



9th Sunday of Luke

The Reading is from Luke 12:16-21

The Lord said this parable: "The land of a rich man brought forth 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 pull 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; take your ease, 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 he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." As he said these things, he cried out: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

Resurrectional Apolytikion. Grave Mode.

By means of Your Cross, O Lord, You abolished death. To the robber You opened Paradise. The lamentation of the myrrhbearing women You transformed, and You gave Your Apostles the order to proclaim to all that You had risen, O Christ our God, and granted the world Your great mercy. [SD]

Apolytikion of the Feast. From Menaion - - - Mode 4.

Today is the prelude of God's good pleasure, and the proclamation of humanity's salvation. In the temple of God, the Virgin is presented openly, and in herself she announces Christ to all. Let us, then, with a great voice cry aloud to her: "Rejoice, you are the fulfillment of the Creator's dispensation."

Discussion

Is it bad to be rich?

This parable about the rich man is meant to instruct us, so that we can be prepared for that moment when we depart this life and stand before God to be judged.

The fathers also tell us that we do well to remember that we will, one day, die; and that each of us should always give thought to the condition of our soul. Wise? Or foolish?

He who lays up treasure for himself is foolish. He is never happy; never satisfied; he is darkened by the love of wealth, and the light of divine knowledge does not penetrate. Ultimately, death overtakes him, his plans unfinished, his soul unprepared. The rich man does not consider that he had received his wealth from God; and so he contemplates what to do with his riches only from a worldly, and selfish, point of view.

THIS IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BEING RICH AND BEING A GOOD STEWARD OF BLESSINGS RECEIVED.

He who lays up treasure for the poor and for God is rich towards God, and does not deprive God of what is His. He trusts in God to provide for his needs, even if he were to give away all that he has. If the rich man had considered that the wealth he had received had come from God, he might have realized that he was meant to serve as a steward for God. Then, rather than planning to build barns to hold his goods, he might have thought of the poor. He might have made their stomachs his storehouses, and so built up riches for God, for he who feeds the poor feeds God.

St. Metrios life was simple and straight forward. It has a miracle in it, but that is a gift from God. Metrios' hagiography consists mostly of one deed: he did the next right thing. He was honest and returned money he had found to its rightful owner without seeking a reward. That is a Christian behavior I can imitate.

The life of St. Metrios tells me, do the next right thing. Leave the ascetic feats to the monks (though Metrios' good deed involved a lot of self denial) and leave miracles to miracle workers. Christ did not command us to do miracles, but He did command us to love. Love is something within my power. It involves doing the next right thing.

Sanctity and the Kingdom of God are not beyond our reach, but rather are possible for everyone who follows Christ and allows the Holy Spirit to work in their lives. God equips us to do the next right thing – to imitate St. Metrios the holy farmer.

Read one of the hymns from the Orthodox funeral service:

Tone 5

I Called to mind the Prophet who shouted, "I am but earth and ash." And once again I looked with attention on the tombs, and I saw the bones therein which of flesh were naked; and I said, "Which indeed is he that is king? Or which is soldier? Which is the wealthy, which the needy? Which the righteous, or which the sinner?" But to Your servant, O Lord, grant that with the righteous he (she) may repose.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The death which You have endured, O Lord, is become the harbinger of deathlessness; if You had not been laid in Your tomb, then would not the gates of Paradise have been opened; wherefore to him (her) now gone from us give rest, for You are the Friend of Mankind.

Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Virgin chaste and holy, Gateway of the Word, Mother of our God, make supplication that his (her) soul find mercy.

Here's a good video. Copy/paste if needed:

<https://www.goarch.org/-/be-the-bee-153-is-self-care-selfish-?inheritRedirect=true>