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| **The Joy of Giving**  *Promise: with minds set on things above we discover joy in giving* Pastor Timothy A. Duesenberg Ecc 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-26; Psa 100; Col 3:1-11; Luke 12:13-21 (8th Sunday after Pentecost, Pr. 13), 8/3/25  *“Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.”* – v. 15  **Lead In –** For many of us in the pulpit, me included, the topic of giving is as touchy as anything we preach on. It has the potential to seemingly be more off limits than to speak about sex. It can get under our skin. After all, we reason, my financial affairs are personal, private, and nobody’s business. Well, try telling that to God. And see for yourself how often the Bible addresses the matter of the stewardship of wealth. Our Lord Jesus certainly never shied away from the matter. Our Gospel Reading is a case in point. So with that in mind, may God grant us the boldness to dive in and be open to what our Lord has to teach us about being faithful stewards …   1. **Jesus Starts with a Stern Warning!**    1. The warning is echoed throughout Scripture…    2. Idolatry and the First and most important command…    3. Distinguishing between owner and the manager… 2. **The Warning Is Beautifully Illustrated**    1. Give the farmer his due for being industrious…    2. The triune god of his worship: Me, Myself, and I…    3. Only one God saves and delivers on His promises… 3. **The Joy of Giving: Three Things Taught in Scripture…**    1. Like sowing of seeds rounding to a rich harvest…    2. In thanksgiving the cheerful giving…    3. The joyful transformation of our heart…   **Final Word –** I wish more than anything else that we discover and grow in the joy of giving. And that is because I believe that it reflects and is an indicator of our gratitude for our salvation, of our trust that Christ will take care of us, and of our growing sense of joy in participating in the greatest enterprise imaginable – Christ’s harvesting of people being snatched from sin, death, and the devil and claiming them for the kingdom, indeed as sons of God. Remember Jesus’ words, “for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” May the Holy Spirit help us to trust this truth and grant us the joy in participating in the harvest. There is joy in giving! May we all discover it.  **1Ti 6:10** For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.  **Pr 11:28** Whoever trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like a green leaf.  **Mk 10:23** How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!  **Mt 6:24** “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.  **Mt 13:22** As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. | **Luke 12:13-21 ESV**  *The Parable of the Rich Fool*  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.”  **Ps 24:1** The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein.  **Ec 2:18-19** 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, and who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? (cf. Jb 1:21)  **Jb 1:21** And he said, “Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.”  **2Co 9:6** The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.  **2Co 9:7** Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.  **2Co 8:9** For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.  **Mt 6:20** but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.  **1Pe 1:18-19** knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot  **Mt 6:21** For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.  **Co 3:1-2** If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. |