



### **Parable of The Rich Fool**

**Then he said, "Beware! Guard against every kind of greed. Life is not measured by how much you own." Then he told them a story: "A rich man had a fertile farm that produced fine crops. He said to himself, 'What should I do? I don't have room for all my crops. Then he said, 'I know! I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I'll have room enough to store all my wheat and other goods. And I'll sit back and say to myself, "My friend, you have enough stored away for years to come. Now take it easy! Eat, drink, and be merry!" "But God said to him, 'You fool! You will die this very night. Then who will get everything you worked for? "Yes, a person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God."**

**The Parable of the Rich Fool can be found in Luke 12:13-21. The key to understanding this parable is in v. 15 (and later summarized in v. 21). Luke 12:15 says, "Take care, and be on your guard against all**

covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." Jesus says this to the man who asked him to arbitrate between him and his brother. In ancient times, the firstborn was guaranteed a double portion of the family inheritance. More than likely, the brother who was addressing Jesus was not the firstborn and was asking for an equal share of the inheritance. Jesus refuses to arbitrate their dispute and gets to the heart of the matter: Covetousness! Jesus warns this person, and all within earshot, that our lives are not to be about gathering wealth. Life is so much more than the "abundance of possessions."

He proceeds to tell the man the Parable of the Rich Fool. This person was materially blessed by God; his land "produced plentifully". As God continued to bless the man, instead of using his increase to further the will of God, all he was interested in was managing his increase and accumulating his growing wealth. So the man builds larger barns in place of the existing ones and starts planning an early retirement. Unbeknownst to him, this was his last night on planet earth. Jesus then closes the story by saying, "So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

So the point of the Parable of the Rich Fool is twofold. One, we are not to devote our lives to the gathering and accumulation of wealth. There is an interesting point made in the parable. God says to the man in the story, "and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?" This echoes the thought expressed in Ecclesiastes 2:18 ("I hated all my toil in which I toil under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to the man who will come after me."). You see it all the time in people who are singularly devoted to the accumulation of wealth. What happens to all that wealth when they die? It gets left behind to others who didn't earn it and won't appreciate it. Furthermore, if money is your master, that means God is not .

The second point of the Parable of the Rich Fool is the fact that we are not blessed by God to hoard our wealth to ourselves. We are blessed to be a blessing in the lives of others and we are blessed to build the kingdom of God. The Bible says if our riches increase, we are not to set our hearts upon it. The Bible also says there is one who gives freely and grows all the richer. Finally the Bible says we are to honor God with the first fruits of our increase. The point is clear, if we honor God with what he has given us, He will bless with more so that we can honor Him with more. There is a passage in Second Corinthians that summarizes this aptly. In that passage Paul says, "And God is able to provide you with every blessing in

**abundance, so that having all contentment in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work." We are blessed by God, so we can in turn "abound in every good work" and be a blessing in the lives of others. So if God has blessed you with material wealth "set not your heart on it" and "be rich toward God." That is the message of the Parable of the Rich Fool.**