

THE FOOLISH WEALTHY FARMER

I. Matthew 6:19-21 & Luke 12:13-34

A. Matthew 6:19-21 (ESV) Let's begin where we left off last Sunday with Jesus at the Sermon on the Mount: **19** *Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

B. Famous Russian author, Leo Tolstoy, wrote a fable: One day a farmer received a novel offer. For 1000 rubles, he could buy all the land he could walk around in a day. The only catch in the deal was he had to be back at his starting point by sundown. Early the next morning he started out walking at a fast pace. By midday he was very tired, but he kept going, covering more and more ground. Well into the afternoon he realized his greed had taken him far from the starting point. He quickened his pace and as the sun began to sink low in the sky, he began to run, knowing that if he did not make it back by sundown his chance to be a bigger landowner would be lost. As the sun began to sink below the horizon he came within sight of the finish line. Gasping for breath, his heart pounding, he called upon every bit of strength left in his body and staggered across the line just before the sun disappeared. He immediately collapsed, blood streaming from his mouth. In a few minutes he was dead. Afterwards, his servants dug a grave, 6 feet by 3 feet. This was all the land that greed awarded him...

C. Luke 12:13-34 (ESV) takes us to another one of Jesus' parables--a discourse regarding the pursuit of wealth vs trusting in God to provide...

1) V13-15: 13 *Someone in the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." 14 But He said to him, "Man, who made Me a judge or arbitrator over you?" 15 And He said to them, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness (Greed), for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." (This random interruption sets up Jesus' telling our parable.)*

2) V16-19: 16 *And He told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man produced plentifully, 17 and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' 18 And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. (Talk about looking out for 'number one!') 19 And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry." (This may sound like the American Dream but it's not a picture of the Kingdom of God on the earth. Let's review a couple verses from Deuteronomy as the Promise Land awaits. Deut. 15:7-8 (ESV) says: 7 *If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of your towns within your land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, 8 but you shall open your hand to him and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be... Add in V11: 11 For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, 'You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.'*)*

3) Jesus continues in V20-21: 20 *But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' 21 So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God." (Then Jesus gives a therefore...)*

4) V22-24: 22 And He said to His disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. **23** For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. **24** Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! **(We were at a restaurant this past Wednesday and saw a blackbird foraging for some morsels. He didn't look anywhere close to starving!)**

5) V25-31: 25 And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? **26** If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, why are you anxious about the rest? **27** Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. **28** But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, 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 are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. **30** For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need them. **31** Instead, seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you. **(Sounds like a promise! Is God, and are His promises trust-worthy? Absolutely!)**

6) V32-34: 32 Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. **33** Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. **34** For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. **(Sound familiar? These words are similar to Jesus' words we began with...)**

D. I've said this before--we don't know how old we are! In other words, the amount of days God has allotted each of us is pretty much a mystery. Back up to V23 once again: "For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing." Add to that an encore of V25: "And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?" (Now those are words to speak to our souls! Words worth putting to memory...)

E. James 4:13-17 (ESV) is also a good reminder: 13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit"— **14** yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. **15** Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that." **16** As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. **17** So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

F. Here's my little prayer: 'Lord help me not to want for what You do not want for me; help me to want for what You do want for me.' We should all hearken back on the OT story of God's people in the wilderness, pestering God for meat because they'd grown tired of manna. So God gave them quail--so much quail that they got puke sick and many of them died. There's two ways to learn from that story--the easy way and the hard way! But the Gospel is the ultimate story of God's giving...

G. John 3:16 epitomizes the generosity of God! 2 Cor. 8:9 echoes: "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you by His poverty might become rich." 2 Corinthians 9:15 is our rightful response: "Thanks be to God for His indescribable Gift!"

*** Close with Prayer...**

[Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff](#)

[Matthew 6:19-21 \(ESV\)](#)

19 Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, **20** but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. **21** For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

[Luke 12:13-34 \(ESV\)](#)

13 Someone in the crowd said to Him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.” **14** But He said to him, “Man, who made Me a judge or arbitrator over you?” **15** And He said to them, “Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.” **16** And He told them a parable, saying, “The land of a rich man produced plentifully, **17** and he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ **18** And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear 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, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ **21** So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.” **22** And He said to His disciples, “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. **23** For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. **24** Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! **25** And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? **26** If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, why are you anxious about the rest? **27** Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. **28** But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, 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 are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. **30** For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need them. **31** Instead, seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you. **32** “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. **33** Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. **34** For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

[Deuteronomy 15:7-8 \(ESV\)](#)

7 “If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of your towns within your land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, **8** but you shall open your hand to him and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be.

[Deuteronomy 15:11 \(ESV\)](#)

11 For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, ‘You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.’

James 4:13-17 (ESV)

13 Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit”— **14** yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. **15** Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.” **16** As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. **17** So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

How Much Land Does a Man Need?

Leo Tolstoy once wrote a story about a successful peasant farmer who was not satisfied with his lot. He wanted more of everything. One day he received a novel offer. For 1000 rubles, he could buy all the land he could walk around in a day. The only catch in the deal was that he had to be back at his starting point by sundown. Early the next morning he started out walking at a fast pace. By midday he was very tired, but he kept going, covering more and more ground. Well into the afternoon he realized that his greed had taken him far from the starting point. He quickened his pace and as the sun began to sink low in the sky, he began to run, knowing that if he did not make it back by sundown the opportunity to become an even bigger landholder would be lost. As the sun began to sink below the horizon he came within sight of the finish line. Gasping for breath, his heart pounding, he called upon every bit of strength left in his body and staggered across the line just before the sun disappeared. He immediately collapsed, blood streaming from his mouth. In a few minutes he was dead. Afterwards, his servants dug a grave. It was not much over six feet long and three feet wide. The title of Tolstoy's story was: *How Much Land Does a Man Need?*

- *Bits & Pieces*, November, 1991.

Bonus Rations for Further Nourishment

Stop Worrying - Troy Black

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=grTuXo1hqN4>

"Generous Giver" - Vintage Worship

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-5JowPZH-w>

My Times Are in Your Hand- Jon Bloom - Desiring God

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/my-times-are-in-your-hand>

Just Call Me Old-Fashioned - Blake Long (Theology & Life)

<https://theology-and-life.com/2021/08/09/just-call-me-old-fashioned/>

Psalm 62:5-12 (ESV)

5 For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from Him. **6** He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken. **7** On God rests my salvation

and my glory; my mighty rock, my refuge is God. **8** Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. *Selah* **9** Those of low estate are but a breath; those of high estate are a delusion; in the balances they go up; they are together lighter than a breath. **10** Put no trust in extortion; set no vain hopes on robbery; if riches increase, set not your heart on them. **11** Once God has spoken; twice have I heard this: that power belongs to God, **12** and that to You, O Lord, belongs steadfast love. For You will render to a man according to his work.

Ecclesiastes 5:15 (NLT)

15 We all come to the end of our lives as naked and empty-handed as on the day we were born. We can't take our riches with us.

Jeremiah 17:7-8 (ESV)

7 Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. **8** He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.

2 Corinthians 9:6-15 (NLT)

6 Remember this--a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. **7** You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully." **8** And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. **9** As the Scriptures say, "*They share freely and give generously to the poor. Their good deeds will be remembered forever.*" **10** For God is the One who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, He will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you. **11** Yes, you will be enriched in every way so that you can always be generous. And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God. **12** So two good things will result from this ministry of giving--the needs of the believers in Jerusalem will be met, and they will joyfully express their thanks to God. **13** As a result of your ministry, they will give glory to God. For your generosity to them and to all believers will prove that you are obedient to the Good News of Christ. **14** And they will pray for you with deep affection because of the overflowing grace God has given to you. **15** Thank God for this gift too wonderful for words!

1 Timothy 6:6-10 (ESV)

6 But godliness with contentment is great gain, **7** for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. **8** But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. **9** But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. **10** For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

1 John 3:17 (ESV)

17 But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?

1 Peter 5:6-7 (ESV)

6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you, 7 casting all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you.

Numbers 11:31-34 (NLT)

31 Now the LORD sent a wind that brought quail from the sea and let them fall all around the camp. For miles in every direction there were quail flying about three feet above the ground. 32 So the people went out and caught quail all that day and throughout the night and all the next day, too. No one gathered less than fifty bushels! They spread the quail all around the camp to dry. 33 But while they were gorging themselves on the meat--while it was still in their mouths--the anger of the Lord blazed against the people, and He struck them with a severe plague. 34 So that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah (which means "graves of gluttony") because there they buried the people who had craved meat from Egypt.

Quote by Martin Luther

"Riches are the least worthy gifts which God can give man, yet men toil for them day and night, and take no rest. Therefore, God frequently gives riches to foolish people to whom He gives nothing else."

Quote by Augustine

"What does love look like? It has the hands to help others. It has the feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see misery and want. It has the ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of men. That is what love looks like."

Quote by John Wesley

"One of the principal rules of religion is, to lose no occasion of serving God. And, since He is invisible to our eyes, we are to serve Him in our neighbor; which He receives as if done to Himself in person, standing visibly before us."

Quote by Charles Spurgeon

"A good character is the best tombstone. Those who loved you and were helped by you will remember you when forget-me-nots have withered. Carve your name on hearts, not on marble."

Quote by Isaac Watts

"In matters of equity between man and man, our Savior has taught us to put my neighbor in place of myself, and myself in place of my neighbor."

Quote by Henry Drummond

"I shall pass through this world but once. Any good thing therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

Quote by F.F. Bruce

"God bestows His blessings without discrimination. The followers of Jesus are children of God, and they should manifest the family likeness by doing good to all, even to those who deserve the opposite."

Quote by Amy Carmichael

"You can always give without loving, but you can never love without giving."

Quote by Thomas Brooks

"The best way to do ourselves good is to be doing good to others; the best way to gather is to scatter."

Quote by Lee Roberson

"Worry is nothing but practical infidelity. The person who worries reveals his lack of trust in God and that he is trusting too much in self."

Quote by John MacArthur

"For some reason, we think of doubt and worry as "small" sins. But when a Christian displays unbelief...or an inability to cope with life, he is saying to the world, "My God cannot be trusted," and that kind of disrespect makes one guilty of a fundamental error, the heinous sin of dishonoring God. That is no small sin."

Quote by C.S. Lewis

"Anxiety is not only a pain we must ask God to assuage, but also a weakness we must ask Him to pardon."

Quote by George Mueller

"The beginning of anxiety is the end of faith, and the beginning of true faith is the end of anxiety."

Quote by David Livingstone

"I place no value on anything I have or may possess, except in relation to the kingdom of God. If anything will advance the interests of the kingdom, it shall be given away or kept, only as by giving or keeping it I shall most promote the glory of Him to whom I owe all my hopes in time or eternity."

Quote by Jay Kesler

"Things are to be used and God is to be loved. We get into trouble when we begin to use God and love things."

Trust Him

Author Unknown

Trust Him when dark doubts assail thee,
Trust Him when thy strength is small,
Trust Him when to simply trust Him
Seems the hardest thing of all.
Trust Him, He is ever faithful,
Trust Him, for His will is best,
Trust Him, for the heart of Jesus
Is the only place of rest.

Sweet Charity's Bread

Author Unknown

"Go break to the needy sweet charity's bread;
For giving is living," the angel said.
"And must I be giving again and again?"
My peevish and pitiless answer ran.
"Oh no," said the angel, piercing me through.
"Just give till the Master stops giving to you."

King Tut's Treasure

By Randy Alcorn

Tutankhamen, the boy king, was only 17 when he died. He was buried with solid gold chariots and thousands of golden artifacts. His gold coffin was found within gold tombs within gold tombs within gold tombs. The burial site was filled with tons of gold. The Egyptians believed in an afterlife--one where they could take earthly treasures. But all the treasures intended for King Tut's eternal enjoyment stayed right where they were until Howard Carter discovered the burial chamber in 1922. They hadn't been touched for more than three thousand years. 1 Timothy 6:7 says, *"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out."*

The Archbishop's Lost Treasure

Author Unknown

Two divers found a strange treasure in the River Wear near Durham Cathedral. They found a stash of coins, medals and religious objects. To whom did this treasure belong? They were the possessions of the late Michael Ramsey, former archbishop of Canterbury. This spot in the river was very near where Ramsay served and later retired in 1974.

The genuineness of the hundreds of items has been confirmed by cathedral officials. One of the items was a gift from Pope Paul VI; others are significant archeological items. The question is, How did they get there? Some suggest the items were stolen from Ramsey. One of the divers suggested Ramsey may have thrown them in the river himself—as a symbolic offering to the people of Durham. Another suggestion is that it was a symbolic statement by Ramsey that we cannot take it with us when we die.

If Ramsey did throw the treasures in the river, we might question if that was good stewardship, but it is clear that he did not take them with him. We can't either. The only things that go with us when we die are the treasures we have laid up in heaven.

PSB - A Sermon Excerpt

Let me tell you about this Kingdom: This Kingdom comes with a King and His name is Jesus. Co-Creator of all things seen and unseen, He is the Word made flesh that dwelt among us; He was crucified, dead, and buried for the atonement of our sins; on the third day He rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sits enthroned at the right hand of God the Father where He lives to make intercession for us. It will be from there that He comes to raise and judge the living and the dead. It will be this King who ushers in the New Heavens and the New Earth and they will be illuminated by the Light of His Glory. Not a kingdom of meat or drink--this everlasting Kingdom will be composed of righteousness, peace, and joy. A Kingdom bereft of the world, flesh, and devil. A Kingdom of no more tears or fears, no more sin and death... And to us who can easily become worried about the smallest of things, who can turn minutia into mountains, He says: *"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."*

- PSB Sermon titled, *"Ravens & Lilies"* Sunday, July 12, 2015.