to our financial resources, but also to our spiritual gifts, time, and opportunities to serve God. In the service of God, devotion must be paired with practical wisdom. We are called to be wise stewards of all that God has given us, whether it is our money, our talents, or our influence. Commonsense teaches us to manage these resources effectively, always with a heart of devotion to God.

Conclusion

In the service of God, commonsense and devotion must go hand in hand. From the cautionary tale of Gehazi's greed to the psalmist's call for wisdom in the brevity of life, from Paul's advice on contentment to Jesus' teaching on wise stewardship, the Scriptures remind us that serving God requires both spiritual devotion and practical discernment. Our faith is not just about heartfelt devotion but also about making wise decisions that reflect God's wisdom in our daily lives. As we serve God, let us seek His guidance to balance our spiritual fervour with practical wisdom, knowing that in doing so, we honour Him with both our hearts and our minds.

Prayer

Gracious and loving God, we thank You for Your Word that teaches us to serve You with both devotion and wisdom. Help us to balance our faith with practical discernment, so that we may honour You in all that we do. Give us the commonsense to make wise decisions, and the devotion to serve You faithfully with pure hearts. Lord, we pray for those who may be struggling with decisions today - grant them wisdom and clarity. May we always seek to be good stewards of the time, resources, and opportunities You have given us, and may our lives bring glory to Your name. In Jesus' name, Amen.