

2nd & 3rd Quarter 2021 Bible Study Outline



THE PARABLES OF JESUS CHRIST - STUDY 22

The Rich Fool Lk.12:13-21

INTRODUCTION:

1. It is amazing sometimes how spiritually dense, and worldly minded, people can be...
 - a. Some habitually fall asleep, not during a long sermon, but at the beginning!
 - b. On one occasion, a man was sharing the gospel of Christ with a person...
 - i) After presenting the gospel message and reviewing examples of conversion in the New Testament, he asked if he had any questions
 - ii) He only had one: "In that passage where the Spirit caught Philip away (**Acts 8:39**), do you think that could have actually been a UFO?"
2. A similar thing happened to Jesus on one occasion...
 - a. He was teaching on the importance of fearing God, and confessing Him before others
 - b. When someone from the crowd interrupts with a request for Jesus to resolve a family dispute over an inheritance!
 - This prompted not only a terse response from Jesus, but a warning and parable to the crowd about the dangers of covetousness and placing one's confidence in earthly riches

The parable, known as "**The Rich Fool**", is recorded in **Lk.12:13-21**. In our materialistic society, what Jesus has to say is especially relevant today. Let's start by taking a closer look at...

I. JESUS' RESPONSE TO AN UNTIMELY REQUEST:

A. Jesus Had Been Teaching A Large Multitude...

1. Warning them about the hypocrisy of the Pharisees - **Lk.12:1-3**
2. Teaching them about the fear of God - **Lk.12:4-7**
3. Instructing them on the need to confess Him before men - **Lk.12:8-12**

B. When One From The Crowd Makes A Request...

1. He wants Jesus to resolve a family dispute over an inheritance - **Lk.12:13**
2. The question reveals where the man's attention has been...
 - a. Not on the spiritual truths being taught by the Son of God
 - b. But on how he can get his share of the inheritance from his brother!
 - This is as incongruous as thinking about a football game during a sermon!

C. Jesus' Response...

1. The Lord's displeasure is evident - **Lk.12:14**
 - a. By His use of the term "Man" - "**The very form of addressing him puts him at a distance. 'Man' is about as frigid as can be.**" (MACLAREN)
 - b. By refusing to become an arbitrator in this matter
2. The Lord knows the true nature of this man's problem - **Lk.12:15a**
 - a. It is covetousness, or greed, the constant desire for more
 - b. It is problem that all need to heed, so He warns not just the one man, but the entire crowd.
3. The Lord's warning is grounded upon an important truth - **Lk.12:15b**
 - a. **"...for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."**
 - b. From what follows, "life" includes both physical and spiritual well-being
 - i) For material abundance did not prolong the rich man's physical life
 - ii) And it certainly did not ensure that one would be rich toward God!

To illustrate the need to heed this warning, Jesus proceeds to tell...

II. THE PARABLE OF THE RICH FOOL:

A. The Parable Summarized...

1. A rich man is richly blessed with large crops - **Lk.12:16**
2. As he considers his situation, he makes plans for the future
 - a. To build greater barns to store his crops - **Lk.12:17-18**
 - b. To retire and enjoy the fruits of his labours for many years - **Lk.12:19**
3. Yet God tells him he is a fool! - **Lk.12:20**
 - a. Because that very night he is to die, and his soul will be required of him
 - b. And the things he had provided, whose will they be?

B. The Parable Analyzed...

1. The man assumes that his life consists in the abundance of things he possesses
 - a. The crops are his
 - b. They will provide for his soul for many years to come
2. The foolishness and selfishness of the rich man is seen in that...
 - a. He does not know himself
 - i) He fails to realize that his "body" is mortal, and will not necessarily live on for many years
 - ii) He does not consider that his riches really can't satisfy his "soul"!
 - b. He does not consider the needs of others
 - i) The needs of the poor are not even taken into consideration
 - ii) He thinks only of self (note the "I's" and "my's")
 - c. Nor does he thank and glorify God
 - i) For all practical purposes, he is an atheist
 - ii) One who truly believes in God would respond like the Psalmist in **Ps.116:12**

C. The Parable Applied...

1. Jesus makes the application in **Lk.12:21**
2. Those who lay up treasure for themselves, and are not rich toward God, are like this rich fool!

3. If your plans for the future focus on self, and not on God and others, you are not different than the rich fool
 - This ought to encourage serious reflection in those planning their retirement!

Not that it is wrong to plan for the future, but we need to keep in mind the brevity of life, and the will of the Lord (**Jam.4:13-16**).

How can we be sure that we who may be rich in this life are also rich toward God?

III. BEING RICH TOWARD GOD:

A. Being In Christ Is Certainly Required...

1. For all spiritual blessings come through Him - **Eph.1:3**
2. The exceeding riches of God's grace will be shown only through Christ - **Eph.2:4-7**

B. But Proper Use Of A Man's Riches Can Help...

1. Notice the words of Jesus, spoken soon after this parable - **Lk.12:33-34**
 - a. He tells them to sell what they have and give alms
 - b. To provide a treasure in heaven that does not fail
2. Helping the poor is often connected with "laying up treasure in heaven"
 - a. As Jesus counseled the rich young ruler - **Matt.19:21**
 - b. As Paul told Timothy to command those rich in this present age - **1Tim.6:17-19**
3. Not that one can "buy their way into heaven"..
 - a. But to ensure that their heart is in the right place
 - b. **"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."** - **Matt.6:19-21**
 - As we use material wealth to help the less fortunate, we become rich toward God!

C. Notice How Jesus Encouraged His Disciples In This Matter...

1. He followed the parable with a reminder of God's loving care - **Lk.12:22-30**
2. The key is to make the kingdom (or rule) of God the focus of our life - **Lk.12:31**
3. For then God will do two things:
 - a. Provide "all these things" (i.e., things necessary for life and body) - **Lk.12:31**
 - b. Give you "the kingdom" (i.e., things necessary for the soul) - **Lk.12:32**
4. So they are exhorted to give alms and provide for treasure in heaven! - **Lk.12:33**

CONCLUSION:

1. From the parable of "**The Rich Fool**", we learn that we can:
 - a. Lay up treasure for oneself
 - b. Yet not be rich toward God
 2. To do the first without the second ignores the soul, and has no guarantee for the body
 3. To focus on being rich toward God saves the soul, while providing for the body!
- Where is YOUR treasure? Are you storing up for yourself a good foundation for the time to come? - **1Tim.6:6-10,17-19**