

Order of Service . SPV HILL
UNITED CHURCH

1
Address. Sunday Oct 8th.

Thanksgiving.

To be better off is not to be better.

What is thanksgiving? Is it a national holiday to give thanks for all our many blessings or just a national holiday. We have so much to be really thankful for that it would sometimes appear that we miss the very heart of Thanksgiving. When we think of our Old Testament portion read from 1 Chronicles 29 - 10 - 17 we remember how King David blessed God for everything. For all they had received wherewith to build the Temple. For even the people being present. The realization that all belonged to God was made doubly sure by David reminding his people of how

2. little they themselves owned.

In our new Testament reading we have the version of those times in which Jesus lived. A selfish egotistical time and which might just possibly compare with the time which we are presently passing through. Jesus made a parable out of this incident. He wanted his people to think for themselves. To compare themselves inwardly to the two men in his parable. It is so easy to be thankful for material things. Good crops, good sales, plenty in a plentiful world. It is a more difficult matter to be thankful for spiritual blessings because in them we have to show our thankfulness in sharing them with others. Those among us who have suffered and borne heart break know what it is when others tread the same road. The

Thou hast much goods laid up for
many years. Take thine ease, eat,
drink, and be merry. That parable
gives us an insight into the times
of Jesus and surely can find
its parallel in our own day. It
does seem to many stewards and
elders of our churches that the
more people have the more
reluctant they are to give. During
the depression when help was
asked for the church one was
quite often replied to this way.
"Well, you know times are tough
but we'll do what we can. Some-
how the needed assistance arrived
Today one is quite often greeted
with. "Well, we know the church
probably needs help but there
are so many other calls - and
anyway the church should do
this and this. Or I'm not
going to contribute a dime while

Mr. - is in the pulpit. We have all heard the excuses. Are we just too completely indifferent to the real needs of others. Quite often all the goods we possess or would care to give do not fill the need of human kindness to one another. It is told of one famous preacher that he once said to a parishoner ^{from} whom he was taking his leave. "I'm afraid I've not been of too much help today." "Not so person not so!" was the answer "God knows you've helped me by just being here and listening!" Our material wealth may be abundant but if we are paupers in our spiritual wealth we are poor indeed. All of us have cares and seemingly, at times, almost unbearable burdens. When one listens to a neighbor recite his all too evident troubles quite often

our own disappears.

3 They are today, and when comparing his people to sheep Jesus well knew that where the sheep went the lambs would surely follow. Then as now the succeeding generation was the hope of the world and Jesus knew that the people of his day could if they would, change themselves. They had done it before and could do it again.

But his people looked for a messiah, a great leader to lead them out of their difficulties. In short they didn't want to get out of Rome's clutches so much as they wanted to be able to popularize themselves through a great king or great leader sent from Jehovah Himself. A prophet the son of an ordinary carpenter, a man who toiled with his hands was not the leader they anticipated. Certainly not the sort of king to stand up to Rome. No, they would not change. Not even listen.

"To be better off is not to be better!" story.

3A Jesus showed them the way. Himself.
Follow me. Not armed conquest but
submissive following. Not opposing
an enemy of greater numbers and
heavier armors. But opposing an
enemy within far more subtle
than the power of Rome. Jesus
knew that if his people chose they
could change themselves but that
they had to use the power of God
within themselves, learn love and
not fear. Follow Him, Jesus, as
a guide.

So we continue to preach to
adults. We are the "sheep of his
pasture" and where the sheep go
the lambs will follow. We wonder
why our young people sometimes
act the way they do. We hesitate to
criticize, especially in our cities
for fear of mob retaliation. And
yet is ^{not} the mob spirit latent in
each one of us as witness it is