

Friday, March 21

“And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have many good things stored up...’”

The first thing that stands out about this man is that he never saw beyond himself. Think of all the good that man could do in utilizing a large portion of his surplus to assist others. By building up the community of farmers around him, he would develop a community of support. These others would learn to do the same— learning to help one another. The farmer would still have plenty, but would also be investing in the total-good. Will there be a ‘random doofus’ in that community who will refuse to play as a team, and be selfish? Absolutely. At the same time, this man’s generosity WILL develop a change in the majority of the community. By paying-it-forward, the farmer will create a means for EVERYONE to have more and succeed. That kind of social sacrifice is not a ‘normal’ human thing to do, at the same time though, we would label the farmer’s sacrifice as a hallmark of ‘civilized society’. God calls us to make difficult choices— just like our parents and grandparents asked us to make difficult choices when we were children. We don’t know then what was best for our lives either. Here, God is preparing our souls for eternity, but the choices are still ours to make, or refuse.

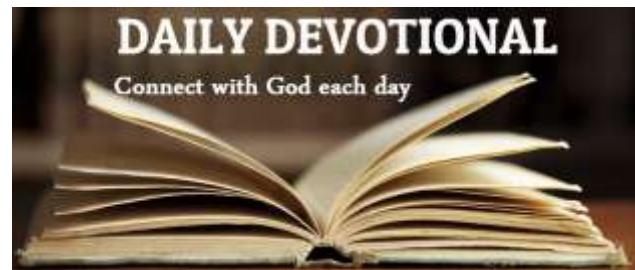
Prayer- Mighty God, help me to see my blessings.

Saturday, March 22

“So it is for one...”

The other thing that is obvious in the farmer is his inability to see beyond his own life. Think of the irony of this man saying to his immortal soul, “Soul, we will have plenty of things to store up for this temporary mortal life!” The man’s self-serving choices don’t help anyone and makes NO impact on the world. Someone else inherits his work, without the toil required to earn it, and they won’t appreciate it or be able to hold onto it. God’s plan, again, is for EVERYONE to do well, not just in THIS life, but also in an immortal life. If we can work with God’s plan, He provides overwhelming success and provisions for those who chose to serve Him. We get to thinking that everything in this life is ours— but every success and every blessing comes from Him. When we can choose to see things in that way, it really becomes a joy to share those blessing with others. In turn, seeing our generosity and like-mindedness, God pours out MORE blessings. It isn’t a ‘normal’ way to approach life, but the reality of the success in choosing to live inside God’s Grace is undeniable. Choosing to see beyond this life, and choosing to live outside of Greed is a POWERFUL change that brings peace and prosperity to your soul.

Prayer- Mighty God, help me to see my blessings.



Luke 12 : 13—21

Amplified Bible (AMP)

¹³ Someone from the crowd said to Him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the *family* inheritance with me.” ¹⁴ But He said to him, “Man, who appointed Me a judge or an arbitrator over [the two of] you?” ¹⁵ Then He said to them, “Watch out and guard yourselves against every form of greed; for not even when one has an overflowing abundance does his life consist of *nor* is it derived from his possessions.” ¹⁶ Then He told them a parable, saying, “There was a rich man whose land was very fertile *and* productive. ¹⁷ And he began thinking to himself, ‘What shall I do, since I have no place [large enough in which] to store my crops?’ ¹⁸ Then he said, ‘This is what I will do: I will tear down my storehouses and build larger ones, and I will store all my grain and my goods there. ¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many good things stored up, [enough] for many years; rest *and* relax, eat, drink and be merry (celebrate continually).”’ ²⁰ But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and *now* who will own all the things you have prepared?’ ²¹ So it is for the one who continues to store up *and* hoard possessions for himself, and is not rich [in his relationship] toward God.”



Monday- Mar 17

'Teacher, tell my brother...'

In the first century Jewish culture, the church was the court system, so Jewish Priests and religious teachers (rabbis) were frequently called on to settle small legal and financial disputes. From this context, this person is coming to Jesus (as a rabbi) to settle his financial inheritance dispute with his brother. The struggle, we can imply from the short discourse, is that the person is asking for Jesus to make a verdict (without any facts), essentially asking Jesus to rule in his favor just because he feels he is in the right. Jesus recognizes this for what it is, and also recognizes the common sin of greed. Let's face it, when it comes to money, ALL of us feel that we are on the 'right' side of a dispute. Much like the man in this context, we anticipate that everyone will be able to see the 'obvious' wrongs done to us. When it comes to finances, we get weird. Logic stops working. Our rational sense of fairness and justice take a backseat. Just like the man, we come looking for our fair share and our reparations, even when those aren't really deserved. Seeing this, and the crowds still around, Jesus uses this opportunity to teach a lesson on greed.

Prayer- Mighty God, help me to see my blessings.



Tuesday- Mar 18

"Man, who appointed me judge or an arbitrator over [the two of] you?"

This is SUCH a cool saying of Jesus- and we miss it completely in translation. The verb in this sentence isn't really best translated as 'judge' or 'arbitrator'. The better translation is 'divider'. The man is coming for an arbitration, but Jesus realizes the man is going to get a permanent division in his relationship with his brother- which is worth more than a portion of an inheritance. The word 'man' in Greek (ἄνθρωπος) is a contemptuous word for addressing another person as a lesser- identifying their limited status in humanity. I'm going to say a good equivalent is calling someone a 'random doofus'. (yikes!) The end of the sentence uses 'you' in the plural, referring to both the man and his brother, but it is more familiar, meaning Jesus is also calling this man 'brother'. It's a social slam, picking on the man's intelligence, and also a loving affirmation of Jesus, softening any criticism with love and invitation. P.B. English translation- "You random doofus! Who gave me the rights to separate you and your brother. DUDE!" My goodness, I love the way Jesus talks!

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Wednesday- March 19

"Watch out and guard yourselves against every form of greed..."

The word for 'greed' in Greek is πλεονεξία (pleonexia)- which is defined as 'covetousness', 'avarice', 'aggressive desire for advantage'. Greed is a tough one to wrap our heads around. We can recognize it easily in others, and yet it's invisible in ourselves. Jesus draws the curtain wide though, pointing out clearly, "for not even when one has an overwhelming abundance does his life consist of, nor is it derived from, his possessions." Jesus is pointing out that 'abundance' in this life has NOTHING to do with possessions, financial well-being or personal property. It's our human nature to make that presumption, but our accumulated 'stuff' isn't really wealth. God is planning on an eternity of perfection for us, and we are iron-clad fixated on shackling ourselves to 'stuff'. We create these attachments to money, possessions, status, prestige and popularity- calling it 'wealth'. In reality, it's just slavery.

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Thursday- March 20

"There was a rich man whose land was very fertile and productive."

As I said, Jesus uses this context as an opportunity to teach on this common sin. Surely a successful farmer, simply growing his own crops wouldn't be 'greedy', right? Wrong. Stop thinking of sins as 'judgements'- as if calling something a sin is God looking down on you. A 'sin' is a mistake... an incorrect way of doing things. Can a farmer approach his farming in the wrong way? You betcha! SO- let's start over. There is a farmer whose land was very fertile and productive. The farmer had SO many crops at harvest, he decided to use his extra earnings to tear down his storehouses, to build bigger ones for future produce. To us- that sounds like very sound, financial planning! The man isn't evil for coming up with this plan, but we don't hear God calling him 'evil'. God says that the farmer is a [ἄφρων] 'fool' ... which is a 'senseless', 'unwise' 'inconsiderate' person. Why would God call him a senseless person? That seems kind-of harsh, doesn't it? Maybe even as harsh as Jesus calling the man in front of Him a 'random doofus'! Bottom line, we don't see the world like Jesus does. He can see ALL things and understands the REAL need for what will not only bring us total happiness, but also to find solutions for EVERYONE. This is a team game- and if we've committed to playing solo, then we can definitely be called a 'random doofus', 'senseless', 'unwise' and 'inconsiderate'.

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