



Daily Reflections

July 31, 2016

Scripture

Luke 12:13-21

Someone in the crowd said to Jesus,

“Teacher, tell my brother to share the inheritance with me.”

He replied to him,

“Friend, who appointed me as your judge and arbitrator?”

Then he said to the crowd,

“Take care to guard against all greed,

for though one may be rich,

one’s life does not consist of possessions.”

Then he told them a parable.

“There was a rich man whose land produced a bountiful harvest.

He asked himself, ‘What shall I do,

for I do not have space to store my harvest?’

And he said, ‘This is what I shall do:

I shall tear down my barns and build larger ones.

There I shall store all my grain and other goods

and I shall say to myself, "Now as for you, you have so many good things stored up for many years, rest, eat, drink, be merry!"
But God said to him,
'You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you; and the things you have prepared, to whom will they belong?'
Thus will it be for all who store up treasure for themselves but are not rich in what matters to God."

Our Scripture Reflection

To appreciate the deeper meaning of today Gospel text, we must return to Luke 9: 51 where it is written: "He resolutely set His face towards Jerusalem." Jesus is determined to win our salvation and nothing, including petty family squabbles will deter Him.

When asked to adjudicate a monetary dispute between brothers, Jesus refuses to get involved and instead warns against greed.

He then tells the story about a rich man who marvels at his own brilliance at managing his property. He cannot help but repeatedly use the personal pronouns "I" and "mine", so full of himself is he. The voice of Almighty God, however, corrects the man's self-absorption. He is a fool. Why? Not because he is wealthy, but rather, because he failed to take three things into consideration:

1. He never thanks God for his success
2. He never offers to share with those in need from his abundance.
3. He fails to reckon with the reality of death.

Jesus never condemns us because of what we have. He condemns an attitude of the heart that is self-absorbed and stingy. May we never forget to thank God for all that we have and all that we have accomplished because without His help, we can do nothing.

Food for your Journey

Did you read about the couple in Florida who had been married twenty-one years and were getting a divorce? The terms of the settlement called for the woman to be able to maintain "a reasonable lifestyle." Since the couple listed their assets at \$100 million, here's what the judge decided: She could fly to New York once a month to get her hair fixed; she would receive \$2,600 a month to eat out; and she would receive a liberal expense account for gasoline, oil, and maintenance of her \$100,000 Mercedes. In addition, she was to receive, each month: \$10,446 for vacations; \$6,452 for clothing; \$1,592 for groceries; \$1,440 for local beauty parlors; \$1,407 miscellaneous; \$171 for pet care; and \$20 for Church and charities. ("The Messenger," Bacon Heights Baptist Church, Lubbock, Texas, 1991.) Is there something wrong with this picture? One hundred million dollars and she's giving \$20 a month to Church and charities? I believe Christ would say to her, "You fool!" Wealth is for sharing. Sure, there is satisfaction in the little luxuries of life, but not as much as being involved in something great and lasting.

The story is told of a king of tremendous wealth who gave his jester a wand, saying "Keep this wand until you find a greater fool than yourself." The jester laughingly accepted the wand and used it on festive occasions. One day the king lay dying. Calling the jester to his bedside he said "I am going on a long journey." "Where to?" asked the jester. "I don't know." came the reply. "What provisions have you made for the trip?" the jester asked. The king shrugged his shoulders. "None at all." "Then" said the jester, "take this." And placing the wand in the king's hands, he added, "it belongs to you. You are a greater fool than I."

Prayer from the Heart

Precious Lord, to You I offer praise and gratitude for the many blessings You have given me in this life, especially the gift of time. Help me, Lord, to use this gift along with my talent to give You glory and honor and praise. Amen.