

THE FOOLISH RICH MAN



Passages to Study: Luke 12:13-31.

Read with the class: Luke 12:13-31.

Texts for memorization:

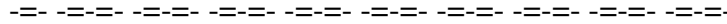
Younger: Matt. 6:33 “Seek ye first the kingdom of God ... “.

Older Matt. 6:33.



OBJECTIVES: To teach:

1. That the things of this world are temporary and destined to pass away.
2. That no one has a guaranteed life span and only God decides how long life will be for any person on earth.
3. That this world’s treasures are useless in the life to come.
4. That he is a fool who makes plans for this life only and not for Eternity.
5. That those treasures that are laid up in Heaven are the most important “savings account” one can have.



Note: What gave rise to this parable was the request by a man for the Lord Jesus to intervene on his behalf in a family dispute involving an inheritance. The man had missed completely the reason for the Lord’s presence on earth and was asking him to be a judge in civil affairs. He had failed to see that the Lord Jesus was the Revealer of truth about Heaven. He Himself was **THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE** to the house of the Father.

The parables shows that no business acumen on earth could purchase security to last into eternity, hence all the rich man’s “intelligent” strategy was deemed “foolish” by God.

SCENE No. 1. VISUAL AIDS: The house of a rich man as he is waited on by servants who bring him food and provide entertainment. Within a bubble can be shown the things that are occupying his mind, such as his harvest, the granaries he needs to build and the wealth he thinks will secure his future enjoyment.

DEVELOPMENT:

- Sug.** Ask the children to think of what is the most valuable thing they possess, which of their possessions they like best of all. Then ask them to calculate for how long a time this object will be useful to them, whether for a short time, or during the whole of their lives on earth, and whether it has eternal value.
- A rich man, owner of a large farm, is concerned about how to best retain his earthly riches. He is thinking about:
 - a. His very large harvest and his granaries that are too small to store it all.
 - b. The new granaries that he has decided to build.
 - c. The riches he will have stored away for future use.
 - Having found a solution to his problems, the man decides that he will be able to be at ease, eat and drink well, and enjoy it all for many years.
 - His main concerns all have to do with his physical well-being. He has no gratitude to God for all that he possesses. **Sug.** Establish early in the lesson that the man is taken up with himself and God isn’t considered as a reference point in his plans with regard to the future.
 - His plans for the future go no farther than his present life. His planning ends with his retirement.
 - The future that really matters is that which comes after this life.
 - Material goods contain nothing that will be of use for the future of the soul.
 - This man is living as if all that matters are the things of this life.
 - The Lord Jesus urges people to be on guard against covetousness (greed, the desire to have more), for a man’s life does not depend on having an abundance of things.

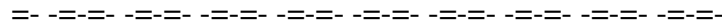
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- A person is worthwhile, not for what he/she has, but for **WHAT he/she IS**.

Cmt. Talk with the students about avarice (greed), what it is, how it is seen in a life and whether they have felt it at some time during their lives. Covetousness is the strong desire to have more money or material things beyond what is really needed, or more than what one now has.

- A person’s actions show what is in his/her heart.



SCENE No. 2. VISUAL AIDS: In the bedroom of the same house, the frightened man hears a voice. Words “Thou fool”, as if coming out of a megaphone above his head, should be prepared and placed about his head. Nearby place a drawing that represents a cold hand on which is written the word “Death” .

DEVELOPMENT:

- The rich man, recently awakened from sleep, faces God’s verdict upon him, “Thou fool”.

Cns. It is a serious matter to call someone a “fool” (Matt. 5:22). If God says it, it is because the person deserves it and his situation is alarming.

- The man is confronted with the only contingency for which he has made no preparation--**DEATH**. He is about to lose everything.

- **DEATH** may arrive at any time, not only to the elderly.

Cmt. If the teacher knows of some sudden death of children or adolescents, they may be mentioned without dwelling on the circumstances if they have been tragic.

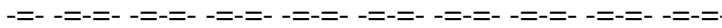
Cns. Death seems very remote to most children, something that only happens to people who are sick or elderly.

- Not only death but also the sudden coming of the Lord may bring an end to their day of opportunity.

- No one can take with him/herself the things acquired during this life.

- For this reason, someone else will be the beneficiary of all that one has prepared for self.

- “Fool” means “lacking in perception or common sense” and “the imprudent ordering of one’s life in regard to salvation”.



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SCENE No. 3. VISUAL AIDS: A plain background divided in two can have the words “Treasures of short term value” on one side. These can include good food, toys, skates, bikes, a late model car, money, etc. On the other side the words “Things of eternal value” can show the Bible, the door to heaven, attendance at Sunday School or meetings, helping others, etc.

DEVELOPMENT:

- Some things are of value only during this life.
- The items on one side show things that can seem important, and which are treasured by many, depending on their age.
- Included should be some items that are important to adults and which they treat as treasure.
- The Bible is truly a treasure.
- Heaven is the place where we deposit our real and lasting treasure.

Cmt. Only that which will accompany us into Eternity is really a treasure.

Cns. Service for God out of gratitude, acts of kindness in showing love to others motivated by the work of God in the heart, are the kind of “treasures” which will be recognized in Heaven.

- These are activities and interests that will have value well beyond this life.
- We are called to lay up for ourselves treasure in heaven. (Luke 12:33)
- Whatever we do in this life that is of eternal value is deposited in heaven.

Apl. The life that is truly worth living begins with receiving the precious gift of salvation. Then the Lord permits us to deposit in a heavenly bank account that which glorifies Him and brings Him pleasure. These are the treasures that will last.

Cmt. Point out that the man is not called “Bad”, but “Foolish”. He does not lack intelligence, but has employed it mistakenly. The elaborate plans left no room for God.

Apl. Ask the students if their plans for the future like having a job or education have taken God into account.

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