Avon Grove Church OF THE NAZARENE

"Living out the mission of Jesus – together."

Sermon Discussion Guide
9/20/2026

Sermon: Clear the Way "*Lord, Take First Place*
Text: *Luke 12:13-21*

🌿 **Introduction:** This week we move from the **stone of brokenness** to the **stone of foolishness**. Last week we considered the things we carry that can hinder our walk with God. This week, we consider the things we try to control.

When you hear the word "control," what are some areas of life where people naturally want to stay in control?

Why do you think surrender can be difficult, even when we trust God?

1. <u>Looking Beneath the Surface</u>

Jesus calls the man in the parable a fool, even though the man appears productive, successful, responsible, and prepared.

What do you think made this man foolish?

The sermon described biblical foolishness as a failure to see life from God's perspective.

How is that different from simply making a bad decision or being careless?

The man repeatedly speaks in terms of **"my"**: my crops, my barns, my grain, my goods, myself.

What does that reveal about the way he viewed his life?

What are some ways a person can live around "my" without realizing it?

2. <u>The Question of Control</u>

One of the central questions from the message was: **"Who actually gets the final word?"**

Consider these areas:

- My money
- My time
- My relationships
- My work
- My plans
- My future

What does it practically look like for God to have the final word in one of these areas?

The sermon made this observation: It is possible to believe in God and still live as though we are God.

What do you think that looks like in everyday life?

What is the difference between asking God to bless our plans and genuinely surrendering our plans to God?

Why do you think we sometimes want God's help without wanting God to have control?

3. <u>Surrender is more than Giving Something Up</u>

The message made an important distinction: "Sometimes surrender means giving God the right to decide." That means surrender is not simply: **"God, I will do whatever You tell me."**

It is first: **"God, You get to tell me what to do."**

How does that change the way you think about surrender?

Why might giving God the right to decide be harder than simply giving something up?

Consider this statement: "The greatest act of surrender is giving God the right to ask for something I would rather keep."

What makes that kind of surrender difficult?

How does trust fit into surrender?

4. <u>What Is on the Throne?</u>

The parable emphasized that the issue is not simply money. The deeper question is: **"What or who is on the throne of my heart?"**

Why do you think good things can sometimes become the hardest things to surrender?

How can you tell when something good has begun taking God's place?

Where am I still saying, "I've got this"?

Where am I making decisions without really seeking God?

Where am I asking God to bless something I have never actually surrendered to Him?

What part of my life would make me uncomfortable if Jesus said, "Give Me that"?

What part of my future would I struggle to place completely in God's hands?

🗣️ **Close in prayer: Clear the way in us, Lord, and prepare us for what You want to do. Amen.**