



Sunday 3rd August 2025

The Seventh Sunday after Trinity

Gospel Reading

Luke 12.13-21

The Parable of the Rich Fool

¹³ Someone in the crowd said to him, ‘Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.’ ¹⁴ But he said to him, ‘Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?’ ¹⁵ And he said to them, ‘Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.’ ¹⁶ Then he told them a parable: ‘The land of a rich man produced abundantly. ¹⁷ And he thought to himself, “What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?” ¹⁸ Then he said, “I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.” ²⁰ But God said to him, “You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?” ²¹ So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich towards God.’

Other Readings: Hosea 11.1-11 Psalm 107.1-9,43 Colossians 3.1-11

Homily

In our Gospel reading, Jesus warns his listeners; “Be on your guard against all kinds of greed.” He saw through the questioner’s motive - envy. The man was not in need – just envious or greedy. Jesus then takes the opportunity to warn about the snares posed by wealth and possessions.

In the Parable, the rich man had been blessed abundantly; his land was productive and his barns over-flowing. He had more than enough already. What should he do with it all? He could have shared generously with those in need and so bless the poor and his whole community. But, instead, he decided to invest in more storage space, and then squander his wealth in self-satisfied indulgence. Is that the true model of success? God says to him; “You fool! Tonight, you will die. What, then, will become of all your riches?”

Someone once asked what estate a deceased acquaintance had left. A wise friend answered – “Everything”. When asked again, “No, how much did he leave?” The wise friend repeated, “Everything!”

The rich man shows us the folly of blind acquisition; when amassing a hoard becomes an end in itself– actually becoming a god that ‘possesses’ heart and mind. We come to

worship what fills our hearts. If we have no respect for our accountability to God, who gives us everything, we do not handle success, power or riches very well. Jesus warns us (Luke 11 verse 3) that we cannot serve both God and Mammon – worldly material gain. At the end of Chapter 12, Jesus says that it is pagans who are obsessed with material security; endlessly worrying about enough food, enough drink and the right clothes. Jesus' priority for us, however, is to; "Seek his Kingdom, and all these will be given to you as well." It's about our priorities. If we invest our energy and resources in the kingdom of heaven, they will last for ever; because our hearts will be wherever we store our treasure (verses 30 – 34). Jesus wants us to learn how to trust our heavenly Father who loves us, who knows and cares about our needs; not to be anxious all the time.

The possession of wealth and the power brings its own challenges. There is nothing sinful about being wealthy, whether through hard work or by inheritance. But, riches carry with them an obligation to steward them well; "Lord, you have given me all these things, how do you want me to use them? What is your will for them, and for me?"

We can often argue passionately about doctrine, worship, tradition and morality and yet become strangely quiet when it comes to personal cost – how we steward our money, time and commitments to support church life, worship or charities; or being ashamed to be known as a Christian. Jesus calls us all to discipleship. And that means living under his lordship. We struggle with the things we value most – money, time, relationships, reputation and security. These are the very areas we need to share with the One for whom we were created – for them to become blessings rather than burdens.

Jesus calls us to serve the kingdom of God wholeheartedly, and that carries a cost. We should, indeed, count the cost; and then resolve to follow him as Lord. At some point we have to move from being observers to become disciples. That is the meaning of repentance – changing how we think and live – Learning to trust in God's faithfulness as we apply Jesus' teachings and obey him as Lord. Practical faith in the real world.

Conversation Questions

1. How do verses 1-3 of the Colossians' reading apply to today's Gospel passage?
2. How does the Holy Spirit enable us to live differently from today's secular culture?
3. Is there anything else from the passage not already discussed that speaks to you?
What is it?
4. What will you do this week in your Monday-to-Saturday ministry in response to what you have heard today? #everydayfaith

Prayer

Spend some time in prayer, responding to what you have heard today and listening to what God might be saying to you.

Collect of the day

*Lord of all power and might,
the author and giver of all good things:
graft in our hearts the love of your name,
increase in us true religion,
nourish us with all goodness,
and of your great mercy keep us in the same;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.*

(or)

*Generous God,
you give us gifts and make them grow:
though our faith is small as mustard seed,
make it grow to your glory
and the flourishing of your kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

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