

### A Fool's Fortune

My Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Lord,

It's not uncommon to hear of someone who spends a lifetime chasing financial success only to discover too late that what truly matters was never for sale. Imagine a man who has built a booming business from the ground up: lavish vacations, multiple properties, a secure retirement. Yet, in the quiet moments of his success, he realizes he has no real relationships, no peace, and no deeper purpose. When illness comes or a loved one dies, his wealth offers no comfort. This modern-day parable mirrors the warning in today's Gospel from Luke 12:13–21.

A man in the crowd asks Jesus to settle a dispute over an inheritance. Rather than intervening, Jesus sees an opportunity to teach about the deeper issue at hand: the danger of greed and the illusion of security through possessions. He shares the parable of a rich man who enjoys an abundant harvest. Rather than sharing or giving thanks, the man decides to tear down his barns to build bigger ones, thinking he can now “rest, eat, drink, and be merry.” But God calls him a fool: that very night, his life would be demanded of him, and his stored-up treasures would mean nothing.

This parable strikes at the heart of our modern condition. Our culture prizes accumulation, more wealth, more comfort, more things. But Jesus, ever the practical teacher, reminds us that all these things are passing. As theologian Peter Kreeft points out in *Food for the Soul*, all three readings today emphasize detachment from this world. Jesus is not idealistic; he simply sees clearly. If we love things that are temporary, we are guaranteed to lose them. Death levels us all, and none of our possessions can follow us beyond the grave.

What, then, are we to do? Jesus doesn't tell us to reject all material things, but he calls us to train our hearts to value what lasts. As he says elsewhere, “Where your treasure is, there also will your heart be” (Matthew 6:21). If we examine ourselves honestly and find that our hearts are overly attached to earthly success, comfort, or recognition, we must redirect that love. We cannot buy our way into heaven—it is God's free gift—but we can cultivate a love for eternal things by living generous, prayerful, and humble lives. Like exercising a muscle, the more we practice detachment and generosity, the more our hearts learn to love what is eternal.

The rich fool in today's Gospel teaches us not just about wealth but about priorities. A full bank account is not the same as a full soul. The real riches are found in loving God, serving others, and placing our trust not in barns but in the One who holds our lives in his hands.

Let us then invest wisely not in things that perish but in the treasures of heaven, for that is where true security and joy awaits.

Yours in Christ,  
Fr. Rudy