

## Praying the Parables Week 2: Resources for prayer and reflection

Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.” <sup>14</sup>But he said to him, “Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?” <sup>15</sup>And he said to them, “Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.” <sup>16</sup>Then he told them a parable:

The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have no place to store my crops? Then 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 all my goods.  
And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have ample goods laid out for many years; relax, eat, drink and be merry’.

But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’  
So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich towards God.’ [Luke 12: 13-21]

### **De-cluttering and discovery**

Imagine you are working to sort through the inner storeroom of your recurring thoughts, drives, desires and fears.

You have the desire to de-clutter, and yet lack the perception to know with accuracy what is of value and what just takes up living space. You need help.

Imagine Jesus now coming to work alongside you, helping you draw out what is within and to know it for what it is. Rather than come with violence to throw things out, he comes with the sensitivity to know that this is difficult and to help you find a place to begin.

As you work through prayerfully, perhaps you begin to discover a desire that has been hidden or buried that seems to hold a quality of life about it. This might be something you can place visibly at the heart of your inner room.

At the same time there may be something that you become aware of that you long to let go and be free of. Ask Jesus for help with doing so.

### **Look at the ravens...look at the lilies of the field** [Luke 12. 22-34].

Each day this week purposefully go out to look at what is stirring in the created



world. To 'look' in this sense is more than a momentary glance; slow down and take time to gaze.

### Praying with open hands

The physical movement of our hands helps to express the inward movements of mind and heart.

- Raise your hands upwards. Give thanks to God for the gifts of your day...whatever has brought you joy...whoever has shown you some kindness.
- Lower your hands, palms downwards and let go to God anything that feels difficult, unresolved or is a source of anxiety for you. Let your very self – just as you are – rest in God.
- Open your hands, palms upwards, and receive from God whatever it is you need. You may have words for this; it may be you have no words, nor a clear understanding of what it is you need. God knows, and is generous.

### Treasure in a field

The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

<sup>45</sup>“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; <sup>46</sup>on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. [Matthew 13.44-46]



Consider the people who have inspired you through your life – those whose stories awoke your own daydreams about what you might do with your life.

Reflect on the particular qualities of these people that appealed to you, the choices they took that spoke to you, the courage and persistence that helped them act on what they felt called to do, the outward obstacles and inward fears they had to work through.

Consider how these lives draw out your own dreams and desires.

How do these lives speak to you now?

What do they show you about who you are and the shape of your inmost desires?



**Some further Bible readings for reflection:**

Psalm 39.4 / Psalm 103 / Mark 8. 34-37 / Mark 10. 17-31