

Luke 12:13-21 New International Version (with apologies)

The Parable of the Rich Church

Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”

He replied, “Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?” Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”

And he told them this parable: “The premises of a certain rich church yielded an abundant rental income. The church council had maximised the lettings and had plenty of money to pay the circuit assessment and still leave some to deposit in their Central Finance Board account. The church members were predominantly of advanced years and as they died the church was fortunate to receive a succession of legacies. Not wanting to waste these substantial gifts, the stewards added them to their reserves. They asked themselves, ‘What shall we do? We are building up large reserves but we are getting very little interest on our money.’

“Then they said, ‘This is what we’ll do. We will take our money out of the Central Finance Board and purchase a buy-to-let where the rental yield is bigger, and there our reserves will grow and be protected from inflation’. And the one remaining steward said to himself, ‘We have plenty of reserves laid up for many years that will cover any eventuality. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.’

“But God said to him, ‘You fool! Before the winter’s out your church membership will have dwindled so low you will be seeking permission to close. Then who will get what you have prepared for your church?’

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

CR 8/9/2017