

From the Rector's Study, the Rev. Bryce Sangster

Sunday, July 31st, Pentecost VIII

Hosea 11:1-11, Psalm 107:1-9, 43, Colossians 3:1-11, Luke 12:13-21

I am reminded the bumper sticker, whoever dies with the most toys wins. The bad news we cannot take them with us. Yet, there is a correlation between wealth and length of life. Life expectancy for the rich is longer than for the poor.

And how we spend our time. Wealth and power seem to be able to free up time for those with wealth and power. It may have something to do with pain for the privilege of not having to wait. I remember hearing when Paul Martin what is Prime Minister that when he went for a doctor's appointment in a clinic in Montreal, there was no waiting in fact they were waiting for him.

The question that comes to mind is when is enough what gives us value and meaning?

I had learned in Business School they've been given a raise only increases performance which benefits the employer for up to two weeks. When I mentioned this to a small business owner, he said the benefit was only a few days.

So, the question becomes, what do we do with the wealth? What value does it have for our lives? Does it get in the way of us living our lives with meaning and care for others or does it make us selfish unless aware of those around us?

Joseph Donders Tells the African story about how death and sickness came into the world through in the beginning nobody died. God gave people life for some time in this world and then after some time God would call them over to God's Kingdom for a fuller life. God used to send a messenger a beautiful young man or woman with the invitation that young woman or young man was so nice because of the beautiful invitation they brought.

Everybody was always very happy to see them always very happy to switch over from this life to the next. Until one day one of those messengers was sent to a man who was very rich. He had just had a bumper harvest. He had just pulled down his old storage shed and built a new one huge one. He had put his harvest in that storage shed and the very night that everything was ready the messenger came with his invitation from God. The rich man said he was not ready to go. He had still too much to eat and drink in this life.

When the messenger came back to God, God asked where is the man I invited? The messenger answered he did not come. He had too much to be able to come.

God became very upset and there and then he decided to send sickness and old age to people before God's messenger came. God wanted to soften us up to make us loosen slowly, through dying eyes, dying ears, and dying teeth, the strings attaching us to the earth and this life. There was a man who came to Jesus and said tell my brother to give me my share of my inheritance. Jesus refused to say that word. He did not want to cooperate in that's man's losing his possibilities and in binding him in such a way that neither life nor death would make any sense to him in the end.

Amen

The Lord bless *you* and watch over *you*,
the Lord make his face shine upon *you*
and be gracious to *you*,
the Lord look kindly on *you*
and give *you* peace;
and the blessing ...