

=THE PARABLES=

Lesson 3

The Rich Fool

AIM: to teach my pupils the importance of heavenly riches and the folly of seeking after earthly riches.

POINT OF CONTACT: Bring to class a clump of grass or a picture of a beautiful landscape, a flower, and a picture of a bird. Use them for points of contact as shown later in the lesson.

INTRODUCTION: First, tell the story of Luke 12:16-34 to the class. Then go back and teach the lessons involved.

I. WHY THIS MAN WAS A FOOL.

1. He was a fool because he thought the main purpose in life was getting possessions. Any wise counselor will tell you that obtaining possessions does not bring happiness to people. The most miserable people in the world oftentimes are those who have the most. The key to happiness is to find the will of God. This man was a fool because he thought he could be happy by possessing things.
2. He was a fool because he was mistaken about true riches. Luke 12:18. You will notice here the man's concept of riches dealt with fruits and goods. God's concept is that treasure is in Heaven, where no thief can steal and no moth can corrupt. Read Luke 12:33. Why not ask the class to share with you some things that compose true riches?
3. He was mistaken about ownership. Notice in verse 18 he said, "...my fruits and my goods." In verse 19 he said, "Soul, thou hast much goods." He felt he owned these things. In verse 20 God straightened him out when He said, "...then whose shall those things be...?" You see, we do not own anything. Life is temporary. We are here for only a while. We are stewards of Someone else's property. God is the owner of it all. We are simply stewards. He has let us use some of His property for a season. This man was a fool because he did not recognize this truth.
4. He was mistaken about the duration of his life. Verse 19 says he had "...much goods laid up for many years..." Verse 20 says, "...this night thy soul shall be required of thee..." Little did he realize his life was so near being over. He thought he had many years; he had only one more day. There are millions of people in the world right now who have only one more day to live. Most of these people do not know it. They will die suddenly in an accident, because of heart failure, due to some kind of seizure, etc. Let us never be mistaken into thinking we have many years. We have now! Our lives and the duration of our lives are in the hands of God.
5. He was a fool because he was mistaken about Who controlled his life. Notice in verse 17 he said, "What shall I do...?" He took no thought of what God might do. He felt that he was in charge. Nothing is farther from the truth. God is in charge of our lives.

II. OBJECT LESSONS GIVEN BY GOD CONCERNING HIS PROVISION.

1. The ravens. Luke 12:24. This is so interesting. God feeds the sparrows, the birds of the fields. It says in verse 24, "Consider the ravens...God feedeth them..." The birds have no life insurance policies. The birds have no annuities. The birds have no social security. This is not to say that life insurance, etc. is wrong, but it is to say that it is God's business to feed His own. He shows us this by telling us to consider the ravens. (Show the bird picture.)
2. The lilies. Luke 12:27. Notice, the lilies do not toil. They do not strike for an 8-hour day or a 40-hour week, and yet the richest man that ever lived, Solomon, could not clothe himself in such splendor as the lilies. Solomon made over \$19,000,000 a year salary. The Queen of Sheba brought him a gift of nearly \$4,000,000. He drank his refreshments and liquids from containers and cups of gold, and yet Solomon could not afford anything as lovely as the clothing of the lilies. (Show the flower.)
3. The grass. Luke 12:28. What is more beautiful than a field of green grass! Perhaps a wheat field is mentioned here. It is God Who makes the grass. It is God Who paints the rainbow, feeds the

sparrows, makes the lily, paints the rose. God is concerned about little things. Certainly God is concerned about us. (Show the clump of grass or picture of a beautiful landscape.)

III. GOD'S PROMISES TO US.

1. God promises to feed us. Luke 12:24. Notice it says that He feeds the ravens, and "...how much more are ye better than the fowls?" God will feed His own.
2. God promises to clothe us. Luke 12:28. He clothes the grass, and He clothes the lilies of the field. We certainly are more important than they. Here is God's promise to clothe us.
3. God knows our needs. Luke 12:30. This is wonderful! God knows what we need. We take care of our children; God takes care of His. We do not always give our children all that they think they need because we know their needs better than they do. God knows our needs and certainly is able to supply them. We have His promises that He will do so.
4. God expects us to put Him first. Luke 12:31. People might ask, "Why doesn't God take care of me?" The answer is in this verse. If we will seek first the kingdom of God, as is stated in Matthew 6:33, God will take care of these other things. About what things is He talking? He is talking about our clothes, our food and our needs. If we seek first God's kingdom, which means we give God the first tenth of our income, the first day of the week, the first place in our lives, then God is duty-bound by His Word to take care of all these things.
5. God gives treasures in Heaven. Luke 12:33. Not only will God provide for us physical care but also eternal treasures in Heaven.

IV. YOUR CONDITION. Notice the words of Luke 12:34, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." This is certainly true. Where does your money go? Do you tithe? Do you give over and above the tithe? Do you give offerings? Are you liberal? Are you unselfish? Are you generous? The promises in the Bible are many, many, many concerning God blessing those who give.

He says in Malachi 3 that He will give us blessings that there will not be room enough to receive. He promises that the liberal soul shall be made fat.

CONCLUSION: The simple teaching of the lesson is that we should not be concerned basically with making money, laying up treasures, etc., but with doing the will of God. It is God's business to care for us if we put His business first. If we care for our own business first, then God will not care for our business. If we put His business first, God is bound by His Word to take care of our business.