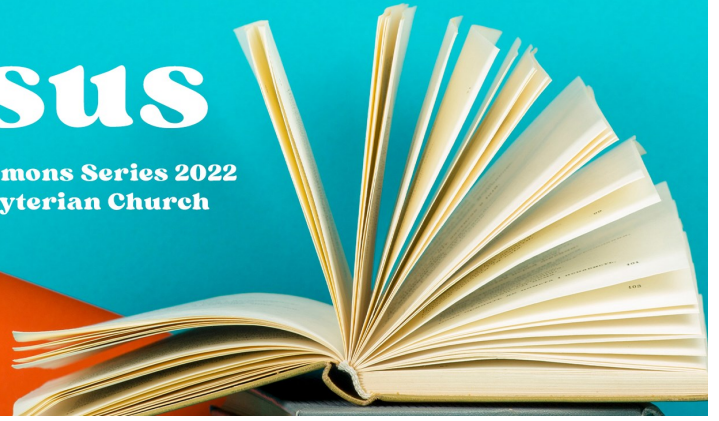


Stories Jesus Told

Spring Sermons Series 2022
First Presbyterian Church



Sermon-based Guide for Reflection and Discussion

Week of May 15

Scripture: Luke 12:13-21

Sermon Title: The Rich Fool

As I turned into our subdivision with kids in tow, I could see that something wasn't right. Smoke billowed skyward from the general direction of our house. It wasn't the kind of smoke that emoted the happy thoughts of an early fall bonfire. This was ugly smoke—black, billowing smoke that signified something was terribly wrong. As we approached the source, we were relieved to see that it wasn't our house that was on fire. Another family, though, on a nearby street, was not so fortunate.

After parking the car, the kids and I made the short walk to the burning house as fire trucks, with sirens blaring, raced by. When we arrived, throngs of neighbors were gathered around the yellow-taped perimeter, watching as the firefighters battled back the flames. I felt this odd mixture of emotions. It was honestly a little thrilling to see the men in fire gear fighting the fire. At the very same time, I felt a deep sadness for the family whose life was being thrown into chaos. Fortunately, no one was injured in the fire, but in a matter of minutes, almost all of their earthly possessions had been destroyed.

Sometimes it's easy to forget how fragile life is. It's easy to forget how quickly we can lose not only our stuff, but our lives as well. This is the realization that's at the heart of the "Rich Fool" parable. The parable reminds us that earthly possessions all have expiration dates. Moths and rust destroy them. Thieves steal them. Fire consumes them. Your IKEA furniture falls apart. And if you should expire before your stuff does, you still can't take it with you. Jesus presents an alternative investment strategy, though—invest in the eternal.

In Matthew 6:21, Jesus says, "Instead, put away riches for yourself in heaven. There, moths and rust do not destroy them. There, thieves do not break in and steal them. Your heart will be where your riches are." Think for just a moment what your greatest pursuits are in life. Are they earthly pursuits or heavenly pursuits? Will they eventually be destroyed or will they last forever? Let's prayerfully resolve to avoid being "rich fools."

- David Rausch, Go Tell It Founder and President

Questions:

1. What are/have been some of your pursuits in life?
2. In what ways are these an earthly pursuit or a heavenly pursuit?
3. What does it mean to be "rich toward God"?