

Harvest. - Money

Luke 12:16-21

16 And he told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. 17 He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’

18 “Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. 19 And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.”’

20 “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’

21 “This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.”

Have you got enough?

Have you got enough petrol or diesel?

Have you got enough toilet rolls?

It seems some people can never have enough of these things!

But I understand. I myself get anxious when my cup of tea gets to the half way mark? Should I fill it up now - just to make sure?

After all this is a normal psychological need - to feel secure.

It can, if you’re not careful, spill over into greed, but mostly we just get a little twitchy!

And its no surprise, that God who made us, understands how we tick, how we think, what we need.

And knowing, that we feel insecure, that we need reassurance,
God supplies us in abundance.

Our generous God always gives us too much!

So we have too much oxygen in our blood - unless we’re unwell

We have a surplus of muscles - unless we’re weightlifters or famers

And we don’t know what much of the brain is for - but there may well be surplus brain cells (alright I know we all feel we don’t have enough memory space!)

And in the harvest - we have so much extra that he gives, we have more than enough.

This year Rebecca and I have been picking blackberries - and we couldn’t pick the hedges clean even if we tried! Not just the “less than perfect” ones we left for the birds and mice - or the out of reach ones - just so many blackberries - day after day, week after week - despite others going out and picking them as well.

Last year I picked apples off the tree -and I threw away lots that had been eaten or gone off, but I was still eating them in February - 5 months later.

We all have more than enough, we are so fortunate - it is not true for other parts of the world - but it is for us.

So what should we do about it?

If I have too many apples, should I be going out and building a bigger shed?
Hands up if you think bigger barns is the solution?!

No - its not!

If God blesses us with a surplus, its for us to give away.

And all that I'm talking about is not food, not harvest, but money.

What should I do with my extra - I should give I away

How should I give it

Why should I give it

I'm not going to tell you Who!

How -

You must give it willingly, cheerfully! That might affect who you give it to.

There are some people or charities we think we should give to - but for some reason they make us resentful, or we're just cynical about it. And whilst in human terms that money would still help them if you gave it - in spiritual terms, in might be a bit dangerous - it might rob of you joy, or might make you feel like they owed you. So a gift is a gift - give it, and let go. And to give is better than to recieve, so enjoy blessing others with the extra that you have.

That motivation, what's in our heart, is always important to God.

And why.. here's the top 4 reasons why we should give..

It all belongs to God

- its his, and not ours. We get so hung up on rights and ownership. But you didn't create the universe or set up the eco-system? You did not give yourself lungs to breathe - every moment we have is gift, from God. Giving it away reminds us.

It helps us rely on God

In the bible there's are several harvest festivals, and one of them is the spring harvest - when they give to god, not of extra, but of the first fruits. Which is unbelievably scary, in a world where they relied on the crops, not the supermarket. Its one thing, to take the first lot of apples, and see there's others there - I'll be alright, I can give this to God. Its another, to take the corn, and the rest is not grown, and there may be bad weather - and to take that, after a long winter - and give it to God. That is about trusting that God will provide. Placing my life in his

hands. You think you just brought a tin to place on the altar this morning, but imagine if it was your life.

Because we have more than enough

I mean, what else are you going to use it for? I wonder with some people if they know how much they need. This is always my chance to have a go at people like Chris Evans, who earns more in a year, than I will in 30 lifetimes, oh no, 60 now I'm part time. Each year! And he's not alone. I heard of a footballer who was transferred for £100 million - is that a year or a week? But actually its not about them. Its about me - I have more than enough. What am I going to do with mine, not about them.

We become imitators of God, the generous giver

At the end of the sermon on the mount, Jesus says - be perfect then, as your heavenly father is perfect. And this has the germ of the idea, that we are meant to be like God. After all, we're made in his image, to reflect him. To be his ambassador, his envoy, to show others what he's like.

This imitating is very important -

so we forgive others, because God is a forgiving God.

We care for all creation, because God so Loved the whole world.

We love our enemies, because God loves them too

We work for reconciliation - because Christ is in his body reconciling the world to God

We work for justice - because God is a god of justice

You see how deep this goes.

And God gives generously, in abundance, freely...

And so we should too.

When we give - we are being as God made us to be.

Isn't that wonderful? Isn't that more than just, oh better put something in the collection plate

So look at your money, your talents and time - and see that God has given them to you - and given them in abundance. Then ask God where you should be giving these away -

And then give with a generous heart and a smile...