

4-2-2017
SETTING PRIORITIES
LESSONS FROM THE FOOLISH RICH MAN

Luke 12:13 And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

Luke 12:14 And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?

Luke 12:15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

Luke 12:16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

Luke 12:17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

Luke 12:18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

Luke 12:19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

Luke 12:20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

Luke 12:21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

Luke 12:29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.

Luke 12:30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

Luke 12:31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Intro: This parable starts out with a real life problem.

A certain fellow thought he had a legitimate gripe.

His brother refused to divide the inheritance with him. The older brother was the executor of the will and he didn't want to divide the inheritance with the younger. The older brother was supposed to get a double portion and the remaining portion was to go to the younger or be divided accordingly.

Now if this man came with a legitimate gripe, and it would seem he did, but note what our Lord said to him.

Luke 12:14 And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?

Our Lord refused to get involved, and said this has nothing to do with my ministry or purpose for coming to planet earth.

Then our Lord says:

Luke 12:15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

HE GIVES A PARABLE TO ILLUSTRATE THIS POINT.

This morning I want to talk to you about this parable and the lessons our Lord was trying to teach through it.

HOW TO SET AN ORDER OF PRIORITIES

I. Our Lord Wisely Opted Not To get Involved In This Worldly Dispute:

Who made me a ruler a judge over you?

Note: Our Lord didn't even try to get entangled in this dispute. It wasn't very important to Him.

Most people wrap their whole lives up in disputes over material things. The inheritance. The things that we can't take with us when we die.

Notice, the parents are dead, now the children are fighting over what's been left behind.

Jesus could have spent time listening to both sides of the story.

Older brother: I took care of mom and dad. I had added expenses.
Younger brother; Yes but mom and dad wanted me to have something.
On and on the dispute could have gone.

BUT OUR LORD SOLVED THE PROBLEM IN ONE STATEMENT - THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH ME, SEE TO IT YOURSELF.

And then he said be careful because your life does not consist of the things you own. For you can't take any material things with you when you die.

Most people wrap up most of their life in things that cannot be taken with them when they go to meet God.

NOTICE LESSONS WE CAN LEARN FROM THIS FOOLISH RICH MAN:

II. THE TEMPTATION TO DO THE LESSOR THINGS IS GREATER IN TIMES OF PROSPERITY: SO THE FOOLISH RICH MAN FILLED HIS LIFE WITH THE PURSUIT OF THE LESSOR THINGS.

Luke 12:16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

In time of prosperity we should have more time to do eternal things.
We should have to spend less time working to eat.
We should have more money to sustain ourselves.

This fellow came to our Lord asking that he step in and talk to his older brother about splitting the inheritance because there was probably a considerable amount of money involved.

Would he have come if all there was was Dad's old Bible, some clothes and a few trinkets?

When there is little materially there is little to fight over.
When we have little we have little to worry about.

THE GREATEST ENEMY OF THE CHURCH DOWN THROUGH THE AGES HAS BEEN PROSPERITY.

WE NEED TO LEARN THAT IN TIMES OF PROSPERITY IT IS TIME TO TAKE SPECIAL CARE TO KEEP OUR HEARTS AND MINDS FOCUSED ON THE LORD!

III. THIS MAN THOUGHT WITHIN HIMSELF:

Luke 12:17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

Proverbs 16:25 There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

So it is when we muse and take thought in ourselves without inquiring of the Lord.

When we do this we tread on dangerous ground.

HE THOUGHT WITHIN HIMSELF.

The most dangerous thing we can do is think within ourselves without the Lord.

1. It takes time to inquire of the Lord for his will.

People think up things decide to do things go places get involved in businesses.... and never once do they ask.... the Lord.

WHAT DOES GOD THINK ABOUT ALL THIS?

James 4:13 Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:

James 4:14 Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

James 4:15 For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

James 4:16 But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.

James 4:17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

When we make plans and decisions without consulting with the Lord we sin.

When we live this way it will slow us down at first.
It is a new way to live.

We are used to making decisions based on our way and our thinking.

I Corinthians 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

2. Myself with my house, I took years because I waited for God to show me when and what to do.

Preacher friend criticized me. He said Bissol you're never going to build that house. You've been talking about it and praying about it for 7 years now.

This same preacher prayed once about going to the mission field and decided it was what God wanted him to do and lasted 4 months in the field.

When you don't just rely on your thinking but need the mind of Christ, sometimes God doesn't tell you right away. That means you have to wait. Waiting is sometimes the hardest thing that we do in the Christian life.

Isaiah 40:30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

Isaiah 40:31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

In times it may look like you're going slow, but that's because God is slow in giving you an answer or you are slow in receiving the answer! The Bible says to wait on the Lord.

Look at the difference between King David and King Saul. Saul's life was a disaster because he never learned to wait on the Lord. David learned how to enquire of the Lord in all matters. Saul killed the priests of the Lord, David used them for his advisors. He maintained a good relationship with His prophets.

IV. HE RESOLVED WHAT TO DO IN THE COUNSEL OF HIS OWN HEART:

Luke 12:18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

Luke 12:19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

He figured out a way to store up to make his life easier.

He made plans to tear down and rebuild for a life of longevity.

He planned for many years in advance.

He planned how he could have it easy in this life.

He planned out a good life of ease and eating drinking and making merry.

So it is, that when our plans take our own lustful desires and base passions as a primary motivation for what we do, we can surely know that it is sin.

For the Bible says:

Matthew 6:25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

I Timothy 6:6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.

I Timothy 6:7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

I Timothy 6:8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

1. There is nothing wrong with planning and storing ahead if God leads that direction.

Joseph did that in Egypt.

The sin of this rich man was that he excluded God from his plans.

**2. This man made assumptions about his future that only God knew.
He assumed he was going to be able to be around to enjoy all that he saved up for.**

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4. HIS GREAT MISTAKE WAS NOT LIVING HIS LIFE EVERY DAY SO THAT HE WOULD BE BETTER PREPARED TO MEET GOD AND GIVE AN ACCOUNT FOR HIS LIFE.

Luke 12:20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

Luke 12:21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

5. We should always ask ourselves these questions:

A. If we knew my life would be required of me this night what would I do differently?

WE WOULD PROBABLY OPERATE OUR BUSINESSES DIFFERENTLY.

WE WOULD PROBABLY CHANGE A LOT OF THINGS.

I had a cousin who developed terminal cancer at the age of 39. When he found out he was going to die, he immediately got his family together and taught his wife and children every aspect of his businesses. Told them where everything was and prepared them to take over when he was gone. Some people are 80 years old and have not done that.

He then spent every available minute with his children.

Why wait until you hear the diagnoses to set your house in order?

It is the divine responsibility of every parent to teach his children to carry on after they are gone.

THE REASON PEOPLE DON'T TRAIN THEIR CHILDREN IN THEIR TRADE IS BECAUSE IT SLOWS THEM DOWN. GETTING THINGS DONE IN THE PRESENT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE FUTURE.

IT IS BETTER TO HAVE LESS IN THE BARN AND INVEST MORE IN YOUR FAMILY.

Can't take the barn to heaven with you but you can take your children.

It amazes me how many people are loving their children to death. They want them to have an easy life. Life is not easy. Often, by protecting them from hardships we are actually destroying them. I meet a farmer one time that didn't want his son to be a farmer so he never had him work with him, which allowed the son to have a lot of free time he thought for school. Instead the kid hung out with his friends and got in trouble and was shot dead by one of his friends in a fight. He loved his son to death.

The Bible says,

Lamentations 3:27 It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.

Lamentations 3:28 He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him.

Lamentations 3:29 He putteth his mouth in the dust; if so be there may be hope.

Lamentations 3:30 He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him: he is filled full with reproach.

Lamentations 3:31 For the Lord will not cast off for ever:

Lamentations 3:32 But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies.

Just think, there is not one person sitting here in this church listening to the word of God doing what you're supposed to be doing that would regret it if tomorrow God called you home to be with Him.

B. OUT OF MY LIST OF THINGS TO DO, WHAT WOULD CHRIST HAVE ME DO FIRST, OR IS THERE SOMETHING ELSE THAT NEEDS TO BE ADDED TO THE LIST?

As we review our list of things to do we need to ask ourselves the question:

If my soul was going to be required of me tonight what things would I do differently?

If this rich man in the parable knew that his soul would be required of him that night, do you think he would have decided to start building new barns? Do you think he would have thought about taking it easy and relaxing and retiring?

The wise christian lives his life knowing that the Lord could call him home at any time!

C. IF A CHRISTIAN LIVES HIS LIFE IN REALIZATION THAT EACH DAY COULD BE HIS LAST HE WILL BE MORE LIKELY TO MAKE PROPER DECISIONS ABOUT SPIRITUAL MATTERS IN HIS LIFE.

Application to the unsaved:

Those who do not know the Lord live this way. They want to party it up while they can.

EAT DRINK BE MERRY TOMORROW WE DIE!

CHRISTIANS SHOULD LIVE TO HAVE TREASURE IN HEAVEN!

When we stand before God the only things that will last for eternity will be manifest in that day. The Bible says this:

I Corinthians 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

I Corinthians 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

I Corinthians 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

I Corinthians 3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

I Corinthians 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Luke 12:31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Many have illustrated this passage with an object lesson through the years.

We can take a large jar and show how it represents our lives. The jar can only fit so much in it. What you put in it first will take priority. Some people never have time for the Lord. The reason they have no time is because they don't put him first in their lives. If you fill that jar with wood, hay and stubble you will have no room for anything else. Whatever you put in first takes up the room in your jar. If you put lessor things in their lives first. There will be no room for the greater.

The Lord and his word is often a picture of Gold, Silver precious stones. Let's say the Lord represents precious stones. If your jar is filled with dirt and sand and gravel. There will be no room for the precious stones. Put the precious stones in first and the sand, and dirt can fill in around it. Put the sand, gravel and dirt in first and the precious stones cannot fit in your jar.

Most people have their lives so filled with material things.

Sand, and gravel and dirt, SEEK THE KINGDOM OF GOD FIRST AND THERE WILL STILL BE ENOUGH ROOM FOR THE OTHER THINGS.

If I were to use the illustration I will not use a jar but I would use a bucket. The reason why is that people talk about their bucket list. And you will notice rarely in that list is there anything spiritual. Why is it no one puts in that bucket some things for eternity? What is in your jar? What is in your bucket list?

Luke 12:31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.