



Grain

“Your playing small serves no one.”

—M. Williamson

Submitted by Vernita Kennen, Roseville, MN

Field

15 And he said to them, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." 16 Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. 17 And he thought to himself, "What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?" 18 Then he said, "I will do this: I will pull 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, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' 20 But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' 21 So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God." Luke 15:13-21

Thoughts

The handyman didn't show up to extend my fence and I thought, How hard can it be? Several weeks later, after working a post digger I called various names and a brief stint with an ungodly heavy jack hammer that deserved even worse names, the project was completed. It can be satisfying to take care of things on your own. However, I have a couple of more complicated project stories in which the response to "How hard can it be?" almost wasn't funny. At least nothing has ever actually blown up. But I've had to question my own reluctance to ask for help at times, especially since our spirits can be so lifted when we move from private monologues in figuring everything out ourselves to listening to others and getting some expert help when needed. Right, this isn't only true for building projects.

The rich land owner in the parable did a lot himself, but was he doing anything wrong? He was capable of managing his finances. He wasn't talking to himself about plans to use his wealth to manipulate society. If you earn an extra \$100,000 next year, that in and of itself is of no matter to anyone else unless you, for example, use it to pressure political leaders to create new laws that would only benefit the wealthiest, penalize people experiencing hunger, and would harm God's creation. In that sense, what the man did with his own money was his business. Besides, isn't saving important? But Jesus lifted the parable up as being about a man caught in a spiraling monologue, not leading to a healthy dialogue with life – with the land, with God, or with other people who might challenge his perceptions. He said to his soul, Soul and stayed there with himself and his possessions as an end-all maybe as part of his private shrinking life. He needed to be freed.

The root of greed is a spiritual problem that keeps our own world small whatever our income level. One anecdote is to talk about it, in your faith community if that works or at least knowing we are part of a greater community of faith. How have I been trying to fill emptiness with material goods, power, or other things that aren't working? What am I clinging to? Let us pray for the grace to rest in God and dialogue with life in a way that informs our compassion and public voice. Happy Monday!

Share

Send any quotes you'd like to share with our network to cindyc@loppw.org

All Monday Quotes found under the Resources & Advocacy Tools tab at www.loppw.org

Many Blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy