

**"FIRST THINGS FIRST; IN GLORY & GRACE!" – OCTOBER 10, 2021
THE TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
AMOS 5:6-7, 10-15; HEBREWS 4:12-16; MARK 10:17-31
Promises for your pocket or purse - Take notes and carry them with you.**

“Failure is not an option!” “Winners never quit, and quitters never win!” “Give 110%!” Every day such clichés try to draw us in. Employers, advertisers, children, parents, lovers, all send messages they want taken seriously. We can feel like we are not being heard. We try emphatically to make our point. Jesus spoke simply, he said it like it is, like it has been, like it always will be. Jesus is direct, he draws the line without reservation. When it comes to our spiritual walk, it cannot be out of comfort or convenience; it cannot be done with a spirit of self-righteousness. God is to be first! As we make God and neighbors first, we believe and see God’s glory and grace, we see God in Jesus has made us first. As we continue to explore the net worth of our core values, we trust anew, our true net worth is in God’s grace alone! When God is first, we may feel last in this world. Trust then, always, what needs no further explanation, only a little more faith, believing first things first: God makes you first, first; you are God’s everything; and God is forever emphatic about you!

1. `Let's get things straight,' "no one is good but God alone." Mark 10:18
 - A. Try as we might only God is good!
 - B. God is good in Jesus - who saves; in the Father - who creates and recreates; in the Spirit - who comforts and strengthens and directs; in us and through us - thanks to the gift of faith.

2. `The most important point,' `Jesus looked at him, loved him.' Mark 10:21
 - A. Jesus loves us, just as we are. We are his everything!
 - B. `He knows our transgressions, how great our sins are, how self-righteous we are, how self-serving we can be, ...' Amos 5:12
 - C. `We can approach him with boldness to receive his love, mercy, and grace.' The rich man knew who to talk to, so do we! So let us pray with boldness! Hebrews 4:16; Mark 10:17-20

3. `To make it clear, crystal clear,' "sell what you own ... you will have treasure in heaven, then come, follow me." Hebrews 4:12; Mark 10:21b
 - A. If our riches are where we ground our trust and security, we will not see the glory of God, and it is time for a change.
 - B. Giving is not about giving it all for the sake of giving it all. We are to give, to serve, with Jesus being first!

- i. No matter the gift given, Christ is to be at the center.
 - ii. An empty heart will equal an empty gift.
 - iii. When our heart, soul, and faith are central - giving is crystal clear, the numbers go away, God is first!
 - iv. Our true net worth is in God's grace alone!

4. `The number one thing to remember is,' `how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God, when God is not first!' Mark 10:10:23-25
 - A. `It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of the needle, than for a rich person to enter,' etc.
 - B. We cannot do it on our own! We cannot buy our way in, give our way in, perfect our way in. We can only surrender our will, our energy, our all, our faith, and our trust to Him.
 - C. We cannot out give our God. We cannot even out sin His love.

5. `If you leave today remembering only one thing ...,' For us to make God and neighbor first, to believe, to see on our own the glory of God is impossible; "for God all things are possible." Mark 10:26-27,31
 - A. Before `with God all things are possible' can be believed; we must first trust and praise, "for God all things are possible."
 - B. God is who saves, loves. If up to us to be good, to surrender, to make God first - impossible. With God, all things are possible!
 - C. God did what everyone thought was the last thing a God would do, he sent His Son, Jesus, to reveal and to fulfill God's glory and grace, to make first things first, to make you first!