

Old Testament Reading:
Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12–14; 2:18–26

² Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity. . . .

¹²I the Preacher have been king over Israel in Jerusalem. ¹³And I applied my heart to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven. It is an unhappy business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. ¹⁴I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind. . . .

^{2:18}I hated all my toil in which I toil under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to the man who will come after me, ¹⁹and who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. ²⁰So I turned about and gave my heart up to despair over all the toil of my labors under the sun, ²¹because sometimes a person who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave everything to be enjoyed by someone who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil. ²²What has a man from all the toil and striving of heart with which he toils beneath the sun? ²³For all his days are full of sorrow, and his work is a vexation. Even in the night his heart does not rest. This also is vanity.

²⁴There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God, ²⁵for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment? ²⁶For to the one who pleases him God has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, but to the sinner he has given the business of gathering and collecting, only to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.

Epistle: Colossians 3:1–11

¹If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above,

where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

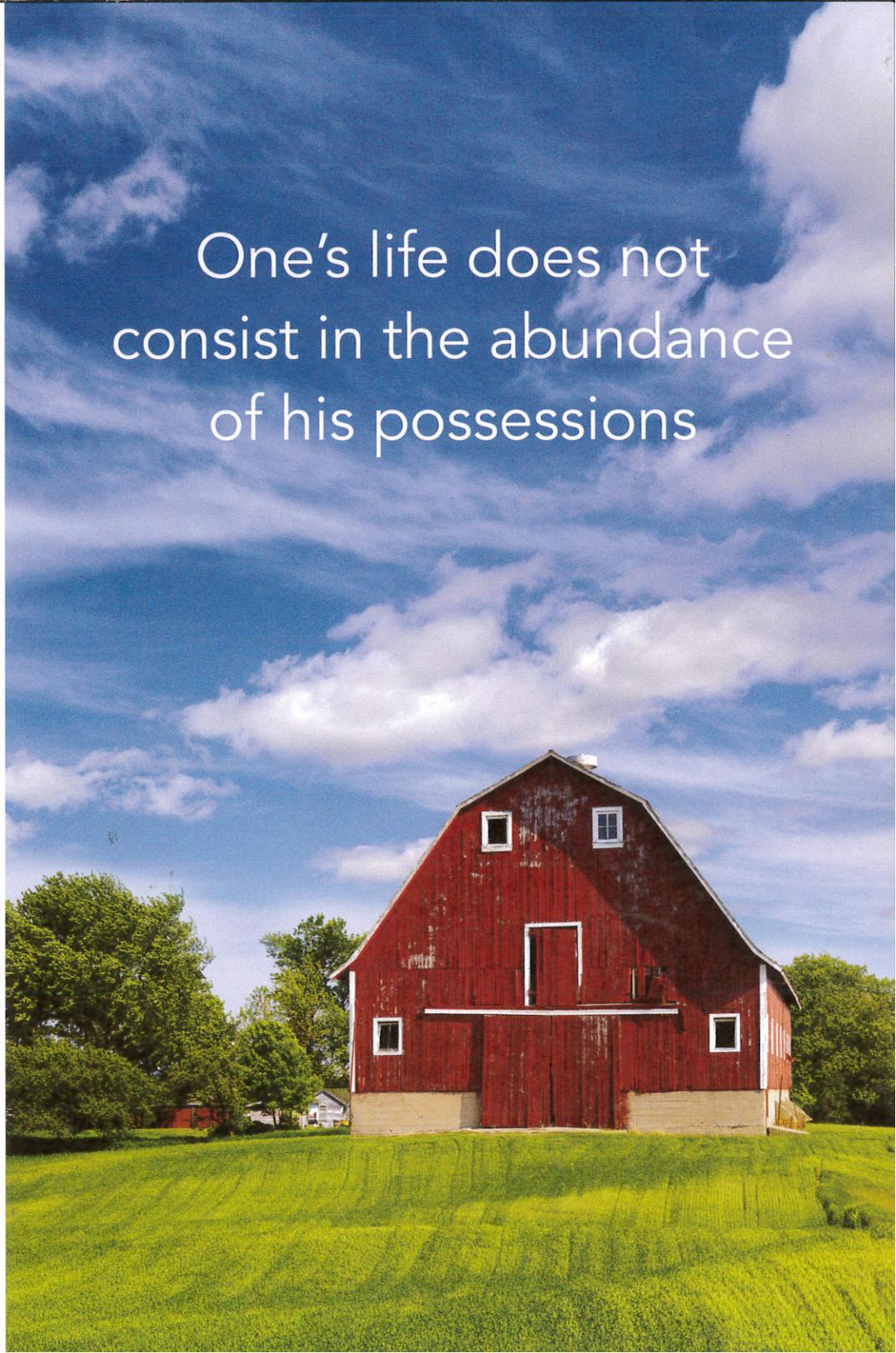
⁵Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. ⁶On account of these the wrath of God is coming. ⁷In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. ⁸But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. ⁹Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices ¹⁰and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. ¹¹Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

Holy Gospel: Luke 12:13–21

¹³Someone in the crowd said to [Jesus], “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.” ¹⁴But he said to him, “Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?” ¹⁵And he said to them, “Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.” ¹⁶And he told them a parable, saying, “The land of a rich man produced plentifully, ¹⁷and he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ ¹⁸And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’ ²⁰But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ ²¹So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”



About the Cover: Taking stock of possessions, whether in plenty or in want, easily becomes its own worrisome burden that is soon brought to futility at the end of this life. Jesus reminds us that being rich toward God is eternally important. In Christ, we see that it is not about what we have but who has us. God has made us His own through Christ, who emptied Himself for us on the cross, baptized us into Himself, and has thus made us rich beyond compare.



One's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions

**St. John's Lutheran Church (LCMS)
8948 N 1900 Ave Geneseo, IL 61254
309-949-2516**

July 31, 2022 **Eighth Sunday after Pentecost**

Divine Service Setting Four (Lutheran Service Book, p. 203)

Hymn of Invocation 875 Father, We Praise Thee

Invocation and Versicles (p. 203)

Introit *Psalm 49:7-8, 13-14a, 15; antiphon: vv. 1-2*

Hear this, all peoples!
Give ear, all inhabitants of the world,
both low and high, rich and poor together!

Truly no man can ransom another,
or give to God the price of his life,
**for the ransom of their life is costly
and can never suffice.**

This is the path of those who have foolish confidence;
yet after them people approve of their boasts.
**Like sheep they are appointed for Sheol;
death shall be their shepherd.**

But God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol,
for he will receive me.
**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Hear this, all peoples!
Give ear, all inhabitants of the world,
both low and high, rich and poor together!

The Kyrie (p. 204)

Salutation and Collect of the Day (p. 205)

P O Lord, grant us wisdom to recognize the treasures You have stored up for us in heaven, that we may never despair but always rejoice and be thankful for the riches of Your grace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

G Amen.

Readings (on back of bulletin)

Gradual *Romans 10:15b, 18b; Isaiah 52:7b, alt.*

How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news,
who publish peace and bring good news of salvation.
**Their voice has gone out to all the earth,
and their words to the ends of the world.**

Alleluia and Verse (p. 205)

Apostles' Creed (p. 207)

Hymn of the Day 781 We Give Thee But Thine Own

Sermon

Prayer of the Church

After each petition:

P Lord, in Your mercy,
G hear our prayer.

The prayer concludes:

P ...one God, now and forever.
G Amen.

Presentation of the Offering

Service of the Sacrament (p. 208)

(Please see the Communion statement in the pew pads for receiving the Sacrament at St. John's.)

Distribution Hymns

560 Drawn to the Cross, Which Thou Hast Blessed

620 Jesus Comes Today with Healing

Nunc Dimittis (p. 211)

Hymn to Depart 700 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH-LCMS

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Website: www.stjohnsgeneseo.org
https://www.facebook.com/St.Johns.Geneseo

**HEARING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE
HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE**

Rev. Timothy Nerud **Pastor**
309-949-2516 (Office), 612-940-8138 (Cell), 309-949-2517 (Home)

Elder: Mike Dahl

Organist: Gail Tutt

Greeter: Janet Bertso

Ushers:

Videographers: Joel Werling, Nicole Nerud, or Heidi Nerud

Today's Readings: Old Testament Reading: Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-26
Second Reading: Colossians 3:1-11
Gospel: Luke 12:13-21

WE PRAY: Holy Spirit, who impels us to despair by the terrors of the Law and who by the grace of the Gospel draws us to faith, let Christ so be in us and us so be in Him, that no evil or idolatrous acts darken our lives and that in Him we live in the image of our glorious Creator; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who with You and the Father are one God with dominion over us forever. Amen

WELCOME TO ALL!

We are anxious to share with you the Christ-centered ministry at St. John's. Our Liturgy follows closely the pattern of Word and Lord's Supper handed down from the ancient Church. It is our hope that you will make the Church's life of prayer your own. If you have difficulty following our order of service, please ask someone sitting near you for assistance. We pray that you will receive rich spiritual blessings from your presence here. May the peace and power of our risen Christ be yours always.

IF YOU DESIRE, a visit or call from Pastor Nerud, please contact the church office (309-949-2516).

OFFICE HOURS

Terri's hours (Monday—Friday) 8 am—12 pm
Pastor's hours (Monday, Pastor's day off)
(Tuesday) 9 am—12 pm
(Thursday) 9 am—12 pm & 1 pm—4 pm
(Wednesday & Friday) please call ahead.

STREAM SERVICES <https://www.facebook.com/St.Johns.Geneseo/> and on the website: www.stjohnsgeneseo.org.

ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY

Sunday school—7 Adult Bible Class—11 Worship—55

OFFERING

Offering last Sunday \$1,816.00
Weekly 2022 Budget income needed \$4,084.71

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES AT ST JOHN'S

Today	8:45 am	SS/Adult & Youth Bible Study
	10:00 am	Divine Worship/Holy Communion
Tuesday	7:00 pm	Adult Instruction
Thursday	6:00 pm	Elders' meeting
	7:00 pm	Men's Bible Study
Next Sunday	8:45 am	SS/Adult & Youth Bible Study
	10:00 am	Divine Worship/Communion

*I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD."
Psalms 122:1*

LUKE 12:15 – "And he said to them, 'Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.'" Coveting is the opposite of being content with what God has given us. And the cure for coveting is twofold: thankfulness to God and generosity toward God's purposes. So be on guard against all covetousness. Acknowledge that your Father has given you all you need, and therefore be free and confident in directing the mammon of this world toward godly purposes.

ATTENDANCE PADS are at the end of each pew. Each family (members and guests) should sign using only **ONE** box per household, naming all family members present in the one box. **EVERYONE** needs to indicate their intention to receive Holy Communion on a Communion Sunday. Return pad to the right end of your pew. Thanks for your help with this.

ALTAR FLOWERS have been given in praise and glory to our Heavenly Father in memory of John and Ann Raschke. We thank You for the witness of their lives, living in faith to God Almighty and their Savior, Jesus Christ.

WHO WILL HELP? We are in need of people to serve on two different committees. First we need 3 people to serve on the nominating committee. You will be asked to secure the names of congregational members willing to be on the ballot for the Church council for 2023.

The second need is for 2 additional people to serve on the Church Constitution Review Committee. Your job will be to review the current constitution and make recommended changes as necessary. Please contact Don Hock (309-945-6675) or Pastor Nerud if you are willing to help on either of these committees. Please let either know ASAP.

MARK THE DATE, August 19th 6-9 pm, for Family Fun Night. This event will replace the usually Rally Day. We will gather at 6 pm for a cook-out and

evening of games, fun, and fellowship. Hope to see many there. This is for the entire congregation and all ages.

ALTAR FLOWERS—The 2022 Flower Chart is now on the bulletin board next to the restrooms. Cost for weekly flowers are \$30 for two arrangements. We greatly appreciate those who help with providing flowers for Sunday worship services. **Please sign up for a Sunday.**

PRAYER MINISTRY

Remember God's work in Lutheran schools as you pray:

MISSION—*Pray for all students*, that God would protect them and provide people to share with them the Word of God.

ST JOHN'S—**Mr. Lawrence Kane**—We offer before You our common request for the well-being of Your church throughout the world that it may be so guided and governed by Your good Spirit that all who profess themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth and hold the faith in unity of spirit in the bond of peace, and the righteousness of life. Specifically, we pray for Larry ask Your blessings upon him.

ST. JOHN'S FAMILY—O Lord, You are the great Physician of soul and body. We pray that You would show mercy to Your servants:

Linda Aper	Betty Firch	Paula Chapa
Elizabeth Bjork	Arlyn Helke	Drew Schillinger
Jim Dahl	Lynne Johnson	Carolyn Werner
Lois Esterlein	Carolyn Wildermuth	Marilyn Woods

Don Eggers (son of friend of Marilyn Woods)

Jodi Martins (daughter of Gary & Darla Johns)

Jon/Anita Clausing (missionaries in Kenya)

Marilyn Potts (wife of Cal Potts, former St. John Laborer for Christ)

Virginia Miller (mother of Jamie Werling)

Rev. Justin Kane (son of Sandra Kane)

Family of Jim Rahn

MILITARY—We pray for those serving in our military and their families:

Mandy/Richard Davila (daughter/son-in-law of Linda Aper)

Luke/Nicole Thompson (son/daughter-in-law of John/Kindra Thompson)

Ken Willeford (husband of Alicia Willeford)

Karl Flynn (son of Mr/Mrs Paul Flynn)

Zachary/Tiffany Gardner (nephew/wife of Lois Esterlein)

Casey Powers Jr. (step son of Lisa Powers)

Brittany Loenser (daughter of Gabe Loenser)

LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

“‘Therefore choose life,’ God said, ‘that you and your offspring may live.’ The way to choose life is to trust. Don’t panic. Did you think human life was going to be humanly possible? It’s not. It was never meant to be. Guiding a human being through the journey of life is possible only for God. That’s why the only way to choose life is to trust, to trust God. God gives no one a possible life. The

call of God is to an impossible life. Otherwise, why trust? And life was created for trust.” *Rev. Gary Blobaum, St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, Oregon, Illinois – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

WALK FOR LIFE—Pregnancy Resources annual fund raiser is set for Saturday, September 10th. Walkers may check in between 8:30—11:00 am at the East Shelter of Ben Butterworth Park. Walkers may walk any time between 9-11:30 am. If you wish to support this event but are unable to walk, you may send your donation to: Pregnancy Resources, 3825—16th St., Moline IL 61265.

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND FAMILY- St. John's in East Moline is looking for a Director of Youth and Family. This is a salaried position with an average of 16 hours per week. A detailed job description can be found in St. John's office. Applicants will need to fill out an application and supply a resume with 3 letters of recommendation. Call Cris Braddy at 309-235-7984 if you have any questions.

The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

July 31, 2022

Text: Luke 12:13-21 (Gospel)

Other Texts: Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-26 (Old Testament); Colossians 3:1-11 (Epistle)

“Rich in Christ, Rich towards God”

Grace, mercy, and peace be yours from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The time after Pentecost, sometimes referred to as the “long green season” gets that name from its being the longest season of the church year and yes, except for the rare festival, the color *is* green. And this is appropriate as green is the color of growth. For the long season after Pentecost has as a primary focus the growth of the disciple in knowledge of the Word, faith, hope, love, and the many Christian virtues which are the fruit of the Spirit, even as we are warned against those things which, like noxious weeds, would hamper such growth and the bearing of good fruit and, if left unchecked, will finally even destroy the plant of faith which sprouted from the Gospel seed.ⁱ And so with that backdrop in place, let us consider *what* is it that our Lord have us learn today so that we might grow in our Christian discipleship.

The Gospel records a man in the crowd saying to Jesus, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”ⁱⁱ Now in the Jewish culture of that time, people would ask the scribes and teachers of the Law to interpret and apply the Law to specific cases, such as inheritance issues, as there often were civil laws given in Scripture which addressed such.ⁱⁱⁱ It is basically the same as today when a person comes to their pastor seeking advice on how to handle a given situation in a way that is appropriate for a Christian according to God’s Word, something that we would consider proper, even godly.

Yet, Jesus’ strong negative response indicates that He will not be entangled in such cases, “Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?”^{iv} Fellow redeemed, this again is part of our instruction so that we understand our Lord’s strong rebuke. Jesus is clearly not just *a* judge, but *the* Judge who, on the Last Day, will judge all the living and the dead. But that is exactly the point. Jesus has come that through His ministry, which will culminate in His crucifixion, death, and resurrection, people will be saved *from His own* righteous condemnation unto eternal damnation at His return. So His teaching is to bring people to faith that they become a member of God’s Kingdom here on earth so that they may live with Him forever. Yet, this man is not interested in that “spiritual” stuff for he is too concerned about “real life,” in this case the inheritance money he believes He deserves.

Again, consider our Lord’s words. He is *not* making a judgment on the man’s case. Whether the man’s brother was wrongly withholding part of the inheritance or not *is not the issue in our Lord’s mind*. As the Lord of Creation from whom all authority comes in heaven and on earth, He has given civil rulers to judge such things and, yes, even religious teachers to help interpret the Law. Thus Jesus is not condemning seeking such judgment or arbitration per se, but He fully condemns the attitude, the mind and soul, which hears Him speaking of God’s judgment and grace and eternal salvation, but then having no real interest in them as it is too busy worrying about this temporary life, about money and the earthly security and the comforts it can buy.

“And he said to them, ‘Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.’”^v And so the problem, as is so often the case, is not the legitimacy of the man’s complaint, as that can be handled by those who have been appointed to deal with such and, if his case is valid, he could receive the appropriate justice. No. The problem *is the man’s heart* which is focused on such things, the greed that has filled it so that, despite all that Jesus has been teaching and preaching, his only concern with Jesus is that He would use His impressive authority to help him get his money.

But while this man was the one who initiated the warning, Jesus quite well knew that greed and covetousness is not something limited to his heart alone, but is found in the hearts of all mankind, all the sons and daughters of Adam. That is why He spoke His warning not just to the one man, but “to them,” that is, all the crowd *including His own disciples*. And not just His disciples “back then,” but yet us still today for our hearts are not yet without sin. And so that we would understand His warning, Jesus follows it with the *Parable of the Rich Fool*.

“The land of a rich man produced plentifully, and he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.”’ But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’”^{vi}

Dear Christians, some of our Lord’s parables can be a bit tricky, requiring real spiritual discernment and sanctified thinking. But to be blunt, *not this one*. It is almost startling in its simplicity and clarity. There is a rich farmer whose land produces plentifully. So much that He cannot store all of it and so he decides to tear down his barns and build bigger ones. His ultimate goal, to rest and relax in a life of comfort and ease, to enjoy his well-earned retirement. But then he hears God call him the one thing you never want to hear the Lord call you, “Fool!”

Yes, this man was a fool. Note, not a thief, the land was his legally. Not a sloth, for his hard work as a farmer is not denied. Not even a fool in the earthly sense, as his planning is both assumed in the planting and harvest as well as indicated by how he considers his options and comes up with, earthly speaking, what sounds like a decent plan.

No, he’s a fool in the sense of being a *Godless* fool. This doesn’t mean he was an atheist in the strict sense, in complete denial of there being any god, as that was extremely uncommon in the ancient world and certainly even rarer amongst the Jews. Yet, as many then and still today, he was a *practical* atheist. That is, God’s Word just didn’t really impact the way he thought or lived. His plans just did not include God in them in any sincere way. Jesus makes this point by indicating that “the land...produced plentifully.” In other words, ultimately all blessings come from God who causes the sun to shine and the rain to fall on both the evil and the good.^{vii} But this man did not recognize God’s providence in the harvest so he did not thank God for his blessings. Instead he claimed them as his own well-earned reward.

Thus his practical atheism is expressed by his self-centeredness. As he considers things no thought of what God would want him to do crosses his mind, no consideration for others even

begins to form in his heart. All his thoughts are *I, my, and I will's*; all his desires focused on himself, “relax, eat, drink, be merry.” There could be no room for the glory of God and the love of the neighbor in such a soul. A soul which, as we heard, he even called “*my soul*.”

And so he was a doomed fool. He thought his future was secure, that his many years of retirement were ready to begin in earnest. “Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?” His soul was *not* his own. As the Lord declares through the prophet Ezekiel, “Behold, all souls are mine...the soul who sins shall die.”^{viii} Just when the man thought all was set and secure, that he could really begin to enjoy the fruits of his years of hard work, His Creator whom He conveniently ignored inconveniently intruded. His life was ended, his soul judged, his destination destruction. For that is the end of all Godless fools as Jesus says, “So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”^{ix}

So we are warned against all greed and covetousness. We are warned against missing, forgetting, all the blessings and provisions God gives to us in His providential care, including the opportunities and ability to think well and work hard. We are warned against being practical atheists who give God some lip-service, but who live as if we are our own gods, following our own plans and desires instead of conforming them to God’s Word. We are warned against thinking “*my soul*,” for our soul, our body, our life, is a gift from His hand, one which we will give an account for unto Him. It is so easy, *too* easy, to say, “I’m not greedy,” “I put God first,” and other such claims. The real question though is does God agree with our self-assessment? For ultimately it is His judgment that counts, not ours.

So let us judge ourselves rightly and confess truthfully, for then we will not come under judgment as godless and doomed fools.^x Instead, let us recognize how rich God is towards us! He is rich towards us in granting us our daily bread, all that we need for life on this earth. More, He is rich towards us in grace, readily forgiving our sins of greed, covetousness, idolatry of money, possessions, and a good life, self-centeredness, and all other aspects of our practical atheism. He forgives us because the Jesus who warns us against these sins so that we would turn from them is the same One who bore them to the cross to pay their penalty in our place. If we confess our foolishness of sin, of our seeking the riches and joys that we can have and hold now instead of setting our mind on heavenly things, patiently waiting for the eternal riches that He is preparing for us, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.^{xi}

Being cleansed from sin and recognizing God’s riches towards us, we can now be wise and rich towards Him. We can be wise by seeking first His kingdom and righteousness and thereby be truly rich, having the eternal inheritance of the children of God.^{xii} Having such, *treasuring* such as the greatest of riches, we can then be rich towards Him in thanksgiving by blessing His name and by using our money and possessions to support the ministry of the Word in our congregation and beyond and loving our neighbor with alms and acts of charity. Yes, we can be rich toward God with such works, certain that they are pleasing to Him since they flow from a heart of faith that overflows with thanks and praise for all His goodness to us in this life and the next. Such truly then are works of which it is written, “Their deeds follow them!”^{xiii}

May God grant us His Spirit that we would not be fools, but wisely be rich towards Him. Amen!

ⁱ Cf. *The Parable of the Sower*, Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23; Luke 8:4-8.

ⁱⁱ Luke 12:13. All quotes are from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version* (ESV) unless otherwise noted.

ⁱⁱⁱ E.g. Numbers 27:1-11; 36:7-9; Deuteronomy 21:15-17.

^{iv} Luke 12:14.

^v Luke 12:15.

^{vi} Luke 12:16-20.

^{vii} Matthew 5:45.

^{viii} Ezekiel 18:4.

^{ix} Luke 12:21.

^x 1 Corinthians 11:31.

^{xi} 1 John 1:9.

^{xii} E.g. Matthew 25:34; Romans 8:17.

^{xiii} Revelation 14:13.