

# MATERIAL THINGS

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## THE LESSON: LUKE 19

*To give and preserve to our use the kindly fruits of the earth,  
so that in due time we may enjoy them,  
We beseech thee, good Lord.*

God made the material world – of which we are a part – and he made it good. Think of delicious foods, the beauty of nature, the affection of friends, and all of your favourite things. There are endless opportunities all around us to be grateful for the blessings of the material world.

The psalms remind us that, “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it” (24:1). When we make our offering in the Communion service, we pray with the words of King David, “All things come from you, and of your own have we given you” (1 Chronicles 29:14). It’s important for us to remember that the material blessings we enjoy are not ours to hoard, but they are God’s, to be used in ways that honour him.

The Bible has a lot to say about money, because a wrong attitude towards it is one of the greatest temptations we face. St. Paul, writing to St. Timothy, said, “the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils”. *Why?* Because “those who desire to be rich fall into temptation”, and “it is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith”. Instead, “there is great gain in godliness with contentment, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world” (1 Timothy 6:6-10).

## AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.

(IF YOU DON'T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE “FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES”, WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON'T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER.](http://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER))

Spend some time praying again with the phrase “*Give us today our daily bread*”. Notice that we say, “Give us” and not “Give me”: Are there blessings that God might be calling you to share with others? Or, is a spirit of envy something you struggle with? If so, ask God to replace it with a spirit of gratitude for what he has given to you, and to help you love those you are tempted to resent. Read Luke 12:15,30: *Jesus said, “Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of one’s possessions... For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need them.”* Conclude with a time of thanksgiving.

- AND/OR -

Take some time to pray through this prayer.

*Almighty God, whose loving hand hath given us all that we possess: Grant us grace that we may honour thee with our substance, and, remembering the account which we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of thy bounty; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.* (PRAYER FOR FAITHFULNESS IN THE USE OF THIS WORLD’S GOODS, BCP PAGE 734)

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## LUKE 19: **THE PRODIGAL RICH MAN**

<sup>1</sup>Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. <sup>2</sup>And there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. <sup>3</sup>And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small of stature. <sup>4</sup>So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. <sup>5</sup>And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.” <sup>6</sup>So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. <sup>7</sup>And when they saw it, they all grumbled, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.” <sup>8</sup>And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.” <sup>9</sup>And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. <sup>10</sup>For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”