

Lk 12:13-21; Eccl 1:2; 2:21-23; Col 3:1-5, 9-11 The Rich Fool

Like sands through the hourglass, so are the days of our lives. That was the opening line from the daytime soap opera: *The Days of Our Lives*. And on the screen, you would see an hourglass with the sand quickly pouring from the top to the bottom.

And, the question is: how do we make the most out of the time we have left?

In today's gospel a man asks Jesus to settle a fight over his inheritance. But Jesus doesn't get involved. Why?

Because part of our journey is to discover for ourselves what God wants us to do. And for that, we have the Holy Spirit.

But Jesus did give him, and us, some words of wisdom: *Take care to guard against all greed* (Lk 12:15).

And, He gave us a parable: A rich man had a bountiful harvest and so he built larger barns to store the harvest. Then he said: *[as for me, now I will] rest, eat, drink and be merry!* (Lk 12:18-19).

But God said to him, *You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you* (Lk 12:20). Why was he a fool?

He was a fool because you can't take it with you. Like it said in the first reading: *Vanity of vanities!...what is the point to slave and work hard all your life, if when you die you can't take your wealth with you, and someone else gets to enjoy it* (Eccl 2:21).

And he was a fool, because his desire for wealth got in the way of salvation. He became selfish. He didn't care about the poor, the needy, the suffering and the sick.

Remember what Jesus commanded us: *Love one another as I love you* (Jn 15:12). He didn't do that. He had his chance and he blew it.

Jesus said: *[So] will it be for all who store up treasure for themselves but are not rich in what matters to God* (Lk 12:21).

But we do have to store up some wealth--to support our families, pay medical bills, and save for retirement. Then, how do we know if we have too much wealth?

Jesus wasn't talking about the size of our bank account or the size of our home. It's OK to own nice things. What really matters, is how we use the things we have.

So what Jesus is talking about is the attitude of our heart.

We cannot allow our desire for wealth, to make us blind to the needy. That kind of greed is idolatry because the desire for wealth replaces God from His rightful place in our hearts.

Then, how do we become *rich in what matters to God*?

We become rich in what matters to God when we make God the center of our lives. Because everything—even life itself—is a gift from God.

We become rich in what matters to God when we see ourselves as stewards—nothing really belongs to us, but we have been entrusted to use these gifts to do His will.

We become rich in what matters to God when we trust completely, and we surrender our worries and anxieties to God. God will provide and He will never abandon us.

And most important, we become rich in what matters to God when we imitate Jesus Christ and share what God has given us, with others.

Remember, there were so many times when Jesus wanted to rest and eat with His disciples. But when Jesus saw the crowd, His heart was moved with compassion for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd (Mk 6:34).

And so, He put their needs ahead of His own...He taught them, He healed them, and He fed them.

That means, we cannot think only about what we want and what we need, without also considering the needs of others.

And, we need to help them to the point of using some of what we think we need and not just out of excess.

Like Jesus said: *If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all* (Mk 9:35).

But putting the needs of others before our own is not natural or enjoyable. Yet as Christians we have been given a new nature when we were baptized.

Like the second reading says: *If you were raised with Christ, seek what is above* (Col 3:1).

***So, put to death, then, the parts of you that are earthly: immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and the greed that is idolatry* (Col 3:5).**

Look, most people are afraid of dying. But let's face it. If you are living, you are dying. Just like the sand in the hourglass isn't moving upward, our days left on this earth will come to an end—we just don't know when.

So rather than worrying about something we cannot control, let's live for today. Let us get up in the morning rejoicing that this is the day the Lord has made let us rejoice in it and be glad (Ps 118:24).

As long as we are alive, it doesn't matter how many grains of sand we have left. Let's live, love, forgive, and make a difference in every person's life--until it's over.

We have a purpose and a reason to live. So, let's love, give, forgive, reconcile, listen, help, hug and love again—and leave every person we visit, better off than they were before.

Let us pray: Lord Jesus Christ, make us rich in what matters to You so that we may give others the opportunity to also grow rich in what matters to You.