

Stewardship

Gary Presbyterian Church

Scripture

Luke 12:22 NRSV He said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. 23 For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. 24 Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! 25 And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? 26 If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest? 27 Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. 28 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you —you of little faith! 29 And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. 30 For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. 31 Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

Devotion

When we think about what our stewardship does to us and for us we can easily see that learning to generously give out of our abundance teaches us to *trust*. That is what Jesus is getting at in this passage from Luke's gospel. He has just told the parable of the "rich fool," who stored up all his profits in barns and then discovered, too late, that his life was demanded of

him that day. Verses 20-21 say, "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?' So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."



We are, all of us, left to negotiate the question of how much wealth we should preserve against the needs of our future years, versus how well will we spend and share the wealth entrusted to us *today*. It is a delicate balance which only you and God can sort out. But Jesus seems to be warning against an excessive preoccupation with ensuring our own well-being in a way which betrays a fundamental lack of trust that the God who has always provided, will *continue* to provide, so that we can risk being generous today.

Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory posits that the very first step on our journey of becoming a mature and healthy social-person is to navigate *trust versus mistrust*. There is a parallel theological development for disciples of Jesus, where we too must navigate our confidence that God can be trusted to provide what we need. Jesus says it this way: "*Do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.*"

Prayer

Lord, help me today to trust that you will provide what is needed so that I can be generous. Amen.