

The Parable Of The Rich Fool

(Luke 12:15-34)



Jesus Warned About Greed

The Rich Fool is one of Jesus' many parables. His teaching came after his following warning about multiple forms of greed:

Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." (Luke 12:15)

The following rich man is a prime example of how NOT to live your life. While he might have been an excellent business man in the natural, he was a complete failure and spiritual fool. Unlike the prodigal son who wastefully spent all his money, this man just planned to spend it, but died before! He had much potential, but ruined it. He is a tragedy and a wasted life:



And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.'" (Luke 12:16-18)

Take Life Easy; Eat, Drink And Be Merry

This rich man was a productive farmer. His land produced an abundant harvest! In fact, the harvest

was so great he planned to tear down the existing barns and build bigger ones to store his large harvest. (Wicked, hell-bound people can be financially prosperous.) In the eyes of most people he would be their envy, but God viewed him very differently.

And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." (Luke 12:19)

With that abundant harvest, he was financially set, even for many years. That implies he must not have been an old man—perhaps mid-life, with decades ahead of him—so he thought.

His short-sided darkened life's philosophy is expressed because of his money: *Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry*. He thought his money was the key to being merry. (A similar atheistic-type philosophy is cited in 1 Cor. 15:32, *Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die*.)

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? This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God." (Luke 12:20,21)

God Called Him A Fool

God called him a fool. His self-indulgent plans for himself would never materialize. His life was about to end abruptly and prematurely. He was obliv-

ious to what a fool he was. He stored things up for himself but was not rich towards God. He was on the road to hell, but thought his future was great.

Furthermore, his material treasures would soon belong to someone else. He did not make adequate preparations for what was ahead. He entered eternity unprepared. His life exemplifies a fool. (Elsewhere a foolish builder is contrasted to a wise builder, for the former merely hears God's word, but does not put it into practice, Mt. 7:24-27.):

Then Jesus said to his disciples: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes." (Luke 12:22,23)

The Basic Necessities

Still continuing the same primary thought about material things, Jesus gave a direct message to his disciples about the basic necessities—food and clothing. The Lord Jesus wanted them to view the whole picture about life and the body, unlike the rich fool he just described:

Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet Almighty God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest? (Luke 12:24-26)

Jesus cited the ravens as an object lesson. God feeds them without the typical farming process of sowing, reaping and storage, and Jesus' disciples are more valuable than ravens. God will feed them too, as they follow God's ways. They were not to worry about that.

Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! (Luke 12:27,28)

Now the lilies are mentioned as an object lesson. They don't labor or spin and are dressed by God in a more splendorous way than King Solomon, the

richest of Israel's kings. As God does that for the lilies, he will do that for his disciples.

And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. (Luke 12:29-31)

Keep Your Heart Centered On Seeking God's Kingdom

The disciples were told what NOT to seek and not to worry about it. Those wrong things are what the pagan world goes after. That is where their heart is. Instead, the Lord's disciples were to keep their heart centered on seeking God's kingdom and those other things will be given to them also.

Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Luke 12:32-34)

The Lord's disciples are called little flock because they are the minority in number. In contrast, the majority of people have their hearts set on the temporal and material, which is the wrong way for the disciples.

Not only are the disciples not to fear or seek after those types of needed things, they are encouraged to sell their possessions and give them to the poor! To do that will store up treasure for themselves in heaven. That spiritual treasure is unlike earthly things, which can wear out, be stolen or moth-eaten. Verse 34 is profound: *where your treasure is, there your heart will be also*. Since the pagan world seeks after the temporal things instead of God's kingdom, their spiritually dead heart is reflected by such—their treasure. The reverse is also true. Don't be like the rich fool!

Evangelical Outreach
PO Box 265 Washington PA 15301
EvangelicalOutreach.org ♦ EternalLifeBlog.com