

8th Sunday after Pentecost, 7th Sunday after Trinity – 2022

Saturday, 7/30 at 4:00 | Sunday, 7/31 at 9:00



Text: Luke 12:13-21 NAS 1995

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: The *average American* has A LOT OF STUFF:

- ✓ The average home has 300,000 items!
- ✓ 1 out of every 10 Americans rent offsite storage!
- ✓ 25% with two-car garages have no room for their cars!
- ✓ The average 10-year-old owns 238 toys!
- ✓ The average woman owns 30 outfits!
- ✓ Many homes have more televisions than people!¹

But sadly:

- ☹ About half don't save any money!
- ☹ Americans spend 1.2 trillion ea. yr. on non-essentials!
- ☹ The average credit card debit is \$6,000!²
- ☹ Only 22% of Americans attend church every week!³

¹ [https://www.becomingminimalist.com/clutter-stats/#:~:text=There%20are%20300%2C000%20items%20in,past%2050%20years%20\(NPR\).](https://www.becomingminimalist.com/clutter-stats/#:~:text=There%20are%20300%2C000%20items%20in,past%2050%20years%20(NPR).)

² <https://www.moneygeek.com/credit-cards/analysis/average-credit-card-debt/>

³ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/245491/church-attendance-of-americans/>

In today's gospel reading, from **Luke chapter 12**, Jesus will give a **wakeup call** to every American who is willing to hear what He says and repent.

What is the setting? In **Luke chapter 11**, “the scribes and the Pharisees began to be very hostile and to question [Jesus] closely on many subjects” (53). Then, in **chapter 12**, with thousands of people present, Jesus began warning His disciples about the religious leaders. We now come to the text when someone in that crowd had a question:

1. **Concern About Earthly Riches:** ¹³ **Someone in the crowd said to [Jesus], “Teacher, tell my brother [male sibling with at least one parent in common] to divide the family inheritance [what is received as a gift when someone dies] with me.”** ¹⁴ **But He said to him, “Man [a way to address someone without using his name], who appointed Me a judge [one who pronounces the verdict in a court case] or arbitrator [one who decides a dispute] over you?”** // The Son of God was NOT sent by the Father to
♦pronounce or ♦decide such things.

Jesus came for something FAR GREATER: To open the ONE WAY to the Father in heaven – through His sinless living and sacrificial dying!

2. **The Proper Perspective on Earthly Riches:** ¹⁵ **Then [Jesus] said to them [those in the large crowd], “Beware [see, have your eyes open, don't miss this], and be on your guard [like a watchman protecting a city from an enemy] against every form of greed [covetousness, wanting more than one's share]; for not even when one has an abundance [when he is rich] does his life consist of his**

possessions.” // Think about this: We tend to define ourselves by ♦what we know, ♦what we do, ♦what we have, ♦where we live, or ♦what we drive! Such things can carry much significance in this world, *but they mean NOTHING in the scope of eternity.*

So, Jesus is telling us to **STOP** focusing on **TEMPORAL** things and to **START** focusing on **ETERNAL** things!

3. **So Rich, Yet So Poor:** Now, to help us and others heed His words, *Jesus told this powerful parable:*
- a. ¹⁶ ... **“The land of a rich man was very productive. ¹⁷ And he began reasoning to himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?’** // For some, *when they unexpectedly have more money*, they are tempted to become like the rich man – *not thanking God and seeking His will*, but rather asking, “What should I do FOR MYSELF?”
 - b. ¹⁸ **“Then [the rich man] said, ‘This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹ And I will say to my soul [that is, my physical life, my breath], ‘Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease [rest], eat, drink and be merry [be glad, rejoice].’”** // When our lives are *all wrapped up in* what we know, what we do, what we have, where we live, or what we drive – *like many Americans*, then we will be JUST LIKE THE RICH MAN. Is that okay? Well, so far in the parable, *the rich man seems to be doing fine.*

- c. ²⁰ “But God said to [the rich man], ‘You fool [one who lacks common sense]! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?’ ²¹ So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.” // A VERY SAD SITUATION! What about people today? Sometimes they work and work, and play and play, and then, because they had no time for Jesus, *they are finally lost forever!* **GOD DOES NOT WANT THAT FOR ANYONE**, so Jesus gave us today’s wonderful, powerful warning – so that everyone might ♥think, ♥understand, ♥repent, and ♥live!

This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?

Take Aways:

- **Truth** – All the stuff we will ever possess is *temporary*.
- **Relevance** – Some eternal things include ♦God, ♦His word, and ♦relationships – *with God and with fellow believers*.
- **Inspiration** – Beginning today, let us ♦loosen our grip on temporal things and ♦put our focus on eternal things!

Let Us Pray: Dear Jesus, TY for the great lesson about possessions; now, going forward, ♦impress upon us the temporary reality of this life, ♦help us to fully embrace the life to come, and ♦move us to put You first in our daily lives.

Website: www.BLC7500.com; **YouTube and Podcast:** Benefit from the Bible
Facebook: Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma; **Pastor:** RevRLGreen@aol.com
7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134, 440-845-2230