

Foothills Christian Assembly Sermon September 29, 2019

Luke 12: 22 – 34 - "Where is your treasure?"

Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. 17 And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' 18 So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry." ' 20 But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' 21 So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

22 Then He said to His disciples, "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. 23 Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing. 24 Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? 25 And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? 26 If you then are not able to do the least, why are you anxious for the rest? 27 Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 28 If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will He clothe you, O you of little faith? 29 And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. 30 For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. 31 But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. 32 Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. 34 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

35 "Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; 36 and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. 37 Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them. 38 And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. 39 But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 40 Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." 41 Then Peter said to Him, "Lord, do You speak this parable only to us, or to all people?" 42 And the Lord said, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? 43 Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. 44 Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has. 45 But if that servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, 46 the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. 47 And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. 48 But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

I. Introduction

- a. Recall Jesus and his disciples are traveling from the mount of Transfiguration near Caesarea Philippi to Jerusalem. (Lk 9:51) So far during this journey, Jesus has been rejected by a Samaritan village and scorned by the apostate leaders of Israel on multiple occasions, He has continued to heal and cast out demons. He has appointed his Seventy and sent them out to preach and heal and cast out demons. They experienced His power in and through them, even with power over demons. Jesus has delegated His authority to destroy demons and every power of the devil, yet commanded rejoicing in eternal life instead of this great power over the devil. Jesus has continued teaching on many topics, including the parable of the Good Samaritan and the Lord's Prayer. Jesus has presented Mary as an example of how to love the Lord our God. Jesus has pronounced woes (miseries, curses) upon the Pharisees and the lawyers and warned his disciples against the leavening hypocrisy of the Pharisees. And, this focus upon the evil of the Pharisees then flows into this entire section we have been studying in Luke 12, where Jesus has been first warning His disciples against the fear of persecution and martyrdom, then warning them against covetousness and the fear of lacking the necessities of this life, finally calling them to be rich toward God. In today's text, Jesus describes what it means to be rich toward God, and He defines this as seeking God's Kingdom because our heart's treasure is safely stored up in heaven. Throughout the teaching, Jesus contrasts this tranquil Kingdom richness with the anxious worldly focus of the lost.
- b. Today's message: Lk 12: 22 – 34 "Where is your treasure?"
 - i. Do not worry about your life. Learn from creation. v22 - 28
 - ii. Do not seek food or drink or have an anxious mind like the lost v29, 30
 - iii. Fearlessly seek the Kingdom of God, resting in His love and care v31, 32
 - iv. Sell what you have and give alms, with hearts set upon God v33,34
 - v. Questions to know, love and obey God

II. Do not worry about your life. Learn from creation. v22-28

- a. 22 "Then He said to His disciples, "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. 23 Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing. 24 Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? 25 And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? 26 If you then are not able to do the least, why are you anxious for the rest? 27 Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 28 If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will He clothe you, O you of little faith?"
- b. "Therefore, I say to you..."
 - i. This connects this entire section back to the immediately previous teaching about covetousness and selfishness. So, Jesus is now teaching His disciples how to be rich toward God, while also continuing to teach

against the anxiety and worry and futility that is the fruit of covetousness, like we saw with the covetous rich fool.

1. v20 The rich fool pridefully presumed he would live a long life.
2. v20 The covetous fool made no Kingdom plans to pass on His wealth to his children for Kingdom purposes.
- c. V22 Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on.
 - i. V22 Do not worry about your life, what you will eat
 1. Jesus is opening up the warning not to be like the covetous rich fool. Jesus tells His disciples not to be fearful about whether they will live or die, about whether they will starve to death or not. This is what the rich fool did. Don't be like him.
 2. The focus of this commandment of Jesus is "Do not worry". Many people do not understand the difference between prudence and fear. Only the spiritual person can wisely plan and care for the physical needs of the human body without becoming fearful.
 3. Do you understand the difference between prudence and fear?
 - a. In Proverbs 6, the Lord also uses creation to teach us. The difference between prudence and fear can be discerned from ants in this Scripture warning against laziness. "6 Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, 7 Which, having no captain, Overseer or ruler, 8 Provides her supplies in the summer, And gathers her food in the harvest."
 - b. Ants are busy providing supplies for the summer and also gathering food in the harvest. Ants do the work that is at hand, by God's design. And, when they do the work set before them, they end up providing stores for the future.
 - ii. V23 Nor about the body, what you will put on
 1. Jesus goes on to also warn about anxiety and fear regarding our bodies. Will our bodies be comfortable? Will our bodies be safe from injury by exposure to heat and cold, wind and rain? Furthermore, will we have the necessary clothing to walk in God's commands regarding modesty, propriety and purpose of the occasion? This is what the rich fool did.
 2. And, even worse, we are often tempted by sin to care more about outward appearance than we should, which is usually a later fruit of this process of worrying about our bodies. In all of these ways and more, we are all tempted to worry about our clothing.
 3. Don't be like the rich fool.
- d. Life is more than food; body is more than clothing v23
 - i. Here Jesus reiterates the overarching principle He just taught in regard to covetousness in the prior section.

1. Lk 12: 15b "One's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."
- ii. The rich fool ended up at the judgment seat of God unprepared. At that moment, he discovered the truth about his life and his body. He discovered that the purpose of his life is found in peace with God. He saw that all his efforts to ensure his own bodily comfort were based upon a lie. He really believed life was about food and the body about comfort. He was brought to the full, unveiled knowledge that he had used his life and body to rebel against God by living for himself alone. He discovered that the hope for life and joy are found in Christ alone, but too late.
- e. Consider the ravens v24
 - i. "Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them."
 1. Ravens do not plant food for themselves. Ravens do not reap from any harvests they tended. Ravens don't even have a storehouse or a barn. When a raven awakens with its morning call, it looks out upon creation expectantly, flying and hopping about, avoiding foes, finding their food. Whether its a mouse, a roach or a bit of seed, God feeds them.
 2. Consider = perceive, observe, understand, fix the mind upon
 - a. Will you take the time to stop and contemplate the raven as a means to fight anxiety?
 - ii. You are more valuable than the birds v24b
 1. When you contemplate the raven, go on to contemplate all the birds. Watch them fly, some darting, some hovering, some soaring. Hear their sounds, some cawing, some shrill, others as the exquisite operatic voices of the outdoor world. They are fed by God each day, day in and day out, and God promises to also feed us day by day, and this is how we are to pray, think and live.
 - a. Lk 11:3 "Give us day by day our daily bread."
 2. To whom are we more valuable? To God, the Creator and Possessor and Sustainer of all the cosmos.
 - a. We are the only creatures made by God in His image. We were made last by God as the crowning work of His Creation, the most valuable of all to Him, His greatest delight in Creation.
 - b. Gen 1:26-29 "Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth

and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." 29 And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food."

f. Worrying is futile v25,26

i. 25 And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

1. "Add one cubit to his stature"
2. The Greek words in view here can reference both height and length of life. So the translation can accurately either read "add one cubit to his stature" or "add one hour to his life".
3. Bock "does the rhetorical question ask whether worrying can add any time to one's life or any height to one's stature? Ἡλικίαν (*hēlikian*) is ambiguous and may refer to the span of life or to the height of a person (BAGD 345; BAA 699). As a unit of measure πῆχυς (*pēchys*, cubit; BAGD 656–57; BAA 1322) refers to about eighteen inches (Fitzmyer 1985: 978); as a measure of time it can refer to an hour."¹
4. In the context, Jesus is speaking both about our life and about our body, but in terms of priorities and the sudden death of the rich man, the focus seems to be upon length of life. But, in either case, Jesus makes the point very clear: worrying is futile.

ii. 26 If you then are not able to do the least, why are you anxious for the rest?

1. The logic of Jesus is irrefutable. We do not have the power to increase our height a cubit or our life span an hour. In truth, we know we cannot increase our own height or life span at all. And, if we do not have the power in ourselves to do things, why do we spend time fretting and worrying about whether we live or die, or whether our bodies will be comfortably clothed?

g. Consider the lilies, more finely clothed than Solomon v27

- i. 27 Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.
- ii. Again, the Lord commands us to contemplate creation, specifically a particular type of flower. Even to consider "how they grow." The Lily of the Valley points us to the growth and beauty of the lily in order for us to learn to rest in God's love and care for us.
 1. Lilies come in all different colors: white, pink, red, orange, yellow, and even purple. Jesus calls us to consider "lilies" which brings to mind all the varied shapes and colors and sizes. Maybe cultivating

¹ Bock, D. L. (1996). [*Luke: 9:51–24:53*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1161). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

a variety of lilies would be a good way to remind us all of God's love and care for our bodies?

- iii. Jesus says that these simple flowers, a Day 3 creation, are more finely arrayed in beauty than even Solomon was "in all his glory". Jesus chooses the high point of the kingdom of Israel and points to the most majestic king of Israel and brings to mind this king's day of greatest majesty and splendor, and not even Solomon can compare to the "clothing" God gives to His lilies.

- iv. Neither toil nor spin

- 1. Like the ravens do not sow or reap, the lilies do not toil or spin. Jesus is teaching us that God takes care of His creation as His creation lives out its purpose in the earth.
- 2. Birds are made to fly and sing and bring beauty and fascination to creation. Lilies are made to grow and beautify the world.
- 3. In the coming verses, we will be taught by Jesus what our purpose is while we are alive in this world.
- 4. God takes care of His creation as His creation lives out its purpose.

- h. Illustration of grass v28

- i. If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will He clothe you, O you of little faith?

- 1. Even the clothing of grass God uses to teach those who will see. Do you also find beauty in a meadow of waving grass?
- 2. Yet, even this grass that God feeds and waters and clothes, that is clearly important to Him, is transitory, not eternal, finding its function in dying and being burned for fuel in an oven.

- ii. You are more important than lilies and grass v28a

- 1. Again, Jesus calls us to compare ourselves to grass in His eyes. What is more important to God? Grass or you?
 - a. "o you of little faith" – Jesus gives us very practical exercises to grow in our faith. Meditate upon the birds, the flowers and the grass. See His meticulous design and care of these transient creatures and marvel at His infinitely greater love and care for you. "how much more"
 - b. He will clothe you. Do you believe this?

- III. Do not seek food or drink or have an anxious mind like the lost v29,30

- a. And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. 30 For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things.
 - i. So, here Jesus brings home the application of the truth that God loves and cares for our lives and our bodies. He commands us not to "seek" after the things for life or for the body, and He commands us against fear.
 - ii. "Do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind."

1. Seek = to seek in order to find, to strive after, to require, to demand, to crave
 2. So, in this context, “to seek” means to make this your life’s purpose and goal. Jesus is commanding us not to make financial security our life’s purpose and goal. We are strictly forbidden from **building our lives** around certain questions. We are commanded not to make our plans for the future based upon money, food, drink, clothing and shelter.
 - a. How will I get money for my future? How will I provide food, drink, clothing and shelter for my family’s future?
 - b. Contemplate this, brothers and sisters.
- b. This is what the Gentiles do v30
- i. “For all these things the nations of the world seek after”
 - ii. This phrase sums up the history and current events of our fallen world- the constant striving, demanding and craving to establish absolute certainty about future money, food, clothing and shelter.
 - iii. “nations” = Gentiles. Unbelieving nations. The lost nations. Lost nations consist of vast numbers of “rich fools” striving together to secure temporary, selfish goals, yet their end is like that of the rich fool, unless they repent.
 - iv. They do not know God as Creator, Redeemer and Provider. They do not know the purpose of their lives or their bodies. They are stranded as orphans, fighting over the resources of the world.
- c. Our Father knows our needs v30
- i. For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things.
 - ii. Jesus points us to the knowledge and care of God our Father. Not only does our Father in Heaven know the needs of birds, flowers and grass, but how much more does He know the life and body needs of His crowing creation?
- IV. Fearlessly seek the Kingdom of God, resting in His love and care v31,32
- a. V31 But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.
 - i. Jesus gives us the summary practical commandment that shows us rich toward God.
 - ii. “Seek the kingdom of God” – We are to seek in order to find the kingdom of God. We are to crave after the kingdom of God as our life’s purpose and goal. We are to make all of our plans for the future based upon our God-restored desire to go after seeing His Kingdom brought from heaven to earth by our lives. This is to be the defining grid by which we make every one of our decisions. This is to be the defining grid by which we decide even what are the important questions of life.
 - b. All these things will be added to you v31
 - i. All these things. Food. Clothing. Shelter. All the needs of your life and your body will be supplied for you AS YOU SEEK GOD’S KINGDOM

- ii. This is one of the most astounding promises that belongs to us and to our children during this life.
 - c. Fear not, little flock v32
 - i. "Do not fear, little flock"
 - ii. Again, Jesus goes back to the command not to fear. This is the 5th time in this section Jesus has referenced our fears. He knows that it requires much faith to believe this great promise. He knows a lack of faith causes us to respond to His promises with fearfulness, so here again He warns us against an unrighteous response to His promises and commandments.
 - iii. Little flock = term of endearment, and pointing to God as our Shepherd.
 - 1. 1 The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, 3 he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. 4 Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.
 - iv. The Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom v32
 - 1. "for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."
 - a. Now Jesus points us to the pleasures of God. And not just any pleasure, but the "Father's good pleasure".
 - b. Knowing the heart of our Heavenly Father will deliver us from fear. The reason we don't believe this promise is because we don't know God our Father's heart toward us and His Kingdom.
 - c. God our Father will give us His Kingdom, gladly, when we seek His Kingdom as our life's purpose and goal. Not only does He give us all the needs of life as we pursue His Kingdom, He actually fulfills our desires by giving us His Kingdom. We possess it with Christ as His co-heirs, and we see it come to pass.
 - d. Daniel 7:26,27 "26 'But the court shall be seated, And they shall take away his dominion, To consume and destroy it forever. 27 Then the kingdom and dominion, And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.'"
 - 2. The lost nations of the world will stop seeking foolishly and seek God and His Kingdom.
- V. Sell what you have and give alms, with hearts set upon God v33,34

- a. Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. 34 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
- b. Sell what you have and give alms
 - i. Bock “Jesus points the disciples to permanent treasure. He exhorts them to sell their possessions and offer alms, that is, give charitably to the poor. Pursuing the kingdom means caring for others, rather than for self. The security that one has in God frees one to be generous with possessions and to be generous with others (L. Johnson 1977: 155). Alms were often regarded as an act of piety, both in the NT and in Judaism. To show concern for others rather than for oneself is at the heart of Jesus’ teaching, where love for others has a high place. To give up possessions to aid the poor shows the highest degree of such commitments.”²
- c. Eternal money bags v33
 - i. Money bags which do not grow old
 - 1. As we seek the Kingdom of God, we will find that anytime we need something in order to receive the Kingdom from God our Father, He will supply it. Like the oil that would not run out.
 - 2. Widow of Zerapheth story “12 So she said, "As the Lord your God lives, I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a bin, and a little oil in a jar; and see, I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die." 13 And Elijah said to her, "Do not fear; go and do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first, and bring it to me; and afterward make some for yourself and your son. 14 For thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the Lord sends rain on the earth.' " 15 So she went away and did according to the word of Elijah; and she and he and her household ate for many days. 16 The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke by Elijah.” (1 Kings 17)
 - ii. Unfailing heavenly treasures v33
 - 1. “a treasure in the heavens that does not fail”
 - 2. Furthermore, when we seek God’s Kingdom, with each new act of faith, we store up treasures in heaven that cannot end and will not fail. Investing in the Kingdom today always yields eternal treasures.
 - iii. Cannot be stolen or destroyed v33
 - 1. “where no thief approaches nor moth destroys.”
 - 2. The only way to permanently secure our treasures is to place them in heaven. Only the Kingdom will do.

² Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1166). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

- d. Where you treasure is, your heart is v34
 - i. “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”
 - ii. What is your heart’s treasure? Is it only in God? Only in His Kingdom?
- VI. Questions to know, love and obey God