

WEEKLY SERMON

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What would you do?

I heard on the radio the other day that someone in the UK had won the largest ever lottery win, £195 million in the EuroMillions mega jackpot. Congratulations will no doubt come flooding in to the lucky, as yet unnamed, individual. No doubt there will also be those hoping to get their own slice of the money too.

What would you do with £195 million?

It is a sum of money which I would imagine is out of the reach of most of us, but to put it into context, it is only 7 years salary for some of our highest paid footballers, or 75 grand slam wins for professional tennis players, or about 5500 years' salary for the 'average paid' full time employee in the UK.

Perhaps you would spread the money around various bank accounts to get the best interest, or maybe dabble in stocks and shares to get a better return, or go for long term investments, invest in property, buy some gold bars, give some away to family, spend it on a luxury holiday or just stash it under the bed.

Jesus told a parable about a rich farmer; you can find it in Luke's Gospel (Luke 12:13-21). The man had a large amount of land that usually produced a bountiful harvest, but this year the harvest was so great that he didn't have enough places to store it. So he decided to tear down his barns and build bigger ones, not only to store his ever increasing harvest, but all his other possessions too. Stockpiling this wealth would ensure that he would be able to eat, drink, and be merry for many years.

What a good idea, you may think, but Jesus' parable has a sting in the tail. That very day the man died, and everything he had worked so hard to accumulate would then belong to others.

In today's world, we are enticed on every front to accumulate wealth, possessions and status, but this parable reminds us that in the end, our wealth, our possessions, and our status will count for nothing. The only criterion we will be judged on is whether we have worked to accumulate the riches only God can give.

So, have you decided what you would do with the money? Or maybe a better question to ask ourselves is, Who and what is most important in my life? In answering that question, we may be able to work out our plan for our wealth. Is it money, status, possessions, esteem which is important? Or is it the people that we love; do we strive to make a difference in our world by our love, care, and generosity? Do we freely share the many gifts that God has given us? It doesn't matter whether we have millions, or much less, the message is the same. The farmer thought only of his own future, he does not think about using his abundance to help others. We must strive to do the opposite.

HEALTHY CHURCHES TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES

Lord, make me a grateful person, aware that all that is good in my life comes from you, and is held in trust, for others. Amen

Rev Carole Garner, Schools Work and SIAMS Administrator