THE SOUL

"What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? —MATTHEW 16:26

Jesus told a story about a man who was not a sluggard at all. He was diligent, disciplined, determined and successful. While Jesus was teaching a crowd, a man asked Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you? Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (Luke 12:13-15).

Then Jesus told this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. And I'll say to myself, 'You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry"' (12:16-19).

There would seem to be nothing wrong with working hard and looking forward to leisure and rest, but then God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?" (12:20) Jesus concluded the parable by saying, "This is how it will be with anyone

who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God" (12:21).

Preparing for physical provision is good. In this regard, we are not sluggards, but it is when we are consumed with provision for ourselves and have neglected something far more important than physical need that we are fools because we have forgotten about our souls. It is a marvellous thing to work hard and conscientiously, to care about our futures and fulfill our responsibilities. The subtlety of this, however, is that we can have life so well sorted out, but the day will come when our souls will be required of us. Will we be prepared? Or are we saying, "A little slumber, a little folding of the hands, and I'll do it soon." But 'soon' just never comes.

The Christian life involves helping those in need and sharing what we have. In this way, we nourish our souls. Are the things we do contributing to heaven? Are they in some way working toward God's agenda? Paul says, "I tell you, now is the time of God's favour, now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2). Salvation has its glorious future dimension, but now is the day to prepare our souls for eternity as tomorrow is promised to no one.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, what I have comes from You. Grant me a kind and generous heart that will always take pleasure in sharing what You have given me. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: Will my soul be prepared for the day God calls me home?