

We are children of time and eternity. As children of time, we have to deal with the realities of our life, our responsibilities, and needs. But as children of time, we must also acknowledge that our time is limited. Our life in time is fundamentally insecure. We are only visitors here.

We are also children of eternity. We are more than our temporal self. Jesus teaches us to live in time, but to be centered in eternity: “To be in the world but not of the world.”

Jesus mentors us into a new way of thinking and living, a way that leads to a life of inner peace and an outer life of service. We still have to own things, accumulate some wealth, and plan for the future. This is the way of social responsibility, but we do not want it to be the way of spiritual and moral folly. Somehow we need to wrestle with the balance of having possessions and disowning them at the same time.

In today’s gospel, Jesus is trying to shock us into seeing the illusion that possessions can be in our lives. Material possessions can be just the tip of the iceberg. They can be the outer manifestation of our inner drive to own and accumulate. This drive arises out of our profound sense of insecurity. If we can just fill the barn, we will be safe.

Looking at the world with open eyes tells us that safety is at best temporary, the turnover of personnel on earth is quite astounding. Moreover, the way of accumulation has some serious moral defects.

When we accumulate wealth, then we have to protect it. Lots of time is spent in hanging on to what we have accrued. This can separate us from our neighbors whom we see as a threat to our wealth. The need to feel safe can make the idea of sharing seem ludicrous.

The drive to cover our insecurity can also become ruthless. We can become so self-centered in our behavior that we commit injustice, or even tolerate almost any society wide injustice as long as it makes us feel safe.

Jesus was not kidding when he said: "The love of money is the root of all evil." Fundamentally, the way of accumulating, in the face of death, is futile and spiritually bankrupt.

Life is insecure. No strategy in time can change that. Jesus gives us instruction on how to break free of this way of thinking. He calls it: "Treasure in heaven." True security is eternal life and it only comes from God. It flows from God's goodness.

How does one receive life from a good God? Above all else, we must value our relationship with God. The path to a God-centeredness is to relinquish possessions and give to the poor.

This is the step Jesus invites the young man to take. The step after that? We deepen the flow of life from God by following Jesus.

The young man in the gospel fully understands Jesus, but is so shocked that he walks away in grief. Jesus then turns his gaze on the disciples and us.

Initially, he speaks of the wealthy, but he quickly broadens his scope. No one can enter the Kingdom of God except by the goodness of God. In other words, we have to stop looking elsewhere for security.

We can pile up all the stuff we want, and it will not give security nor will it allow us to inherit eternal life. It is not the material possessions themselves that are the problem. It is our inner belief that owning and accumulating will give us security.

Stay focused on the goodness of God. It will become clear that dispossession is the way to the fullness of life. It makes us receptive to the Holy Spirit.

We are children of time and eternity. If you have not already been thinking about it, this would be a good week to reevaluate your charitable giving. I am

thankful for your support of the work of the gospel here at Sacred Heart. The pandemic has certainly put a strain on everyone's resources. Please consider making an increase of your monthly donation. Also, consider how you are supporting the work of the many other organizations that take care of those in need.