

'Super-Size It!'

Rev. Jane Courtright

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***Have you ever had one of those blessed summer moments?***

*A breezy summer night at the beach,*

or a wonderful **summer meal** outdoors,

surrounded by *family* or, relaxed and content....

*still days left* of your vacation time.

Summer – with the family at the lake,

or on a long-**awaited trip**,

or *just relaxing* on your deck or patio...

**Summer is a time for visions of contentment!!!**

***“Saul, you have ample goods laid up for many years;  
relax, drink, be merry!***

I pray that YOUR summer thus far

has blessed you with such moments of contentment.

\*If not at the beach or lake, then when you saw  
your child (or grandchild) graduate from high school or college,  
or exchange rings in a beautiful wedding ceremony.

\*When you played with your grandchild on the lawn,

\*When you looked over your IRA portfolio, and took pleasure  
in how much you've saved over the years for retirement,

\*OR when you glanced at your scorecard,  
very pleased to have only four over par.

***“Soul, relax, eat, drink...be merry!”***

This morning's parable begins NOT in contentment, but in a DILEMMA!

**A RICH MAN HAS A PROBLEM:**

He has a *spectacular* harvest – a harvest so great....

that he doesn't have enough room to store all of the grain!

The rich man thought to himself,

had a discussion with himself really, saying,

***“What will I do with all this grain that I've harvested?”***

Then, STILL talking to himself, he says,

***“I'll do this: I'll pull down my barns and build bigger ones,  
and there I will store ALL of my grain AND GOODS!”***

**DOESN'T THIS SEEM LIKE DRASTIC ACTION TO YOU?!**

This man doesn't just build new barns to ADD to his old ones –  
he tears down his OLD barns and builds NEW BIGGER ones.

**MUST HAVE BEEN SOME HARVEST!**

And I will say to my soul:

(Notice that when you're this **RICH**, this **SUCCESSFUL**,  
you don't need to consult with anyone else-  
all your conversations are monologues!)

**I KNOW THIS STORY. DO YOU?**

\*The **diploma** on the wall

\*The **monthly printouts** of our pension accounts, 401ks or IRA's

\*The decals of our **children's colleges** on our rear car windows

\*The sleek **car or SUV or van** with all the latest conveniences

\*The house with closets and pantries **filled to bursting**

**\*It all means that not only have we done a GOOD job  
of the job of LIFE,  
but also that we have built a kind of fence around life:**

\*stable career

\*fat retirement account

\*successful children

\*FULL BARNS

**ALL** of them...insurance against life's *calamities*.

**WE HAVE DONE MIRACULOUSLY WELL!!!**

***WE are able to say,***

***"Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years;  
relax, eat, drink, be merry!"***

We all this parable – the parable of the rich fool,

**BUT JESUS DOESN'T.**

Jesus begins this story, NOT with talk about the man....

but with talk about the LAND and its BOUNTY:

***"The LAND of a rich man produced abundantly."***

What **FIRST impresses Jesus** is this *miraculous*, barn-busting harvest!

## **A MIRACULOUS GIFT. A BLESSING.**

But the blessing is a burden also. The gift becomes a big problem.

How do I manage my miracle?

It's a story about THAT.

How do I manage my miracle?

**How do I manage MY miracle?!**

You can see this in **people's giving** to the church.

There is rarely a correlation between a person's **level of income** & **what % of their income** they give to the work of the church.

Giving is related to **something other** than income.

It has to do with **GRATITUDE:**

a sense that "What I have is not what I earned or deserve,  
but is **a gift, a trust** from God.

It has to do with how they **manage THE miracle!**

While I was in seminary,

I attended a Martin Luther King observance in Washington, DC/

One of the speakers said,

"If you are **black**, and if you have a **good job** & a **secure family**,  
you owe a fortune to the NAACP...

***When are you going to pay up?!"***

I have often thought of that speaker,

because **much the same** could be said for all of us.

**Sometimes we forget**

the *coaches*, teachers, **doctors, nurses,**

***janitors***, pastors, **neighbors,**

churches, *denominations*, **people....**

Whose names we will never remember!

Why is it do often –  
as we sit and gaze with pride  
over all the achievements, the accomplishments,  
the acquisitions of our lives ---

it's all I, MY, ME, MINE?

**ALL of the talk** in our parable this morning, so far,  
has been **the monologue** of the rich farmer!  
He *talks* for himself,  
*plans* for himself,  
*congratulates* himself,  
*celebrates* himself.

It is only at the **END**, at the **VERY end...**  
that another voice intrudes into the story –  
**THE VOICE OF GOD.**

This move from *self-satisfied, contented, monologue*  
to the *intrusive, realistic* **VOICE OF GOD**  
is *not comfortable*....but **IT IS REAL.**

The voice *does not accuse* the rich man of  
*injustice*, of **immorality**, or even **greed**.  
God says to him, **“YOU FOOL!”**  
This man, whom we might call *careful and far-sighted*,  
**God calls a FOOL. Why FOOL?**

After all,

- \*He didn't get what he got unjustly
- \*He didn't cheat elderly people out of their money with a scam
- \*He didn't steal from his neighboring farmers
- \*He didn't even adjust his scales for his own profit!
- \*He didn't treat his farm workers unfairly.

**As far as we know, the man came by his wealth honestly.**

There's nothing wrong with having money!

1 Timothy 6:10 warns against the **LOVE of money**.

Many people read that verse wrong.

It's **NOT money**, but **LOVE of money** which is judged.

NO, God isn't saying that the rich man was a **BAD MAN**...

only that he was **FOOLISH!**

**ARE WE ALSO FOOLISH?!**

We try to build bigger barns *every way* we can, but...

\*How **big** is the barn **we can trust** finally?

\*How big is the ***safety deposit box*** we need for OUR soul's sake?

\*Can you rent a **storage unit** to hoard abundant life?

\*What kind of **insulation** WILL ward off the chill  
of ***whatever*** is to come?

\*Can we **GET** a *security system* to warn us of the inevitable?

\*Can even a ***heavy steel door or dead bolt*** lock out death?

\*Even in our biggest, deepest, ***walk-in closet***....

we can't store abundant life!

### **WE CAN'T LOCK OUT DEATH.**

We and our closets ***float on the Titanic***....

and we know *deep down* how the trip **always ends**.

And this is **OUR Endless dilemma**:

All our *wisdom*, All our **work**,

All our ***days of worry***,

and our *restless nights*:

**NONE of it** can store **life**....nothing can lock our **death**.

*Maybe*, as the teacher in ***Ecclesiastes*** says,

"The whole human endeavor comes down to

**vanity** and a *chasing after the wind*."

OR DOES IT? After all, **death is NOT the LAST word!**

Once again, as on *so many* Sundays

God's voice intrudes in our false security,

our smug contentment.

GOD IS TALKING TO **YOU**.

GOD IS TALKING TO **ME!**

Yet, we are called **foolish** by the source of all we *have & are!*  
God comes to the rich man (**and YOU & ME**) and says,

**“YOU FOOL!”**

This **very** night **your soul** is being demanded of you.  
And **the things** you have prepared,  
whose will they be?”

**The answer is clear.**

The rich man had put his trust in **THINGS...**  
His *priorities* had been confused.  
**NOW**, he was leaving **these things** behind,  
and *what exactly* DID he have to take with him?

In the verses following this parable **in Luke’s Gospel**,  
Jesus tells his disciples:

“Do not keep **worrying** about your life,  
what you will *eat*,  
Or about your life,  
what you will *wear*...

Instead, strive for the Realm of God,  
and these things will be given to you *as well*.

**Do not** be afraid,  
for where ***your treasure is***,  
**THERE YOUR HEART WILL BE ALSO!**  
AMEN.