

Sermons
New Testament
Luke
18:18-30

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Date written: May 25, 1946

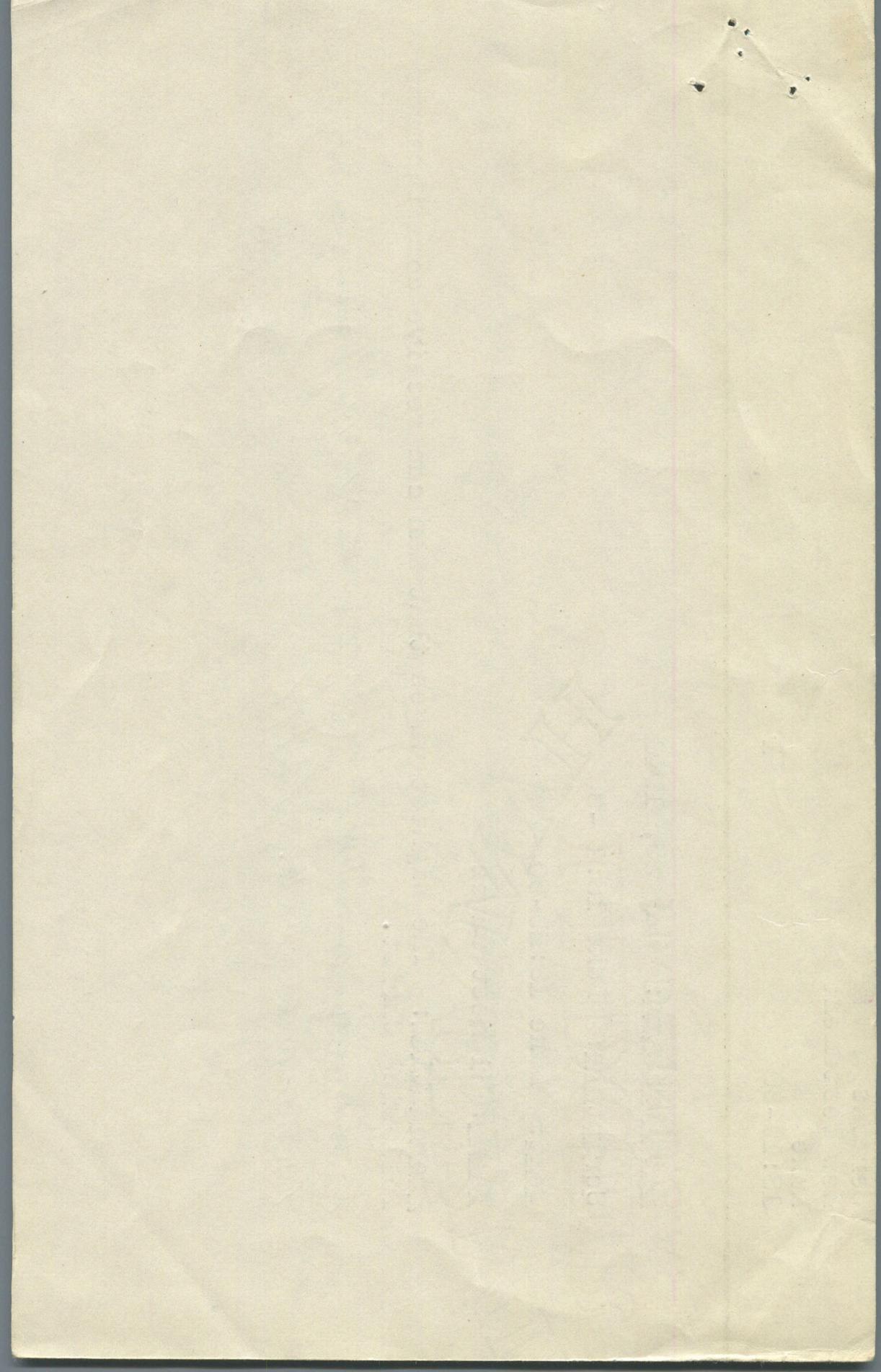
Scripture: Luke 18:18-30

Text: Luke 18:29-30

Theme: Highest wages

Proposition: The highest wages that man can receive come through following Christ.

Places Preached: Pawtucket 5/26/46 // Rocky oak 5/26/46 // Salem & Grewton 6/2/46 //
Wilmington, Ark. 5/2/48



And a certain ruler asked him, saying Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God.

Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.

And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.

Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.

And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! F

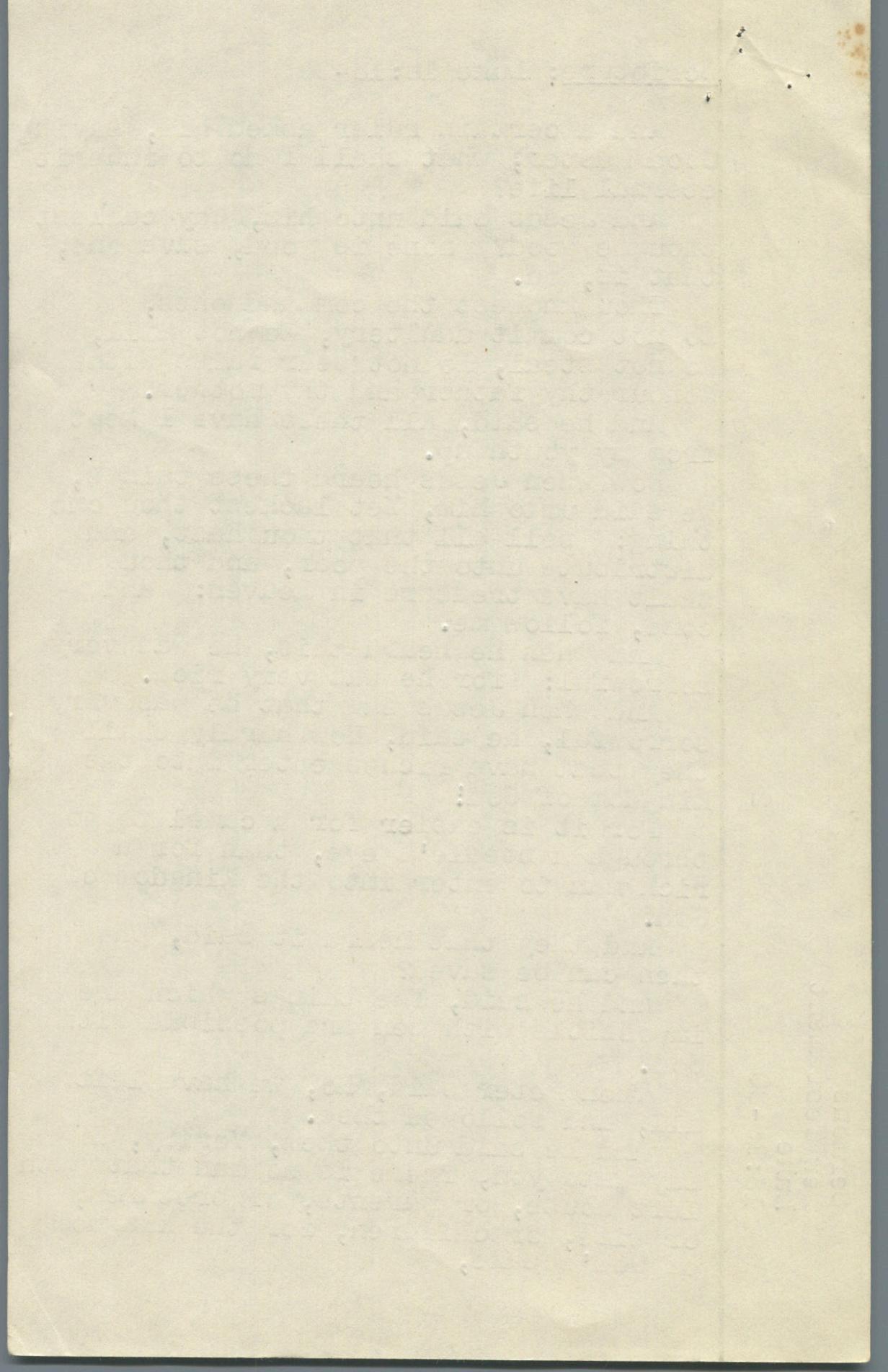
For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

And they that heard it said, Who then can be saved?

And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee.

And he said unto them, Verily, I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,



Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

Text : Luke; 18:29,30.

Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,

Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

Introduction:

1. At the present time, late May, 1946, there is much talk about wages.

a. Strikes of various labor groups the country over emphasize the desire of the average man for higher and still higher wages.

b. Recently, three strikes have gained particular attention, the Virginia Electric Power Company Strike, the coal miners strike, and that of the workers on the nation's railroads.

c. Whatever may be the ulterior motives in these strikes, the motivation of each one, sofar as the average striker is concerned and in the eye of the public, is the desire for higher pay for time worked by those striking.

d. Labor groups are not the only ones demanding higher wages. The demands of manufacturers, salaried workers, retailers for more

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pay for their various services indicates the desires of these groups are similar to those that labor groups are expressing through their strikes.

(1)(1) The demand by such groups as the NAM (National Association of Manufacturers) for the end of price control is an illustration of this.

e. Thus, it is unfair to put the blame for inflation on any one group, manufacturers, labor, utility operators, or others. The greater part of the country's population is guilty interested in this subject of wages.

2. There is so much interest in wages because of the conceptions that people have of what they will do with the wages they receive.

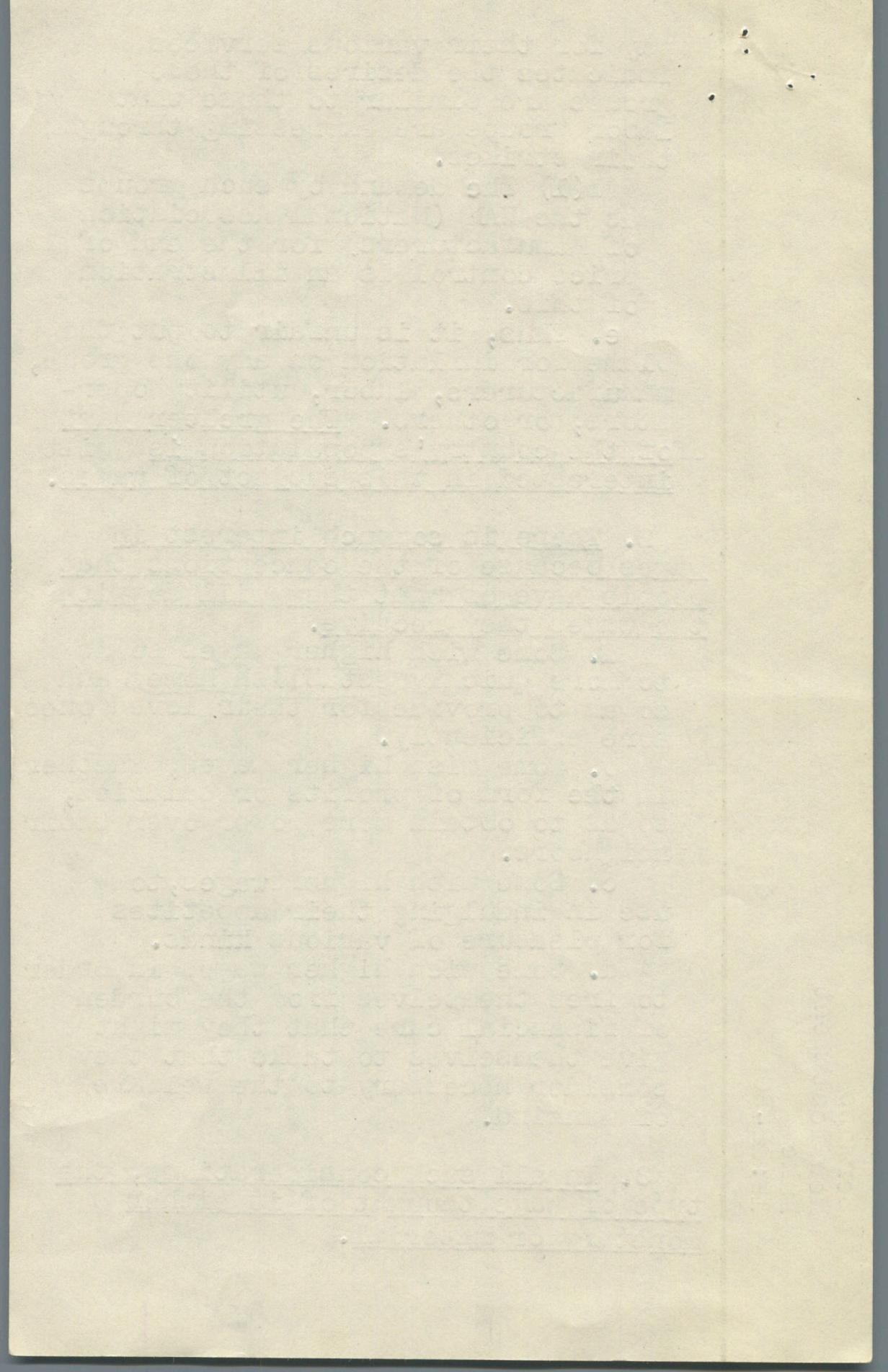
a. Some wish higher wages so as to more quickly establish homes and so as to provide for their loved ones more efficiently.

b. Some wish higher wages, whether in ~~the~~ form of profits or salaries, so as to obtain more power over their neighbors.

c. Some wish higher wages, to use in indulging their appetites for pleasure of various kinds.

d. Some wish higher wages in order to free themselves from the burden of financial care that they might give themselves to tasks that they consider necessary to the welfare of mankind.

3. In all such considerations, the type of wage thought of is either monetary or material.



4. Jesus pointed out in the record which is our scripture lesson that the highest wages man can receive are non-material and come through following him.

I. The ruler who is the central figure in the beginning of the story was a man of material wealth, one who had "high wages".

1. In verse 23 we read "for he was very rich."

2. The word that has been translated "ruler" is one of several words that have been translated "ruler." Here the meaning of the original word is the same as the meaning of the word translated "ruler" in John 3:1, referring to Nicodemus. The word means one of the Sanhedrin, the central judicial ruling council of the Jews, composed of seventy members. This ruler was evidently such a member. Being this, he not only was very rich in material things but also was rich in the influence he had over men.

3. Thus it is evident that he was a man of high wages inasfar as the usual conception of the word "wages" holds true.

II. Yet, though one who received high wages, he was not content. Even though a member of the highest judicial and highest religious council of Judaism, he was not religiously, or spiritually, and mentally satisfied with his lot in life.

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1. He came to Jesus asking "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

2. It might be thought that he asked this out of mere idle curiosity, or as a member of the Sanhedrin perhaps to trap Jesus in blasphemy. However such ideas are dispelled by the recorded fact that when he found he could not meet the conditions that Jesus held forth, "he was very sorrowful."

3. The essentials of this story as they are recorded in Luke are also in Matthew (19:13-30) and in Mark (10:13-31), the oldest of the gospels. They are the same in all three gospels.

III. To the rich young ruler, the highest wages that he could receive was eternal life.

1. In each of the three gospels the question is the same, "How may I inherit eternal life?"

2. In Mark he is recorded as coming to Jesus running, so great was his desire to receive the key to eternal life. "there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" (Mk.10:17).

IV. Jesus in his answer to the young man devaluated all earthly riches as unimportant.

1. This man who questioned him was a man who was a good man, who lived a good moral life, who obeyed the commandments.

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2. Yet, while obeying the commandment he was absorbed in his possessions to the extent that he could not give them up, in order to follow Jesus.

3. Consequently he lost eternal life.

V. Jesus held out to him eternal life as the result of complete giving of self to the Christian way.

1. Text.

VI. The truth of this lesson holds good today.

1. Men are receiving higher wages, monetarily and materially speaking, than ever before in their history.

2. Yet the creation of an atomic bomb and the discovery of a germ serum that can wipe whole nations off the globe at a time is causing frantic efforts between national groups to cooperate to avert war.

3. This frantic activity comes because men are afraid to die through fear of either complete oblivion or eternal punishment for their sinful lives in the period following death.

4. Still Christ holds out to us the challenge "sell all that you have, distribute it to the poor and come follow me."

5. Yet, still not realizing that

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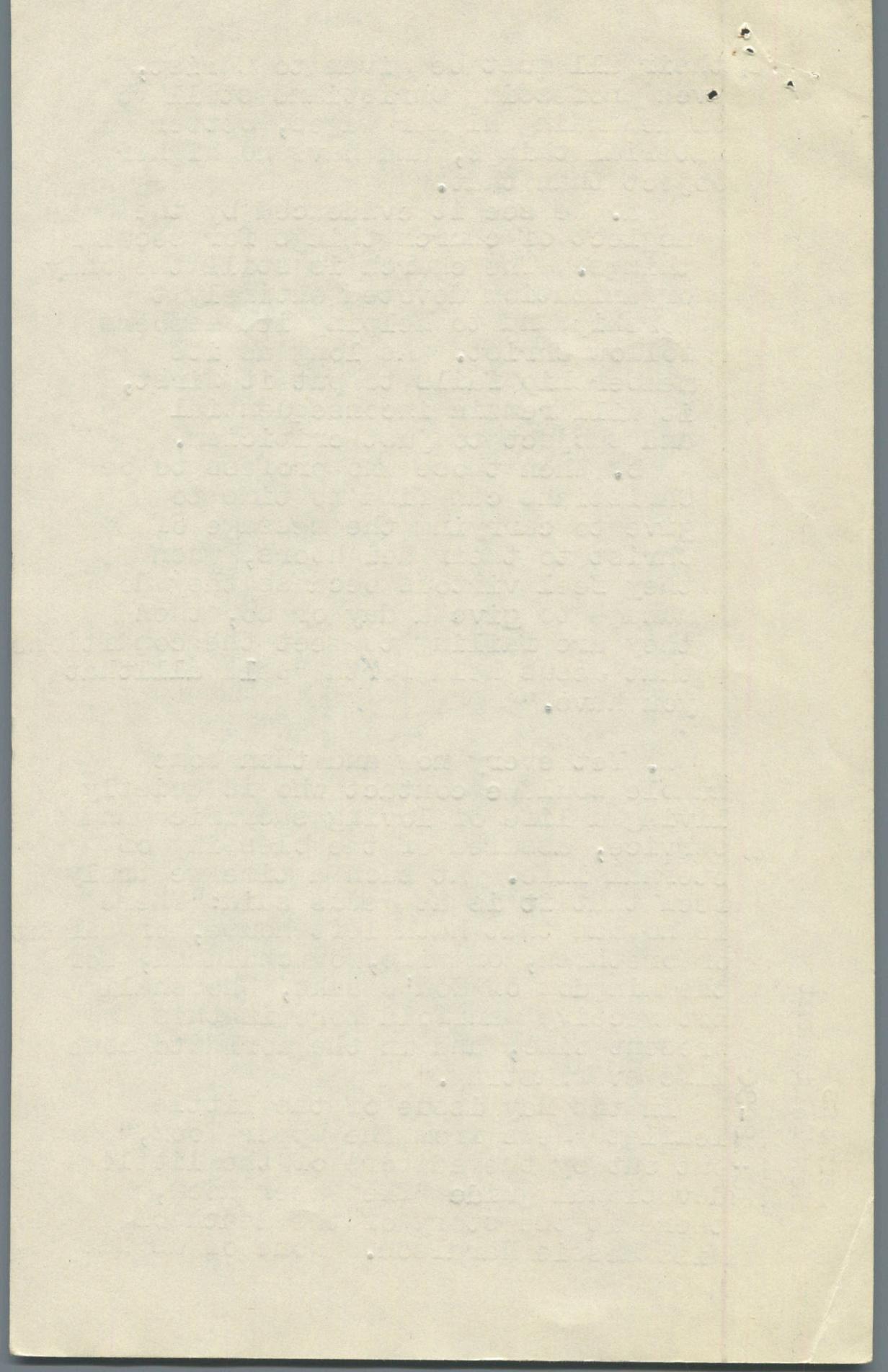
8 their all must be given to Christ, even professing Christians still go on demanding higher wages, better material things, and have no higher object than that.

a. We see it evidenced by the neglect of church things for secular things. The church is still the only organization devoted entirely to worship and to helping its members follow Christ. As long as its membership fails to put it first, it will remain inconsequential and subject to just criticism.

b. When those who profess to be Christians can find no time to give to carrying the message of Christ to their neighbors, when they feel virtuous because they do manage to give a day or so, then they are failing to meet the conditions that Jesus held forth "sell all that you have."

6. Yet every now and then some humble soul we contact who is quietly living a life of loving sacrifice and service, assured of the blessing of eternal life. At such a time we truly feel that it is as Jesus said: "There is no man that hath left house, or parent or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting."

In the May issue of the little leaflet "News from The Upper Room," put out by the editors of the little devotional guide "The Upper Room," there is the story of the death of Miss Bessie Hardison. None of us has



heard of Miss Harrison previously, probably. Yet here was one who all her life served with the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church. One who knows the Board of Missions knows that it's monetary wages are low. One who received relatively little wages, materially, and in the war years could have made much greater wages in secular work, remained through the years there in the Office of The Upper Room helping get out "The Upper Room" that we might through its messages get closer to God. Yet, Miss Harrison evidently enjoyed living, for those who knew her said "She always had a smile and a cheery greeting for everyone and her serene and happy disposition brought happiness to all around her." Truly, the wages of sacrifice to follow Christ's call to service is "manifold more in this present time" in happiness and contentment, and is assurance of eternal life.

Conclusion: Such illustrations could be repeated time and time again.

Conclusion: In this time of talk of wages, let it be remembered that the highest wages a man can receive are happiness and contentment here and assurance of life everlasting. These Jesus promises to those who give up love of material things to follow him.

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