

“The Rich Fool”
Luke 12:13-21
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I. Introduction

- A. Jesus is giving us a parable
 - 1. The parable is commonly called “The Rich Fool”
 - 2. “And he spake a parable unto them, saying, the ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully” (v. 16)
 - 3. “But God said unto him, Thou fool. This night thy soul shall be required of thee: them whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?” (v. 20)
 - 4. Why did Jesus give this parable?

II. The Purpose of the Parable (Luke 12:13-15)

- A. Why did Jesus refuse to get involved in this man’s family matter? (vv. 13-14)
 - 1. Illustration- The People’s Court
 - 2. Jesus knew that the heart of the problem was the problem of the heart (the man’s heart)
 - a) People want Jesus to fix their problems, but not change their heart
 - b) Fix others, not me
 - c) The man’s real problem was covetousness (v. 15)
- B. The warning from Jesus
 - 1. “Take heed and beware of covetousness (v. 15)
 - 2. What is covetousness?
 - a) Literally “to fix the desire upon”
 - b) It’s the inward desire to have more
 - c) It’s the sin that we celebrate, but God condemns
 - 1) Illustration- It’s keeping up with the Joneses
 - d) It’s the cousin of greed
 - e) It’s the opposite of contentment
 - 1) (1 Timothy 6:6)
 - f) It’s the 10th Commandment
 - 1) (Psalm 10:3)
 - g) It can lead you to commit other sins
 - 1) Illustration- King David
 - 2) “For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows” (1 Timothy 6:10).
 - h) Jesus warns us to “take heed” and watch out for covetousness
- C. He tells us why
 - 1. “And he said unto them, take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth” (v. 15).
 - 2. This is the life-giving principle given by Jesus
 - 3. “He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity” (Ecclesiastes 5:10).

- a) Illustration- Solomon
- D. Jesus gave this parable
 1. To warn and beware of covetousness
 2. To teach us that real life is not found in our possessions, but in God
 - a) Don't forget God!

III. The Picture of a Foolish Farmer (Luke 12:16-20)

- A. Why did God call this farmer a “fool”?
 1. Why did God not call him a “fool”?
 - a) Not because he was rich
 - b) Both rich and poor can be covetousness
 - c) Not because he stored his grain
 2. So, why was he a fool?
 - a) He thought only of himself
 - 1) When the foolish farmer looked at his bumper crop, he forgot to thank God and thought only of himself
 - b) He forgot that he was not the owner, but that he owes everything to God!
We are only stewards.
 - c) He forgot to get down on his knees and thank God from whom all blessings flow
 - 1) Don't forget to thank God for His blessings
 - 2) Illustration- Moses warning Israel when they entered the Promised Land
 3. He thought only of the pursuit of pleasure (v. 19)
 - a) “...take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry” (v. 19)
 - b) It's called “hedonism”
 - 1) Illustration- King Solomon
 - c) He left God out
 4. He forgot about the brevity of life
 - a) “...you have much goods laid up for many years” (v. 19)
 - b) A false security
 - 1) Illustration- Like a “vapor” or a “flower”
 - 2) “Go to now, ye that say, today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know now what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” (James 4:13-14)
 - 3) None of us knows when we will die
 - a. “But God said unto them, thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou has provided?” (v. 20)
 5. He forgot his mortality
 - a) It's appointed unto every man once to die
 - 1) “But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?” (v. 20)
 - 2) After death, the judgment

6. He forgot that you cannot take your possessions with you in death
 - a) God asked, “Whose shall those things be...” (v. 20)

IV. The Problem (Luke 12:21)

- A. He was not rich toward God (v. 21)
 1. Whether you are rich or poor in this world, what matters most is that you are rich toward God
 2. What does it mean to be rich toward God?
 - a) For the Christian- “lay not up for yourselves...”
 - b) For the non-Christian:
 1. That your sins are forgiven
 2. You have the richness of God’s grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)
 3. Though He (Jesus) was rich, yet for our sakes, He became poor (the cross)
 4. Receive eternal life by faith

V. Conclusion

- A. Don’t be a fool
- B. Don’t forget God
- C. Death is certain
- D. Life is short—be rich toward God
 1. (John 3:16)