**THE RICH FOOL**

***Luke 12:13-21***

Sunday School Lesson

*Parables of Jesus Christ*

Week 5 – 11/19/2017

**Introduction:** The parable of the rich fool shows us the reality of life and our material possessions. Too often, we get overly focused on the abundance of the things we possess. Christ warns us of this mentality in the parable, and He reminds us that our focus should be on heavenly things (Colossians 3:2). As we study this parable, we ought to inspect our hearts to see if we have the right perspective when it comes to our wealth and our service for the Lord.

1. WE MUST REALIZE THAT OUR MATERIAL POSSESSIONS ARE NOT AS VALUABLE AS THE TIME THAT WE POSSESS.
2. **Notice that the rich man had wealth, but he was never able to truly enjoy it.** He was so consumed by his wealth that he built greater barns. This took more of his time. His intention was to finally be able to retire and enjoy all of the benefits that would come from his great wealth. Maybe, he even thought that he would start serving God when he had enough wealth built up. The problem is that he did not have as much time as he thought he did, and he ultimately had wasted his entire life on something he never even got to enjoy (James 4:14).
3. **Notice that the rich man’s time was not influenced by his wealth.** There is no doubt that the rich man had enough money to have the best physicians of the day tend to him. His wealth probably gave him a false sense of security that he would live a long and merry life. The truth is that no amount of wealth can deny the appointment with death that God has already ordained for us (Hebrews 9:27). When God told him that “this night” was the night for his soul to be required, there was no arguing or potential for another outcome.
4. **Notice that our material possessions cannot survive time.** At the conclusion of the parable, the Lord continues to teach on the right attitude for wealth. He mentions in verse 33 that we ought to seek treasure that cannot fail us. He then points out that our material possessions will eventually decay and wither away in value. The moth corrupts these things (2 Peter 3:10).
5. **Notice that our wealth can be stolen and potentially restored, but time can never be restored.** While the rich fool would have been devastated by the theft of his materials, he could always work to earn them back again. When the Lord told him that his time was over, there was no possibility for the recovery of that time. The invaluable nature of time should make us consider how much of it we use to earn more material possessions. The Lord tells us after this parable to take no thought on the physical things of life.
6. WE MUST REALIZE THAT OUR TIME SHOULD BE SPENT ON SEEKING THE THINGS OF GOD.
7. **While our time is limited, the rewards of seeking the Lord are eternal.** The Lord condemns the rich fool in the parable because he squandered the time that he had on things that would not last. He was not rich toward God. When we seek the kingdom of God, we obtain heavenly treasure that fail not (vs. 31-33). Our time is greatly invested when it is committed to serving the Lord. What is seventy years of time compared to an eternity?
8. **When we spend our time serving the Lord, we escape the redundancy of the world.** In verse 30, the Lord reminds us that the nations of the world seek after material things. The entire book of Ecclesiastes is committed to detailing the monotony and vanity of spending all of your time seeking material possessions. When we go against the trend of the world with our time and effort, we are able to truly be unique and spend our time on something other than our possessions. The world does not understand the mindset of a Christian who is truly committed to giving his time to God. They tend to assume that we are looking for some material benefit from it in this world.
9. **When we spend our time on a specific item, it shows that we value it greatly.** Given that our time is so valuable, it is obvious to see that what we spend our time on provides us with evidence of what is important to us. Jesus says in verse 34 that where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. If we do not give the Lord our time, it is not because we do not have sufficient time to commit to Him. Instead, it’s a direct result of our prioritizing some other item ahead of the Lord.
10. WE MUST REALIZE THE RESULTS OF FOLLOWING AFTER MATERIAL POSSESSIONS.
11. **When we spend our time seeking material possessions, we become very comfortable in those possessions.** This leads us to neglect the work that we are supposed to do for Christ. The rich fool told himself to take it easy in verse 19. A common result of gaining material possessions is a tendency to get very comfortable in those possessions. The more we have the more time we need in order to enjoy what we have. This is why Jesus tells us starting in verse 36 that we need to be ready and watchful. He does not want us to even think of what we need physically, as it may distract us from following after Him. With Thanksgiving approaching, you can picture this with the results of the Thanksgiving meal. After the meal is over, we are very comfortable. There is no reason to even leave the rocking chair!
12. **When we spend our time seeking material possessions, we are giving the wrong things to our children.** The Lord asked the rich fool who would take ownership of his wealth. The point being that someone else was going to inherit all of his material possessions. While it is not a bad thing to provide possessions to your children, how much greater is it when a Godly saint passes on that heritage to his son or daughter! The majority of children who inherit a great sum of money or possessions do not know how to manage it, and they usually end up spending it on wasted living.
13. **When we spend our time seeking material possessions, we stop considering God in our decisions.** Notice that the rich fool is talking to himself. His many possessions caused him to regard himself so much that he sought his own opinion when it was time to make a decision. He wanted to know what was the best decision to help fulfill his fleshly desires.The term fool means a person who says that there is no God. When we do not consider God in our decisions, it shows very easily that we are being foolish.
14. **When we spend our time seeking material possessions, we forget where the possessions come from.** Everything that he had gotten came from out of the ground. This means that it was only available to him as a result of God allowing it. When we get so consumed with the physical, we tend to lose track of the work that the Lord is doing. The rich fool referred to the possessions as “his” fruits, and he gave absolutely no glory to God for what he had received.

**CONCLUSION**: We ought to ensure that we are keeping the right mindset when it comes to the topic of wealth. While God clearly recognizes that we have needs that have to be met, He tells us that we must learn to keep our focus completely on Him. Life is too short to be worried about winning a fortune or finding the latest money-making scheme. We need to put all of our efforts into doing the work of Jesus Christ. By doing this, we will earn eternal rewards that are much greater than anything we can receive here on earth.