

THE

# RICH FOOL

L u k e 1 2 : 1 3 - 2 1



# Context: Parable of the Rich Fool

## ■ Luke 11:52

- “Woe to you to lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge, you yourselves did not enter and you hindered those who were entering.” – NASB Version
- **Key – *kleis*** – (literally or figuratively) “revelation”; Keeper of the keys has the power to open and to shut, the word.
- **Knowledge – *gnosis*** – “A seeking to know, an enquiry, investigation”; especially of spiritual truth, knowledge of God or the things of God.

A key is "that which opens." Men can *lock away* understanding through their own selfishness and deception.



# Parable Reminders

- A Parable is **not** a straightforward description of an event, just as it occurred or will occur.
- A Parable is a **casting or placing side by side** to a real event or **to compare likeness or similitude** to reveal the true meaning by interpretation .

# Context: Parable of the Rich Fool

## ■ Luke 12:13-15

- A man in the crowd abruptly interrupts Jesus' teaching in order to get His assistance on a personal matter. Jesus had been talking about the need for faithfulness in situations of persecution (Luke 12:1-12).
- This man suddenly appeals to Jesus to settle a dispute over a family inheritance.
- Under their administration, the law of succession covered most cases (Deuteronomy 21:17; Numbers 27:1-11; 36:7-9), but sometimes an issue would arise that needed intervention. It was quite common at the time to go to a rabbi for a legal ruling.
- The man asks Jesus to instruct his brother to divide the inheritance due to him equitably. The man is not really asking Jesus to arbitrate. Rather he wants Jesus to side with him in this dispute with his brother. Jesus will not honor such a partisan request.

# Context: Parable of the Rich Fool

## ■ Luke 12:13-15

- Jesus uses the teaching moment to utilize a parable for the purposes to give a warning about excessive focus on possessions.
- He uses this occasion to teach His disciples that a godly life is more important than material things.
- It appears that one or both of the brothers, no doubt, was guilty of covetousness. It violates the tenth commandment and is expressly equated with idolatry. In this instant, there was a sinful desire of seeking more than their share.
- Greed is the desire to have more, to acquire without reference to one's own specific needs or the situation of others.
- In Verse 15, the words of caution are given to all. The word "You" is in the second person plural, in the original Greek.

# Context: Parable of the Rich Fool

## ■ Luke 12:13-15

- A danger of greed is that it can make one self-centered and insensitive to people. Greed can create a distortion about what life is, because the definition of life is not found in objects, but in relationships, especially to God and to His will
- It leads to the fulfillment of ignoring Our Father and worshiping the creature of Our Creator; Romans 1:25 "For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever."

**GUARD AGAINST  
ALL COVETOUSNESS**

Luke 12:15



# Context: Parable of the Rich Fool

## ■ Luke 12:13-15

– Jesus utilizes a parable to make the point that life should not be based on having many possessions and it does to consist of greater wealth.

– Colossians 3:1-7 “Therefore, if you have been raised up with Christ...consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire and greed, which amounts to idolatry...in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.”

■ Those of us who live in a society of affluence must be particularly careful. (Hebrews 13:5)

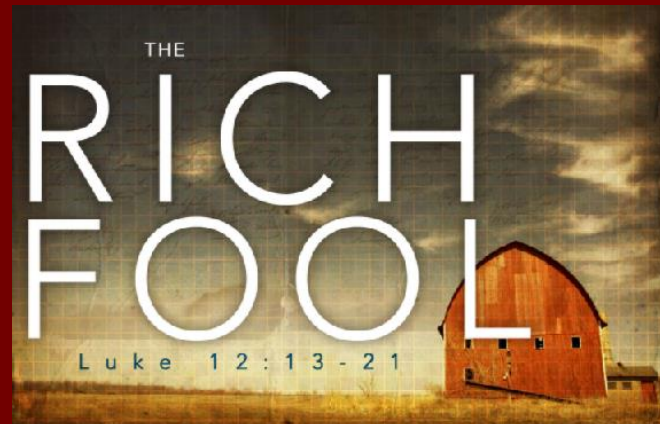
ONE'S LIFE  
DOES NOT CONSIST  
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LUKE 12:15

# Parable of the Rich Fool

## ■ Luke 12:16-21

Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. "And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' "So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry." "But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

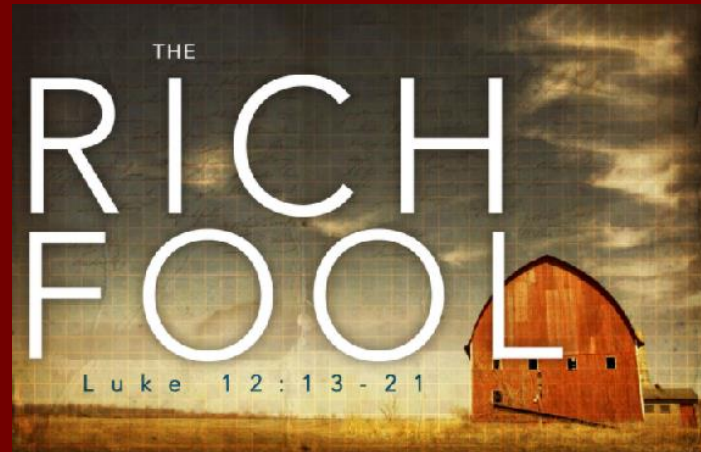




# Parable of the Rich Fool

## ■ Points to Consider

- ✓ The story centers around one character, a landowner for whom everything in his business goes right.
- ✓ Apparently, his harvests were very good over time and he was rich. This harvest was exceptional and his crop was so huge, that his barns were not big enough to store everything.
- ✓ Rather than building additional barns, which would take up land that might be used for agricultural production in later years, he chooses to tear them down, in order to make room for larger ones.



# Parable of the Rich Fool

## ■ Points to consider

- ✓ **The rich man may even have been embarrassed by his inability to store his hoarded wealth, but he never considered using his riches for the benefit of others.**
- ✓ **It is apparent, that rich man does not plan to contribute to the current year market, with his surplus. He wants to hold back his harvest so that he can sell it later at a better price.**
- ✓ **Proverbs 11:25-26 "The generous man will be prosperous, And he who waters will himself be watered. He who withholds grain, the people will curse him, But blessing will be on the head of him who sells it." Proverbs 22:9 "He who is generous will be blessed, For he gives some of his food to the poor." (Example of Boaz, in the Book of Ruth)**
- ✓ **Galatians 6:7-10 "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith."**

# Parable of the Rich Fool

## ■ Points to consider

- ✓ The parable portrays this man as a person who makes prudent and efficient plans, with clear-sightedness and practical wisdom.
- ✓ There is no hint of cheating or immorality.
- ✓ Nowhere is it mentioned that he has done something dishonest. The picture seems to be an ideal one.
- ✓ This man's additional wealth fell on his lap, he came by his wealth honestly because God's provision and kindness blessed him and yet, such blessing can still present a problem, a problem of stewardship.
- ✓ The predominant presence of the word 'my' and the numerous first-person singular verbs give us the first hint of a problem. In just three short verses describing his thoughts, the rich man in the parable said 'I' six times and 'my' five times. My fruit, my barn, my goods. I will do, I will tear down, I will store. Such language points to an ingrained selfishness. He seems to be preoccupied only with himself. Everything is about 'I' and 'my'. There is no indication that he gave thought to the needs of others or that he thanked God for His blessing.

# Parable of the Rich Fool

## ■ Self-Indulgence

- ✓ **James 4:13-15** "Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit...Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that";
- ✓ **Matthew 6:19-20** "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal."
- ✓ **In Greek, this word 'fool', *aphron*, is made up of two parts. The front part is the privative *a*, which means 'without.' The other part is *phren*, which means 'mind'. So a fool is a person 'without mind,' 'without understanding.'** The rich man is a fool in the sense that he is lacking in spiritual understanding.
- ✓ **Matthew 16:26** "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul"

# Parable of the Rich Fool

## ■ Rich Toward God

- ✓ God calls the man to give an account of all his wealth.
- ✓ This rich farmer had piled up his produce in barns and had accumulated sufficient wealth to last for many years.
- ✓ Because he was concerned for no one but himself and had failed to account for the will of God, his spiritual bank account registered zero.
- ✓ It is often mentioned by commentators that the issue in the parable is not wealth, but how wealth is directed. The story does not imply that material things are wrong in themselves, but only when they become the focus and goal of life.
- ✓ In the parable of the sower, Jesus explained that 'those one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of riches choke it, making it unfruitful (Matthew 13:22).' Wealth choked the word.
- ✓ Matthew 19:23-24. "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

# Parable of the Rich Fool

## ■ Our Responsibility

- We who are alive need to make the right kind of investments, with our eyes focused on wealth towards Our Father – while it is still not too late for us
- ✓ Consider I Timothy 6:17-19. "Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed."

Considering the context and symbols of the parable of the Rich Fool, it appears that his riches and the prospect of having more, he lived out his life on earth as if this were all there is, failing to prepare for the life to come. One day, sooner than he expected, he found out that he was wrong. When God called him, he was faced with the fact that all the wealth in the world could do nothing for him. The accounts were closed and could not be altered.