

Proper 13 – Year C – August 4, 2019

Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23 Psalm 49:1-11 Colossians 3:1-11 Luke 12:13-21
the Rev. Deborah Kempson-Thompson

Why didn't the farmer just build another barn?

Why was this farmer hell bent (literally)

to abandon that which had served him

well for many years, why not add to it?

Why seek something bigger, grander?

This farmer is a fool—

no small characterization by Jesus;

He is unwise

mindless, irrational, ignorant, egotistical, morally unbelieving

In short, this farmer has no common sense or common decency.

This farmer no longer relies on the simple

commandment to love God above all else

He fails to understand that when one becomes

overly concerned about one's security,

one is digging a bottomless, unsecured pit for one's self.

The foolish farmer has become an idolater,

has cut himself off from the source of Life itself—

The foolish farmer has abandoned God's commandment:

*I am the Lord your God...
You shall have no other gods but me.*

and made self absorption his God.

relying on material comfort and not grace—

rejecting God's provision.

This farmer is not being present to God's reality with thanksgiving.

Sir Anthony Hopkins, noted actor recently attested

at a young people's leadership conference,

the provision in being present to God.

Hopkins' career was taking off in the seventies and eighties,

yet he says at the time he was,

disgusted, busted, and not to be trusted.

He was a fool:

*"I was hell-bent on destruction.
And I just asked for a little bit of help, and suddenly, pow.
It was just like, bingo,"
Hopkins said at the time [of his life]
"It was like being possessed by a demon, an addiction, and I couldn't
stop...."*

A woman's simple question in an AA meeting, put Hopkins back on track when,

Why don't you trust God?

*Hopkins trust in God that led the actor to say
"why not" before taking what he described as
a "quantum leap" out of unbelief...*

*And I just asked for a little bit of help, and suddenly, pow.
It was just like, bingo,"*

*"If you chase the money, it's not gonna work.
And if you chase success, it's not gonna work...
You just have to chase whatever you want to be,
but live it as if it is happening nowⁱ*

We want to be followers of Jesus, walking the way of love,

in the same way that Paul reminds Jesus' followers in Colossae:

*you are resurrected with Christ,
reach out for the highest gifts of Heaven,
where your master reigns in power.
Give your heart to the heavenly things,
not to the passing things of earth.
For, as far as this world is concerned,
you are already dead, and your true life
is a hidden one in Christ...and
Christ is all in all!ⁱⁱ*

We know that one's is a fool to believe that wealth soothes

all of anxieties and protects from betrayal,

illness, and ill will

not to mention death.

As the prophet Isaiah long ago assured

the Hebrew people,

“Tomorrow’s not promised.”ⁱⁱⁱ

The parable of the rich fool underscores

the importance of faith and being faithful to God.

In the gospel of Luke, Jesus introduces the parable of the rich fool

by saying to the gathered crowd:

Beware the yeast of the Pharisees who are hypocrites.

A hypocrite is a good actor on stage

who has memorized a script and knows that part

and only that part—

a good actor does not improvise.

A genuine follower of Jesus has no script—

we have to improvise.

As we know, life can vary from shooting the rapids
to canoeing a tranquil current.

Following God in Christ is an enlightened walk of
guided by knowing and loving

God, ourselves, and one another

in the manner of Jesus—

There is only example not rules—

Jesus shows not tells

and reminds us at all times to be not afraid

because we are worthy to stand before

God Almighty just as who we are.

For us Christ is everything and in everything.

The leaven of Jesus lifts us to love and serve.

We are worth it, says Jesus prior to the story of the rich fool,

In fact, Jesus says his disciples are worth a great deal:

*Are not two small sacrificial birds
sold in the market for two silver coins?
Yet God does not forget a single bird ...
you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of birds.*

Shall we live in fear or trust in God's provision?

Let us act as secure, beloved people.

We are worthy of God's love.

Count on it.

Amen.

ⁱ "let not a man say I will go to my house, "and I will eat and drink", (and say) (yvpn Kyle Mylv) , "peace to thee, O my soul"; if he does so, of him the Scripture says, ([Isaiah 22:13](#) [Isaiah 22:14](#)) "Behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die---surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you, till ye die""

ⁱⁱ Col 3.11

ⁱⁱⁱ [Anthony Hopkins Reveals Journey From Atheist to God-Believer](#), Updated on 7/30/18 1:00 PM by [Billy Hallowell](#)
<https://insider.pureflix.com/prayer-faith/anthony-hopkins-reveals-journey-from-atheist-to-god-believer>