

## “HERE TODAY...GONE TOMORROW...”

R9 Sermon Resource  
31 July 2022

Luke 24: 1-12  
8 Pentecost C

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Good morning! I bring you greetings from your siblings in Christ in our VA Synod and ELCA. Our denomination says, “We are church together!”

Let us pray... *Lord, grant that your word is proclaimed in truth and received with joy! Amen.*

Have you felt tossed about by recent headlines? COVID deaths; war in Ukraine; possible recession; acts of terrorism and hatred; all kinds of injustice – and on and on we could go... For example, does anyone else worry about the impact of the economy on their retirement? I do...

All this reminds me of “Mimi.” My beloved grandmother who had no home of her own and three outfits, one for work, one for every day and one for worship. She would shake her head when hearing about wealth and say, “Honey, just remember, it’s here today, gone tomorrow!” Having lived through the great depression on a tobacco farm in NC, she knew what she was talking about AND... she was the most content, faithful and wise person I have ever have known.

Against that back drop... After a story about one of our biggest obsessions – possessions and inheritance, Jesus warned, *Be on guard against all kinds of greed.*” And, *“Do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear.”*

Someone asked John D. Rockefeller how much wealth is “enough.” His response... “Just a little more!” The more we have, the more we spend and the more we want. Our wants seem to always outpace our income; overshadows our need and too often clouds or derails our good judgement. Jessica Mesman says, “The fool loses all sense of perspective.” (The Christian Century, July 13, 2022, p.19.)

Clarence Jordan’s translation of today’s gospel from The Cotton Patch Version of Luke and Acts is helpful. Look at verse 20. The NRSV reads: “Your life is being demanded of you.” The Greek text reads, *“They have demanded your life.”* Who were the “they” who demanded the life of the farmer? *His things*, of course. He no longer owned his possessions; they owned him. Or in Jordan’s words, “Your goods are putting the screws on your soul.”

Deep inside, we all know that Jesus was stating a powerful truth. Everything we own also owns a little bit of us. Dr. N.T. Wright ([Paul for Everyone, The Prison Letters p.178-179](#)) says Paul’s letter to the Colossians demonstrates many ways we can make other things our Gods, including sex, anger, divisions, etc. And that leads us right back to the gospel. Jesus said, *“Do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear.”* That is amazingly good news!

True freedom, true delight comes not with what we possess, but rather by relying on and knowing the One who created, redeemed and sustains us. When that is God rather than greed; faith rather than fear — everything else will fall in place... the rise and fall of the Dow-Jones, COVID-19, war, or even partisan politics won’t bother or control us nearly as much... Instead, our faith – rather than our fear – will shape and inform our giving, directing how we live and love... “Here today, gone tomorrow!” Focus on faith, not fear! *Do not worry about your life... Really!*

Freed by the love, forgiveness and eternal embrace of the God who sustains all things... Let us invest *all* of what God has first given us – our time, talent and treasure- in the things that really matter: Our faith, our family, our friends, our church – both local and global. Let’s reach out to *all* in need of receiving truly Good News! We ARE Church Together! *Faithful + Bold + Serving!*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit + Amen