

Sunday Homily  
33<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Ordinary Time A  
November 16, 2008

By Deacon Jeff Claar

*“Well done, my good and faithful servant. Come; share your master’s joy.”*

*“Throw this useless servant into the darkness outside, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.”*

These are the two fates of our servants in today’s parable. But this parable really isn’t about their money-management skills. If it were only about money, it would seem to teach that the rich get richer, and the poor get poorer. The vast majority of us would agree that this isn’t right, when it comes to our money. If this parable isn’t talking about money, what is the point?

What if this parable was really talking about our relationship to our God? What if this parable was teaching us who we really are, and who our God really is? There are two players here – the master and the servant. Just who is the master – and who is the servant? Well, that is exactly what this parable is trying to teach us.

This parable is about the Kingdom of God and what it takes to share the master’s joy. The servants who were given the praise of the master did two things. First, they had a healthy fear and respect for the master and they knew what he wanted from them. Second, they knew that they were expected to use their skills and knowledge to improve what the master gave them and when the time came, they could return even more to the master and He would be most pleased. Well we are the servants, and God is the master.

To have this clear understanding of our relationship as servant to our God is a gift of the Holy Spirit; a gift we call Fear of the Lord. This is the gift that makes us aware that there is nothing worse than separating ourselves from God.

God loves us to a depth we will never know and we can’t even begin to imagine the joy that He promises to us. But, and it is a big but, God loves us so much that He gave us free will. We know that we can never force anyone to love us, and God know that too.

God is the one who defines our relationship and how we are to live it out in our lives. And He does this through Scripture and the teaching authority of His Church. We should be very careful when we think that we know better than the Church on any particular issue or belief. There is no quicker way to serious sin than to believe that we know best. We fool ourselves when we believe that we can define how we will pray or worship or act and what will please our God. Clearly in this parable it is the Master, and He alone, who defines what actions are rewarded and what actions are punished.

In what areas of our lives are we trying to be the Master?