Jesus said to his disciples:
“Do not be afraid any longer, little flock,
for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom.
Sell your belongings and give alms.
Provide money bags for yourselves that do not wear out,
an inexhaustible treasure in heaven
that no thief can reach nor moth destroy.
For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.
“Gird your loins and light your lamps
and be like servants who await their master’s return from a wedding,
ready to open immediately when he comes and knocks.
Blessed are those servants
whom the master finds vigilant on his arrival.
Amen, I say to you, he will gird himself,
have them recline at table, and proceed to wait on them.
And should he come in the second or third watch
and find them prepared in this way,
blessed are those servants.
Be sure of this:
if the master of the house had known the hour
when the thief was coming,
he would not have let his house be broken into.
You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect,
the Son of Man will come.”
Then Peter said,
“Lord, is this parable meant for us or for everyone?”
And the Lord replied,
“Who, then, is the faithful and prudent steward
whom the master will put in charge of his servants
to distribute the food allowance at the proper time?
Blessed is that servant whom his master on arrival finds doing so.
Truly, I say to you, the master will put the servant
in charge of all his property.
But if that servant says to himself,
'My master is delayed in coming,'
and begins to beat the menservants and the maidservants,
to eat and drink and get drunk,
then that servant’s master will come
on an unexpected day and at an unknown hour
and will punish the servant severely
and assign him a place with the unfaithful.
That servant who knew his master’s will
but did not make preparations nor act in accord with his will
shall be beaten severely;
and the servant who was ignorant of his master’s will
but acted in a way deserving of a severe beating
shall be beaten only lightly.
Much will be required of the person entrusted with much,
and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more."

Our Scripture Reflection

Today’s wonderful Gospel reading serves as a teaching on Christian stewardship. And what is stewardship?
1. Stewardship must always begin by a careful and prayerful accounting of how I have been blessed. I must take into account the simple, precious gifts: Time, talent, treasure, faith.
2. How can I use these precious gifts to say Thank You to the Lord? Using our gifts for His greater glory is the essence of Christian stewardship. Please note: When the Lord comes at the end of time, each of us will be called to give an accounting of how we used our gifts. What will we have to show Him?

Food for your Journey

On a recent wilderness canoe trip to the Quetico Provincial Park, I sat with my daughter, Hannah, in front of a lovely campfire as the sun fell on the water behind us. As we sat together I casually picked up a small pine cone that I saw lying at my feet and tossed it in the fire. Hannah said, "Dad, do you know what that is?"
"No," I said. She said, "That’s the cone of a jack pine. It opens when heated by fire. The seed can't germinate until the cone burns." ...
The next day as we paddled along I reflected on the lesson of the jack pine cone. As it lay in our campsite, the cone itself was hard as a rock. You'd never know by looking at that little crescent-shaped pine nugget that there was any life inside it. Unless it were exposed to extreme heat! ...
The Bible describes the Holy Spirit with images of uncontrollable power. The Spirit is fire. Wind. And Jesus calls that promised Spirit a "Helper" that will remind us of all that he has said and done. When we gather in worship, pray for one another, reach out to a neighbor or give generously, the holy heat of that Spirit is continually cracking our hearts open so that the "life that really is life" can be released.

--Jeff Sackett,

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear God, You love me and trust me to be Your steward in this life, to use the gifts You have given me on loan for Your greater glory. With the help of Your Grace may I produce an abundant harvest for You and Your people. Amen