

## Stewardship Reflection on Lectionary Readings

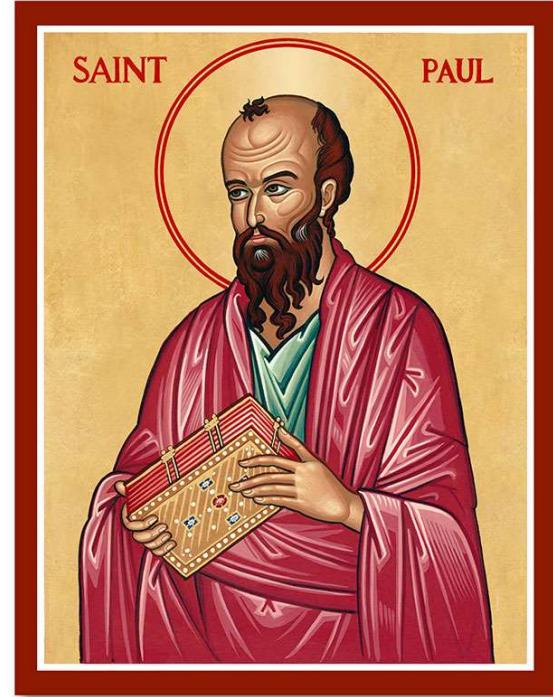
August 23, 2020 — Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

IS 22:19-23; PS 138:1-3, 6, 8; ROM 11:33-36; MT 16:13-20

Our readings today reveal beautiful truths about our God, and they challenge us to look at the truth about ourselves as well.

The second reading from Paul's letter to the Romans describes the attributes of God in powerful, eloquent terms. "Oh, the depths of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How inscrutable are his judgments and how unsearchable his ways!" It makes you want to stand up and cheer. Paul ends the passage with this final shout of praise, "For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen." We can and should join in this chorus of praise.

But mere words are not enough — sentiment alone will not do for this perfect, all-loving and all-powerful God of ours. We must love Him with our whole being. We must make our very lives a grateful gift of love to Him. This is how we can truly give Him "glory forever."



Our Gospel passage, from Matthew, leads us to take a serious look at whether our lives give God the glory He deserves. It comes in the form of a question that Jesus poses to the disciples. He leads up to it gently enough: "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" And they offer varying responses. Then, Jesus gets personal with them. "But who do you say that I am?" Peter gets the answer right: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Jesus is getting personal with us today. He poses the same question to each one of us who call ourselves His stewards and modern-day disciples. Surely, we would not hesitate to answer just as Peter did, that Jesus is the Christ, Son of the living God.

But do our lives truly reflect this answer? If we really believe that Christ is the Son of God, sent to save us from our sins and lead us to heaven, then we must say so — not just with words, but with our actions. Do my ambitions and priorities in life say that Christ is my Savior and I am His disciple? Does my budget, my family life, my entertainment say so?

The gifts and blessings that God has given us — our time, our talents, our material possessions — are meant to be used in a manner that says "Christ is my Savior and I am His disciple." The most eloquent praise we can offer Him is a life lived in grateful response to His unfathomable love. This is the beauty and power of a stewardship way of life.

— *Stewardship Reflections by Catholic Stewardship Consultants*