

Pastor Geoffrey R. Boyle  
12<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
11 August 2013  
Grace-Trinity Lutheran Churches, Wichita  
Luke 12:22-40

*In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit*

I've been doing grad work for roughly 4 years now...and I'm not close to being done.

I just applied for a second extension—I hope they grant it.

Is it worth the effort? Am I supposed to be doing this?

We've still got thousands of dollars of student loan debt.

We want the best for our kids—but can we afford it in the long run?

What will they learn in the schools?

What sorts of friends will they make?

Will my kids reject the faith?

Will they walk away from the Church I love?

Am I spending enough time with my wife?

Does she know I love her?

Am I working to make our marriage better?

Will my Dad make it through all these treatments?

And for how long?

Am I being the brother to my siblings that they need?

How can we be closer? And kinder?

Have I called my Mom this week?

Will the congregation still like me if I speak a hard word?

Will that couple resent me for saying they can't live together.

Will that boy reject the faith if I say he can't smoke pot anymore?

Will the people love the Lord and all the gifts He has to give—

or will they think I'm forcing something new?

Can I get to all the shut-ins this month?

What if I can't?

What if I miss someone in the hospital, or they think I don't care?

Am I teaching what's right?

Are they learning?

Is it going over their heads?

Or have they heard it all before?

Am I too strict? Am I too loose?

Am I splitting my time evenly between family, church, school, and the neighborhood?

Am I using my gifts to the best I can?

Will my paycheck meet all the places it needs to go?

Can we give more to the church?

Are we safe? As a family, a church, a country?

These are *my* anxieties—*my* fears, my worries.

You have your own.

You don't have to look far to be afraid, or worried, or anxious about this life.

Just open your eyes.

See that the body wears out,

that the roof has a leak,

the basement is flooded,

the pews are empty,

and terrorists lurk in the shadows.

Open your eyes and see that this life is difficult.

See the prices of medication.

See the cost of tuition.

See the cool new pair of shoes,

the latest technology,

the price of that ring or the price of the divorce.

Then see your bank account, or your credit card bill, or your mortgage.

And then we hear Jesus' words in today's Gospel:

*"Do not be anxious about your life."* (Lk 12:22)

Easier said than done.

We do worry and we are anxious.

And whenever that sick feeling in your stomach comes, you try to get rid of it.

Some of us deal with our worries by drowning them.

Others by running.

And then there are others who work and work and work—hoping that'll get it all done.

We end up treasuring whatever takes our worries away.

If we're worried about paying bills, we treasure the paycheck.

If we're worried about our children's education, we treasure the school.

If we're worried about our health, we treasure the gym, or our diet, or the doctor's office.

If we worry about how we look, we treasure the latest fashion or style.

If we worry about being cool or connected, we treasure facebook or the newest iPad—

which, by the way, the iPad 5 should be out this fall.

We treasure all these things because by them and through them we can control our fear.

As long as we work a bit harder, or study a bit later, or eat a bit healthier—

our anxieties won't overwhelm us.

As long as our eyes can see that things are alright, then we're fine.

But when Jesus says *don't be anxious*, He strips us of every treasure that can be seen and controlled.

He strips us *of us*.  
He leaves us bare.

*“Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them...  
Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Of how much more value are you than the birds!”* (Lk 12:24, 27)

If our treasure is in what our eyes see:  
the things of this life—money, stability, success, power—  
then that is where our heart—  
that is, our faith, our hope, our love—  
will be also.

This is about to be one of the most *anti-stewardship* sermons you've ever heard...but—  
*where your treasure is, there will your heart be also,*  
has nothing to do with your money.

It's all just the opposite!

When Jesus says, *do not be anxious*, and again, *fear not, little flock*,  
He isn't speaking to condemn you, but to free you.

Only Jesus can speak these words and actually create what they say!

Why?  
Because these are words spoken through the cross.  
They're words covered in His blood,  
soaked in His righteousness.

These words are then given to you as a gift.

He really means don't be worried, don't be anxious, do not fear;  
not because you've worked hard enough, or because these things don't matter—  
*for your Father knows that you need them* (12:30)—  
but because when He stretched out His arms on the cross He said,  
*“It is finished.”*

Every sin: paid for.  
Every worry and fear: destroyed.  
Every guilt, every doubt, every pain: forgiven.

*“Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”* (12:32)

And He has.  
He does.  
And He'll keep giving it until He brings you home to Himself.

He tenderly speaks His Word of forgiveness into your ears.  
He washes you with His forgiveness.  
He feeds you with His life, risen from the dead.

And by this He has freed you from every worry, fear, and anxiety this world can throw at you.

But He does this all by His Word.  
And that means we might not always see it.  
What we see will be the many fears and doubts all around us, the worries of this life.

But what we hear is the truth, the promise of God that all is finished for you.  
That Christ who conquered death is with you and will never leave you.  
That no matter what you face, what you're going through, what makes you anxious—  
no matter what, you are clothed with Christ and His righteousness.

In Him you're dressed and ready for action (12:35).  
The feast is prepared, the Master's on His way, and you are the bride—  
waiting in your chamber for the Son of Man to come and call you home.

We live by faith, not by sight.

Your treasure is Christ.  
And where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

*In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit*