

We will stay in Luke 12:13-21 all week. Read it, soak it in, know it!

Monday

Eons ago, back on Monday the 16th, I ventured to Costco and things had sure changed. Having gone to Costco regularly for 25 years, I tend to notice when things change there more than at other places. I ended up standing outside for 10 minutes to be let in. They had decided to limit the number of people in there at one time. When I got in, the place was eerily empty... they had done a good job restricting the numbers. There were signs on many items restricting the number that could be purchased. I went to the toilet paper aisle just to scope it out and sure enough, no toilet paper. Fortunately, there was pasta (or I might have faced a revolt at home). The food court was only selling hot dogs and all the seating areas had been taken away.

Looking at that paragraph, it seems silly to claim that we are burdened in any major way as it regards the things of Costco. I would bet most folks in the world, regardless of this crisis, would be ecstatic to have the resources and infrastructure to be able to shop in a place like that. But it got me thinking about what treasures we are trying to store up. What have you felt the urge to gather up in the past week? As you look back, were those the best things to gather?

Tuesday

Someone in the crowd calls out to Jesus with a request to get this guy's brother to divide the inheritance with him. Jesus, however, is not too interested in dealing with this issue, "Man, who made a judge or arbitrator over you?" Why do you think Jesus doesn't want to help resolve this dispute? He's not against resolving disputes because he resolves things amongst the disciples and for other people. But he isn't interested in solving this dispute. Why?

What disputes/disagreements/problems/issues come to you? Do you really need to solve all of them? Is there something more important you could be doing – for you, for them, for the mission Jesus has you on – than to solve every little problem?

There's an anecdote a friend tells about being in the Peace Corps in China. If a light bulb needed to be replaced in the friend's faculty dorm room it would take days or weeks to get it replaced. It isn't because they didn't have plenty of light bulbs at this university, it is because it had to go through many layers of bosses and bureaucrats to get the change approved. What is your mission? Are you controlling light bulbs or is there a better approach?

Wednesday

Translated for our moment, Jesus might say, "Watch out! Check yourself. Beware. Life does not consist of lots of toilet paper. Life does not consist of hoarding anything to the detriment of others. Life does not consist of being grumpy, haughty, or self-righteous because you don't get to do what you want to do at the moment."

But what kind of life are we talking about? The Greek of Jesus' time (which is the language that Luke uses) had three words for life:

Bios – like biology. Bios refers to quantitative life. How long someone lived or how much stuff they had. The basics.

Psyche – like psychology. Psyche refers to qualitative life. The values and relationships that make up your personhood. What you believe, who you hang out with, what you choose to do with yourself.

Zoe – like zoo. Zoe is more like quintessential life. Zoe is the life force, life essence, vitality. In a broad sense, the life of the universe that is derived from and sustained by God. The New Testament uses zoe to talk about the book of life, the Holy Spirit, the life free from death made possible through the death and resurrection of Jesus.

This is the life Jesus refers to here. Zoe. Zoe cannot be reduced to or measured or satisfied by material possessions. Which life are you focused on?

Thursday

In this rich man's mind, the source of his blessings is himself, not God. He gathers his harvest and uses it to serve himself. He is a practical atheist. Surely, he would never deny God or say he didn't believe in God (not even to himself), but the way he lives ignores God.

Whereas Jesus counters Satan by saying that man does not live by bread alone, this fellow is out to prove that he can live exclusively with his bread. He has rejected the zoe of life and all his hope rests in his stuff. Jesus does not condemn wealth in and of itself. Jesus condemns the attitude that all we have we have earned and done for ourselves... common amongst any who have possessions or wealth. What is the measuring stick you use to look at your life?

Friday

Please read and reflect on Luke 12:22-34. How does this connect with this week's passage?