

The Poor Fool

Luke 12:13-21

- I. Introduction
 - a. The untoward interruption (12:13-15)
 - b. The rich fool? (12:16-21)
 - c. He was rich in many respects
 - i. Lands
 - ii. Houses
 - iii. Security
 - iv. Riches
 - v. Apparently had acquired all these things without any treachery or dirty dealings on his part.
 - vi. He is not accused of oppressing the weak or cheating his business partners
 - vii. His works have borne abundant fruit
 - d. But poor in the only way that really matters
 - i. He was not rich toward God
 - ii. God said he was a fool
 - iii. Jesus said he was poor
 - iv. He was a poor fool.
- II. Being Rich Toward God means
 - a. A wealth of right feeling toward God
 - i. There are certain thoughts and feelings that every thinking person should have toward their Creator
 - ii. With out them, a person is poor, with them, he is rich
 - iii. What are these thoughts?
 1. Reverence for God
 2. Trust in His word
 3. Gratitude for His goodness and faithfulness
 4. Love for Him as our Father and Savior
 5. Child-like submission to His will
 6. Devotion to His cause
 7. Interest in the advancement of His kingdom
 - iv. The more we have of these, the richer we are toward Him
 - v. Contrast the Poor Fool
 1. He seems to have reserved all his worship for Himself
 2. He recognizes that he has many earthly treasures
 3. But there is not a thought that God was the source of those blessings
 - vi. Examine ourselves
 1. How rich are we in the right thoughts and feelings toward God?

2. What activities or circumstances increase these right thoughts and feelings?
 3. Can I increase my wealth in this area by seeking out those experiences and activities that increase these thoughts and feelings?
- b. A Wealth of Divine Characteristics
- i. Being rich in those traits in which God is rich
 1. Some qualities of God we cannot attain to
 - a. Glory
 - b. Power
 2. But those character traits that we can acquire and form in God's image we should
 - ii. Divine Characteristics we can be rich in
 1. Righteousness
 2. Truth
 3. Faithfulness/Faith
 4. Patience
 5. Gentleness
 6. Goodness
 7. Kindness
 8. Mercy
 9. Generosity
 - iii. We should seek to be "partakers of the Divine nature" in these things
 - iv. The more of these we possess, and the great quantity we live out in our lives, the richer we are toward God
 - v. Contrast Poor Fool
 1. He is not accused of being unscrupulous in any way.
 2. But does he should mercy or compassion?
 3. He is actually at a loss to figure out what to do with all his goods?
 - a. Aha!! I'll build bigger storehouses!
 - b. That way none of my stuff will go to waste!
 4. But to share our abundance with those who lack is not a waste
 - a. It is acting like God!
 5. Those who are rich are commanded to do this
 - a. 1 Tim. 6:17-19
 - vi. What about us?
 1. Which characteristics of God are we rich in?
 2. Which are we poor in?
 3. Whether we have a lack or an abundance of Christ-like character traits, our goal as Christians is to always be increasing in these things
 - a. He who desires silver will not be satisfied with silver

- b. He who desires to be rich toward God, should not be satisfied to have just the smallest amount of godliness.
 - c. This is a case where strong desire and ambition is appropriate and called for.
 - d. Let those who are desire the kingdom of heaven be no less zealous for good works than the men and women of the world who labor to put money into bags with holes in them.
 - 4. What changes in our lives would be required for us to be rich toward God in this respect?
 - c. Wealth in God Himself
 - i. Enjoying his Divine favor and friendship
 - 1. Enriched with His presence and His gracious influence
 - 2. Contemplation of His Character
 - 3. Worship of Himself
 - ii. If we have Christ we have it all
 - iii. If we possess
 - 1. the ear of God
 - 2. the fatherhood of God
 - 3. the inheritance of God
 - 4. the presence of God
 - 5. the acceptance of God
 - 6. the fellowship of God
 - iv. We are indeed rich
 - v. Contrast the Poor Fool
 - 1. God was an unwelcome intrusion into his life
 - 2. He was uniquely situated in his time and society to partake of the life of religious devotion and activity to the fullest
 - a. He did not need to spend 150% of his waking hours trying to earn enough bread to keep his family from starving
 - b. So what was he going to do?
 - i. Tevya from Fiddler on the Roof – “If I were rich I’d have the time that I lack to sit in the synagogue and pray, and maybe have a seat by the eastern wall. And I’d discuss the holy books with the learned men, several hours every day. That would be the sweetest thing of all.”
 - c. No, he will...
 - i. Take his ease
 - ii. Eat
 - iii. Drink
 - iv. And Be Merry

- d. That was the highest use he could think of for the life God had given him
 - 3. For the worldly, every circumstance is a reason to eat, drink and be merry
 - a. Rich – This man
 - b. Poor – Is. 22:12-13; 1 Cor. 15:32
- vi. What about us?
 - 1. Is time spent in communion with and contemplation of God of very high value to us?
 - 2. How do we spend our leisure time?
 - a. There are things we feel we must do and the things we do at those times demonstrate what we believe is necessary
 - b. But what do we do with our free time? That demonstrates what we believe is valuable
 - c. Our society demonstrates that there is nothing more valuable than this life by doing almost nothing with its leisure than eating, drinking and making merry
 - d. Some of this is right good and a reward and gift from God (Eccl. 5:18-20)
 - e. But if I recognize that the ultimate treasure is wealth in God Himself
 - i. I will enjoy my earthly blessing
 - ii. As a gift from Him, not with an attitude of ignoring Him
 - iii. I will gladly spend my earthly blessing to acquire a greater interest in Him
 - iv. And the presence of God in my life will not be an unwelcome intrusion but the whole point of my life
 - f. If I know better, I should act better shouldn't I?

III. Conclusion

- a. God does not call us to give up our possessions and live a life of poverty
- b. He calls us to have true wealth in Him
 - i. 1 Tim. 6:6-11
 - ii. Some use godliness to attempt to get worldly wealth
 - 1. They think getting a little worldly wealth will make them happy
 - 2. And its worth having to put on a show of godliness to get it
 - 3. They have it backwards
 - iii. Pursuit of worldly wealth as one's highest good will lead to ruin
 - 1. We do not value God properly
 - 2. We don't build character like His or act like Him
 - 3. And we are cut off from true fellowship with God
 - iv. It is foolish to live life that way

1. And regardless of size of his storehouses, bank or investment accounts
 2. A man who lives like that is a poor fool
- c. On the other hand
- i. If you are rich toward God and possess the unsearchable riches of Christ
 - ii. Why should you worry about what you should eat or drink or wear?
 - iii. You have got it made!
- d. If I could show you a way to turn an oak leaf into a 1 ounce gold bar would you be interested?
- i. Why?
 1. Oak leaves are common, transient and near-worthless
 2. Gold bars are rare, valuable (over \$1000) and long-lasting
 - ii. I can't show you how to do that
 - iii. But God's word show us how to take time, money, talent and relationships that would otherwise have no eternal value, and turn them into invaluable treasure in heaven
 - iv. It is called being rich toward God
 1. Thinking and feeling rightly toward Him
 2. Acting out the character of God in our lives
 3. Possessing and enjoying His companionship and favor
 - v. What do you have that is worth more than that?
 - vi. Paul said nothing – Phil 3:7-11
- e. Invitation