

## Stories of Grace and Truth

Luke 12.13-21

March 10, 2024

Not long ago, we considered Jesus' blunt statement in Luke 14.33: "Those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples." In this morning's parable, we focus directly on one really challenging expression of that. So be reminded of one of Jesus' great themes: God's great grace comes to us with clear demands. It's free, but it isn't cheap. I'm praying that our ears are wide open as we get closer and closer to Easter.

Pastor Eric

Opening Up:

*Are you rich?*

(Give it some serious thought before you answer!)

In the Luke 14.33 verse cited above, Jesus seems to be indicating that every single area of our lives should be given over to Jesus. What are some of those areas? Jesus said a lot about money, and one example is found in Luke 12.13-21. Read it over. What is it that the man in the opening verse is asking of Jesus? What do you imagine might be his personal situation? Since rabbis often arbitrated those sorts of situations, why do you think Jesus rejects his request?

Jesus immediately brings up greed in verse 15. What has greed to do with this guy's request? What do you think Jesus means at the end of that verse, "life does not consist of an abundance of possessions?" How do you think that society around you would feel about Jesus' statement?

"The first question regarding discipleship is what one does with money."

Klyne Snodgrass  
*Stories with Intent*

Retell Jesus' parable that begins in verse 16 using something more familiar than grain farming. An oft' repeated question about this parable is, "What did this guy do that was so wrong?" Doesn't it seem reasonable, even wise, to build barns to house his excess grain? This is the only parable of Jesus in which God appears as a part of the story. What is the purpose of that part of the parable?

Ponder greed for a bit. What is it? Many suggest that it's the insatiable desire to have more even when one doesn't need any more. What do you think drives greed? Do you see greed in yourself, even occasionally? Take a closer look at Jesus' conclusion in verse 21. What are the two practices being contrasted here? What does it mean to store up riches for yourself and to be rich toward God? (Note Luke 12.34; 16.13). What happens to people who give their lives to building up things for themselves? Here, note 1 Timothy 6.9.

We considered two ways to combat greediness. How can someone cultivate *contentment*? How can you do it? What about cultivating *generosity*? Read Leviticus 23.22. What are some creative ways you could leave some of "the edges" of your wealth for others? Do you think some form of tithing is a good practice for Christians to engage in? Besides contentment and generosity, what other ways might we combat greediness?

"Prosperity knits a man to the World. He feels that he is 'finding his place in it,' while really it is finding its place in him. His increasing reputation, his widening circle of acquaintances, his sense of importance . . . build up in him a sense of being really at home on Earth."

CS Lewis  
*The Screwtape Letters*