

THE RICH FOOL

BIBLE TEXT : Luke 12:1-34

LESSON 44 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Be content with such things as ye have" (Hebrews 13:5).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Luke 12: 1-34

¹ In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

² For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.

³ Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.

⁴ And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.

⁵ But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

⁶ Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?

⁷ But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

⁸ Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God:

⁹ But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God.

¹⁰ And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto

NOTES:

The Length of Eternity

Jesus came to earth to teach men how to live, but He emphasized the fact that their life here was only to prepare them for Heaven. After this brief life is over we shall spend eternity somewhere, either with the Lord in Glory, or with the devil in torment. People who are not ready to meet Jesus do not like to think about what will happen after they die, but their reward for the way they have lived will come to them just as surely and as quickly as to those who have made preparation.

Eternity is a long time, longer than we can comprehend. It will go on forever and ever, without beginning or end. Just as we say that no one made God, but that He always was, so is eternity -- it always was and always will be. "The whole space between the creation of the world, and the dissolution of it, would not make a day in eternity, yea, so many years as there be days in that space, would not fill up an hour in eternity." How important it is that we prepare to meet God in peace so we shall not have to suffer torment throughout the endless ages!

Briefness of Life

And how long is a man's life on earth? David said, "Our days on the earth are as a shadow" (I Chronicles 29:15). A shadow is here one instant and is gone the next. That is how long our life on earth is when compared with eternity. James had the same thought in mind when he said, "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 4:14).

No Time for God

Jesus told the people a parable about a rich man whose land brought forth great crops. He should have thanked God for his abundance, and because he had more than he needed for himself, he should have tried to help the poor. But so many times when people begin to gather wealth about themselves they forget the poor. They think only of how much more they can get. This rich man decided that if his present barns were not large enough to hold his crops, he would tear them down and build greater ones.

When the rich man felt that he was at the height of his glory, when he thought he would never have to work again but could just enjoy the rest of his life in ease, God spoke to him. He had forgotten all about God, but the Lord was watching him. God did not remind him that he must sometime die, but He sent swift and sudden judgment upon him. God said, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee."

The Sinner's Reward

God has given every man a soul, and it is our duty to prepare it for eternal life. What would happen if God should ask for our soul before we had prepared it for Heaven? Jesus said that such should be cast out "into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 22:13). Again, He said, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matthew 25:46).

Covetousness

Jesus called the rich man a fool because he had had every

him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven.

¹¹ And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say:

¹² For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

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

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

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.

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

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

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.

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.

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?

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

²² And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye

opportunity to seek God, but he had been so interested in laying up riches for himself that he had neglected his salvation. Sometimes people will admit they are not doing the right thing in neglecting God, and they promise they will sometime give God their heart, but for the moment they love their riches so much that they cannot let go of them, even if it does cost their soul's salvation.

Some of the servicemen who were in the South Pacific during the war told of the manner by which some of the boys captured monkeys. They would cut a hole in the end of a cocoanut, fasten it so it could not be carried away, and then put some candy in it as bait. The monkeys would put in a hand to get the candy, but the closed fist would be too big to withdraw. Rather than let go of the candy and escape, the monkeys would submit to capture. Just so will Satan capture the soul of the man who refuses to consecrate his worldly goods to the will of the Lord.

The Lord's Providence

Our life on earth consists of much more than our daily routine of working, eating, sleeping, playing, and studying. The sinners spend all their time and interest on those things, but Jesus has said that He knows what we have need of, and He will provide. He made us in the beginning, and if we trust Him and try to do His will, He will surely give us all we require.

Jesus told the people to consider the lilies of the field. They do not worry about their living, or about how they look, yet "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." You know Solomon was very rich and could have anything he wanted. But some of the fine purple cloth he wore, which signified royalty, has been found, and when it was placed under a microscope one could see the unevenness in colouring, the coarseness of the weave. But if one takes a wild purple iris and places a bit of one of its petals under the microscope, it will appear even more beautiful than it does to the natural eye. God made the lily, and its colouring is perfect; its veining is according to a pattern. Why should we worry about what to wear when the great Designer is our Father? Jesus said, "How much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

Jesus calls His people His "little flock," which is helpless if it tries to get along by itself; but when led by the great Shepherd, the flock goes by the "still waters" and lies down in "green pastures." It is His pleasure to give His children the heavenly Kingdom, if that is where their treasure is.

A Home in Heaven

A wealthy man was about to die, but his little daughter did not know what death meant. Her mother explained that he was going away. The little girl came to her father and asked, "Daddy, have you a home in that land where you are going?" That man had spent all his life laying up treasures on earth, and when his time came to die he had no home in Heaven. Let us be sure that we are laying up our treasures in Heaven, so that when this brief life is over we will have a mansion prepared for us above.

QUESTIONS

1. Why did God call the rich man in our lesson a fool?
2. To what is our life on earth sometimes compared, as to length of time?
3. Do we need to worry about what we shall eat or wear? Who will provide for us?
4. How long is eternity?
5. Where do you want to spend eternity?

shall put on.

²³ The life is more than meat, and the body *is more* than raiment.

²⁴ Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?

²⁵ And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?

²⁶ If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?

²⁷ Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

²⁸ If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more *will he clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

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

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

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

³² Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

³³ Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

³⁴ For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

