

**SERMON NOTES: OCT. 13TH**  
**SCRIPTURE READINGS... 2<sup>ND</sup> Timothy 4: 9-22, Luke 16:1-9**

**THE GAME OF SOMEDAY...there's professional thief on the loose robbing us blind, stealing our time and incentive. His name is procrastination. Like most crooks, he hits us when we are weak and we relax our defenses. He whispers into our ears: TOMMORROW. So, we put off till tomorrow whatever we could do today. Tomorrow must be the longest day of the week, judging by how many things we plan to do then. One day, someday, we will do all that we should do. Procrastination can ruin faith. God is present now, always/only now offering to be with us.**

**COME BEFORE WINTER...Paul had seen procrastination ruin Churches. He writes with urgency, making a plea to Timothy to visit him.**

**COME QUICKLY, DO YOUR BEST TO COME BEFORE WINTER**

**We can almost feel the strain in his words "come quickly". In that cell, deprived of freedom/comfort, isolated from his friends, prevented from finishing his mission, Paul's world had shrunk to those 4 walls. We don't know if Timothy ever made it to Rome. What if he delayed, let other stuff get in the way? What if he put it off, waited till spring, only to discover that Paul had already died.**

**ONE WEIRD STORY... Jesus lived not only with a sense of destiny but also a SENSE OF URGENCY. He told a set of shocking stories-known as "crisis parables"- all meant to sound an ALARM, a wake-up call to God's people to stop being INDECISIVE, and to shock us to life. In today's story, his main character is a steward, a trustee who treats his Master's money as if it were his own. He appears to be using a VILLAIN as role model. It isn't about MORALITY but APATHY. It is about DECISIVENESS: the steward didn't allow APATHY/FEAR OF FAILURE to prevent him from doing what he could do. Call him savvy! Faced with a crisis, this weasel refused to let tragic things unfold without his taking action.**

**OUR ULTIMATE CHOICE: YES OR NO...with God, our only choice is 'YES or NO' Christian maturity is knowing HOW/WHEN/WHY to say both YES/NO. We say YES/NO not just with our WORDS, but with our LIVES. Jesus suggested that it's better to say "no" and mean it than to tell God "YES", and not to mean it. We love to keep options open, to tell God yes, no, or maybe, to give us more time to ponder it. Jesus puts his finger on a sensitive nerve: being DECISIVE. Crises must be faced. Many people don't TACKLE their problems; they CUDDLE them. He calls us to follow, not to dawdle. To act now, do what we can, while we can, for as long as we can.**