

Ascension Lutheran Church

Pastor Godkin's Sermon for the week of August 1, 20 10

Life Does Not Consist in Abundance of Jesus (Luke 12:13-21)

Grace, mercy and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Our text is from the 12th chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke:

"Someone in the crowd said to him, 'Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.'

¹⁴ Jesus replied, 'Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?'

¹⁵ Then He said to them, 'Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.'"

This is the text.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, About 100 years ago there was a man named John Henry Jowett. He was a pastor and influential author from England. He once had this to say about the value of money. "The real measure of our wealth is how much we'd be worth if we lost all our money."

Money is a topic that almost all people are interested in and it is a topic that the Bible speaks of a great deal as well. There are about 250 verses in the Bible which talk about money. And many of the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ involve money in some way. So why all the interest in money, we might ask? In Biblical times and even more so in our present time, people live in a consumerist society. And the way that we treat our possessions affects more than our pocketbooks. It indicates our spiritual condition.

There is a deceitful teaching going around in many churches these days, particularly in many of the mega-churches we see on TV. It is called the prosperity gospel. It is seen basically as a giant vending machine. It says we simply put in faith and out pop blessings—money, homes, cars, good neighbours, big churches, and plush vacations, and all the health and wealth you can ever imagine.

In our text today, our Lord Jesus Christ makes it crystal clear that His teaching about possessions is the direct opposite, the very antithesis of such a covetous and selfish outlook.

For our lives, the real question is: Of what does my life consist? Jesus tells us here to "take care, and be on your guard against covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

Then He gave a parable about a man who considered his possessions to be the most important things in his life. God had blessed the man with abundant crops and made him wealthy. He had a whole lot of things, too many things than he knew what to do with. So what did he do? It says he thought to himself, "I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods... Then

the hymn says, "Fount of purest pleasure... Hence, all pleasure."

Friends, no, life does not consist in the abundance of the Lord Jesus Christ in our lives. Make do so that all we have may be used for His purposes. He provides through the Word and Sacraments let us have. Let us cling to the supreme riches we have in the King of kings and Lord of lords and He is the God. Go in peace, serve the Lord. Amen. The peace and understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ

earthly treasure, Jesus is my

of possessions. It consists in the Word of His Word permeate all that we have. And so with the strength that we hold onto what we already have in Christ our Saviour. For His glory of all glories. Thanks be to God that surpasses all things. Amen.