

12th Sunday of Matthew (19:16-26)

17. 'Go and sell all you have and give to the poor' (**Matt. 19:21**); and 'deny yourself, taking up your cross' (Matt. 16: 24). You will then be free from distraction when you pray. [V1] 59 Evagrius the Solitary On Prayer: One Hundred and Fifty-Three Texts

148. The Law figuratively commands men to work for six days and on the seventh to rest (cf. Exod. 20:9-10). The term 'work' when applied to the soul signifies acts of kindness and generosity by means of our possessions - that is, through material things. But the soul's rest and repose is to sell everything and 'give to the poor' (**Matt. 19:21**), as Christ Himself said; so through its lack of possessions it will rest from its work and devote itself to spiritual hope. Such is the rest into which Paul also exhorts us to enter, saying: 'Let us strive therefore to enter into that rest' (Heb. 4:11). [V1] 138 St. Mark the Ascetic On Those who Think that They are Made Righteous by Works Two Hundred and Twenty-Six Texts

And why did the Lord, when He spoke to the rich man about the life of perfection ordained by God, instruct him to sell his possessions and give the money to the poor, keeping back nothing for himself (cf. **Matt. 19:21**)? Was it not because He knew that anything kept back would give rise to all kinds of distractions? [V1] p. 230 St. Neilos Ascetic Discourse

65. Once the spiritual way has become a reality for us, we shall find it proper and helpful to follow the Lord's commandment and sell all our possessions immediately, distributing the money we receive (cf. **Matt. 19:21**), rather than to neglect this injunction on the excuse that we wish always to be in a position to obey the commandments. In the first place, this will secure our complete detachment, and a poverty which is in consequence invulnerable and impervious to all lawlessness and litigation, since we no longer have the possessions which kindle the fire of crime in others. Then, more than all the other virtues, humility will warm and cherish us; in our nakedness she will give us rest in her bosom, like a mother who takes her child into her arms and warms it when, with childish simplicity, it has pulled off what it is wearing and thrown it away, innocently delighting more in nakedness than in pretty clothes. For it is written: 'The Lord preserves the little ones; I humbled myself and He saved me' (Ps. 116:6. LXX). [V1] 274 St. Diadochos of Photiki On Spiritual Knowledge and Discrimination One Hundred Texts

39. A condition of total poverty, combined with silence, is a treasure hidden in the field of the monastic life (cf. Matt. 13:44). So 'go and sell all you have and give to the poor' (**Matt. 19:21**), and acquire this field. And when you have" dug up the treasure, keep it inviolate, so that you may become rich with a wealth that is inexhaustible. [V2] 21 St. Theodoros the Great Ascetic A Century of Spiritual Texts

89. Some people with possessions possess them dispassionately, and so when deprived of them they are not dismayed but are like those who accepted the seizure of their goods with joy (cf. Heb. 10:34). Others possess with passion, so that when they are in danger of being dispossessed they become utterly dejected, like the rich man in the Gospel who went away full of sorrow (cf. **Matt. 19:22**); and if they actually are dispossessed, they remain dejected until they die. Dispossession, then, reveals whether a man's inner state is dispassionate or dominated by passion. [V2] 81 St. Maximos the Confessor Four Hundred Texts on Love Second Century

90. Only God is good by nature (**cf. Matt. 19:17**), and only he who imitates God is good in will and purpose. For it is the intention of such a person to unite the wicked to Him who is good by nature, so that they too may become good. That is why, though reviled by them, he blesses; persecuted, he endures; vilified, he supplicates (cf. 1 Cor. 4:12-13); put to death, he prays for them. He does everything so as not to lapse from the purpose of love, which is God Himself. [V2] 112 St. Maximos the Confessor Four Hundred Texts on Love Fourth Century