

Dover

Daily

DEVOTIONALS

Growing
Together in
God's Word!

Dover Daily Devotions

This week's sermon delved into the Parable of the Rich Fool, highlighting the danger of prioritizing material wealth over spiritual wealth. We were reminded through Jesus' parable of a rich man obsessed with his possessions, that life's true value isn't found in what we own. The sermon stressed the importance of being 'rich toward God' rather than accumulating earthly wealth. It was a powerful message about the pitfalls of greed and the ephemeral nature of material possessions. We were encouraged to focus on spiritual growth and serving others, using our resources in ways that honor God and further His kingdom. The sermon was a timely reminder to reassess our priorities, ensuring they align with God's teachings and contribute to our spiritual richness.

Monday: Covetousness Divides; Charity Gathers Together

Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." But he said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?" - Luke 12:13-14

Devotional:

He was correct when he did not listen to the man who, in disagreement with his brother, said, "Master, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." He said, "Master, tell my brother." Tell him what? He said, "To divide the inheritance with me." The Lord said, "Speak, man." Why do you want to divide it except because you are human? Whenever someone says, "I am of Paul," but another, "I am of Apollos," are you not merely human? "Tell me, man, who has appointed me a judge of the inheritance among you? I have come to gather, not to scatter." He said, "I say to you, guard against all greed." Greed wants to divide, just as love desires to gather. What is the significance of "guard against all greed," unless it is "fill yourselves with love"? We, possessing love for our portion, inconvenience the Lord because of our brother just as that man did against his brother, but we do not use the same plea. He said, "Master, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." We say, "Master, tell my brother that he may have my inheritance." - Augustine

Discussion and Reflection:

How can we apply Jesus' response to the man asking for inheritance division in our personal lives, especially in situations where we might feel entitled or consumed by material desires?

Prayer:

"Heavenly Father, we come before You today seeking Your wisdom and guidance in understanding Your teachings. In the story of the man seeking his inheritance, You taught us about the dangers of greed and the importance of not letting material desires consume us. Lord, help us to embody the spirit of unity and love that Jesus exemplified. Guide our hearts away from selfishness and towards compassion and generosity. Teach us to value relationships over possessions, and to seek Your kingdom above all earthly treasures. May we always remember to guard against all forms of greed, filling our hearts instead with Your love. In Your holy name, we pray. Amen."

Tuesday: Covetousness Is Equivalent To Idolatry

And 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."- Luke 12:15

Devotional:

"Take heed, and keep yourselves from all greed." He showed us that covetousness is a pitfall of the devil and hateful to God. The wise Paul even calls it idolatry, perhaps as being suitable for only those who do not know God or as being equal in the balance with the defilement of those people who choose to serve sticks and stones. It is a snare of evil spirits, by which they drag down a person's soul to the nets of hell. For this reason, he says very correctly, as setting them on their guard, "Take heed and keep yourselves from all greed," from great and small and from defrauding anyone whoever he may be. Greed is hateful to God and humankind. - Cyril of Alexandria

Discussion and Reflection:

In what ways can modern society's focus on material wealth and possessions lead us away from spiritual fulfillment?

How can we actively guard against the pitfalls of covetousness in our daily lives?

Prayer:

"Gracious and Loving God, we come to You with hearts open to Your teachings. In a world often dominated by the pursuit of material wealth, guide us to understand the true value of spiritual riches. Lord, help us to heed the warning against covetousness, recognizing it as a snare that can lead us away from Your path. Give us the strength to resist the temptation to value possessions over Your eternal love. Grant us the wisdom to see beyond the temporary allure of worldly goods, and to cherish what truly matters – our relationship with You and with each other. May we live lives that reflect Your love and

generosity, sharing what we have with those in need. In doing so, let us honor Your commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves. In Your holy name, we pray. Amen."

Wednesday: The Bellies Of The Poor Are Safer Storehouses Than Our Barns

And he told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man produced plentifully, and he thought to himself, What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?" And 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. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.'" But God said to him, Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God." - Luke 12:16-20

Devotional:

This silly fool of a man... was hoarding perishable crops, while he was on the point of perishing because he had handed out nothing to the Lord before whom he was due to appear. How will he know where to look, when at that trial he starts hearing the words "I was hungry and you did not give me to eat"? He was planning to fill his soul with excessive and unnecessary feasting and was proudly disregarding all those empty bellies of the poor. He did not realize that the bellies of the poor were much safer storerooms than his barns. What he was stowing away in those barns was perhaps even then being stolen away by thieves. But if he stowed it away in the bellies of the poor, it would of course be digested on earth, but in heaven it would be kept all the more safely. The redemption of a man's soul is his riches.
- Augustine

Discussion and Reflection:

How does the parable of the rich fool challenge our modern attitudes towards wealth, consumption, and the idea of 'saving for the future'?

In light of Augustine's interpretation, how can we practice being rich toward God and generous towards others, balancing prudent saving with compassionate giving?

Prayer:

"Merciful God, we come before You with humble hearts, seeking Your wisdom in understanding the parable of the rich fool. Teach us, Lord, the true meaning of wealth in Your eyes. Help us to remember that our time on earth is fleeting and that our true treasures are not those stored in barns but those given in love and service to others. Inspire us to use our resources to help those in need, recognizing the bellies of the poor as a more worthy storehouse than any earthly barn. Grant us the courage and generosity to share our blessings, and in doing so, store up treasures in heaven. May our lives reflect the richness of Your love and the depth of our commitment to Your teachings. We pray for a heart that seeks to please

You above all else, remembering always that the redemption of our souls is the truest form of riches. Amen."

Thursday: Preparing For The Life To Come

And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry."
- Luke 12:19

Devotional:

The rich fool in the parable wanted to take it easy and just enjoy himself (v. 19). That is one of the great sins of our day and age. Many dream of a long, luxurious, and easy retirement. There is nothing wrong with enjoying the gifts God has given, provided we do not neglect the true reason we are here on the earth: to prepare for the life to come and in the meantime to steward our privileges in a God-honoring way. As long as we are able we must serve. - Jole Beke

Discussion and Reflection:

How can we balance enjoying the blessings God has given us with the responsibility of serving others and preparing for the life to come?

What does a God-honoring stewardship of our privileges look like in our daily lives?

Prayer:

"Heavenly Father, in Your infinite wisdom, You have blessed us with many gifts and comforts. We are grateful for these blessings, yet we are mindful of the lesson of the rich fool, who sought only his own pleasure. Lord, guide us in using our gifts in a way that honors You. Help us to remember our purpose on this earth is not just to seek our own comfort, but to serve others and prepare for the eternal life You promise. Teach us to enjoy Your blessings with a heart of gratitude and generosity, sharing with those in need and stewarding our resources in a way that brings glory to Your name. May our lives be a testament to Your love and grace, reflecting the true joy and fulfillment that comes from serving You and others. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

Friday: Spiritual Priorities and Eternal Values

Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." But he said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?" And 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." And he told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man produced plentifully, and he thought to himself, What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?" And 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. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.'" But God said

to him, Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' - Luke 12:13-21

Devotional:

Christ's kingdom is spiritual, and not of this world. Christianity does not meddle with politics; it obliges all to do justly, but worldly dominion is not founded in grace. It does not encourage expectations of worldly advantages by religion. The rewards of Christ's disciples are of another nature. Covetousness is a sin we need constantly to be warned against; for happiness and comfort do not depend on the wealth of this world. The things of the world will not satisfy the desires of a soul. Here is a parable, which shows the folly of carnal worldlings while they live, and their misery when they die. The character drawn is exactly that of a prudent, worldly man, who has no grateful regard to the providence of God, nor any right thought of the uncertainty of human affairs, the worth of his soul, or the importance of eternity. How many, even among professed Christians, point out similar characters as models for imitation, and proper persons to form connexions with! We mistake if we think that thoughts are hid, and thoughts are free. When he saw a great crop upon his ground, instead of thanking God for it, or rejoicing to be able to do more good, he afflicts himself. What shall I do now? The poorest beggar in the country could not have said a more anxious word. The more men have, the more perplexity they have with it. It was folly for him to think of making no other use of his plenty, than to indulge the flesh and gratify the sensual appetites, without any thought of doing good to others. Carnal worldlings are fools; and the day is coming when God will call them by their own name, and they will call themselves so. The death of such persons is miserable in itself, and terrible to them. Thy soul shall be required. He is loath to part with it; but God shall require it, shall require an account of it, require it as a guilty soul to be punished without delay. It is the folly of most men, to mind and pursue that which is for the body and for time only, more than that for the soul and eternity. - Matthew Henry

Discussion and Reflection:

How can we as Christians ensure that our pursuits and desires are aligned with spiritual growth and eternal values, rather than being overly focused on worldly success and material possessions?

Prayer:

"Almighty God, in Your boundless wisdom, You have shown us through Your word the dangers of covetousness and the folly of placing our trust in earthly wealth. Lord, guide our hearts towards Your eternal kingdom, where true riches lie. Help us to see the transient nature of material possessions and the lasting value of spiritual treasures. Teach us to use our blessings, not for selfish gain, but for the good of others and the glory of Your name. May our lives reflect a deep commitment to Your teachings, focusing on serving You and our fellow beings. Instill in us a spirit of gratitude for Your providence and a desire to share with those in need. In all our endeavors, let us remember the importance of nurturing our souls and preparing for eternity with You. In Jesus' name, we pray, Amen."

Saturday: To Be Rich Toward God

“So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.” - Luke 12:21

Devotional:

It is true that a person's life is not from one's possessions or because of having an overabundance. He who is rich toward God is very blessed and has glorious hope. Who is he? Evidently, one who does not love wealth but rather loves virtue, and to whom few things are sufficient. It is one whose hand is open to the needs of the poor, comforting the sorrows of those in poverty according to his means and the utmost of his power. He gathers in the storehouses that are above and lays up treasures in heaven. Such a one shall find the interest of his virtue and the reward of his right and blameless life. - Cyril Of Alexandria

Discussion and Reflection:

How can we practice being 'rich toward God' in our daily lives, especially in a world that often measures success by material wealth?

What are practical ways we can prioritize virtue, aid those in need, and store up treasures in heaven rather than focusing solely on earthly gains?

Prayer:

"Heavenly Father, we come before You with hearts seeking to be rich in Your sight. In a world that frequently measures worth by material possessions, guide us to understand the true meaning of being 'rich toward God,' as taught by Your servant Cyril of Alexandria. Help us to embrace a life where virtue is valued over wealth, where giving takes precedence over accumulating, and where our actions reflect Your love and compassion. Encourage us to open our hands to the poor and use our resources for their comfort and support. May our efforts to help those in need be an investment in the heavenly storehouses, laying up treasures that are eternal. Grant us the wisdom and strength to lead lives that are pleasing in Your sight, rich in good deeds and filled with the joy of serving You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."