

WHAT'S WORTH LIVING FOR?

Luke 12:13-21

How many times have we seen it?

We're driving down the freeway, or along a mountain road, when we spot it.

– wheels still spinning in the air on top of the car, or a mangled frame.

As we look at the the damage, we know that for someone a pleasant afternoon drive has become the end of the road.

What was going to be a day of fun and games has ended as a day of calamity.

In one quick blow, it's all over.

We wonder if the occupants were ready for eternity.

We repeat to ourselves again: **Prov. 27:1**

"Do not boast about tomorrow, For you do not know what a day may bring forth."

or **James 4:13-14**, *"Come now you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.' Yet **you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow**. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away".*

So, what are we living for today? Is it worth it?

INSTRUCTION IN VIEW OF REJECTION 12:1-19:27

Jesus helps them identify the proper priorities in view of His rejection and coming kingdom 12:1-48

He has already spoken to them concerning:

Hypocrisy 12:1-3

A proper attitude about rejection 12:4-12

... and now he moves to the

PROPER PRIORITY CONCERNING POSSESSIONS 12:13-21

Jesus gives us: 5 CONTRASTS THAT TEACH 5 LESSONS:

DON'T FOCUS ON: FOCUS ON:

Lesson #1 External Appearances Heart Attitudes 12:1-3

Lesson #2 Opposition God who cares 12:4-12

Lesson #3 MATERIAL POSSESSIONS PROPER RELATIONSHIP TO GOD 12:13-21

We ought to seek the true riches He offers

– NOT materialism/ possessions

BEWARE OF COVETOUSNESS, for a man's life does not consist of the things he possesses.

Whether that be: Money–toys–things–power–position–fame

The important thing is not what we possess, but what possesses us!

EXAMPLE OF A MATERIALISTIC BROTHER 12:13-15

– a young man wants a larger share

Request of the brother who wants Jesus to help him get a larger share of the family inheritance motivates Jesus to warn them: It's better to seek the true wealth of a proper relationship with God than to pursue material prosperity.

He lost sight of true perspective–wants more possessions

Not concerned about truth

He wants Jesus to help him get more goods.

Messiah is present–Jesus refuses to get involved in his greed.

Morris: "Jesus came to bring men to God, not to bring property to men."

Jesus refuses to participate in his materialism and warns His listeners about the dangers of greed. He warns us:

"GUARD AGAINST ALL KINDS OF GREED!" 12:15

"the thirst to have more" (pleon – more; + exo – have)

Covetousness arises from a false philosophy of life: The greatest good is to acquire material possessions.

True life does not depend on the abundance of possessions.

Advertisers bombard us with propaganda to convince us v. 15 is wrong!

"If you just own such and such product, you'll enjoy the good life!"

Whether you have the goods or not isn't the issue

– even when you have them, that's not what life is all about.

What are we living for?

We read passages like the following parable and suppose "the rich" refers to someone else.

It doesn't tell us how rich he is.

We don't realize how wealthy we are from the perspective of history

– and yet *we want more!*

Jesus warns us: look out for every form of greed – and it takes many forms!

This young man looks innocent. He's just out for what's his, right?

Wrong – He's still seeking more for # 1.

Vance Havner: "Patrick Henry: 'Give me liberty or give me death.'

Modern Americans just say 'Gimme!'

Jesus makes clear, that's not what He came for.

He's not interested in seeing to it that we get more for ourselves!

That's in contrast to the prosperity gospel, that tells us Jesus wants to make us rich.

We say, "O no. I'm not seeking more for me!

I want to give 10% to God – a much bigger 10%!

But, what happens to the 90% then.

PARABLE OF THE RICH FOOL 12:16-21

Jesus directs a parable to the crowd to warn them of the danger of the covetous accumulation of goods. 12:16-21

Wrong view of self:

Thinks he'll be around for years.

Thinks his things give him satisfaction.

Jesus uses the parable to drive home His point about the danger of greed.

Greed never gives us the right perspective on life.

Greed is never satisfied!

Wrong view of others:

He doesn't give an appropriate priority to others.

No consideration for others and their needs.

He really doesn't care about others.

No parable uses more personal pronouns: I, my, mine. (8 "I"'s; 4 "my"'s)

He already has more goods than he can store! 12:17

It never occurs to him to give some away to help others!

He could've spread the wealth to others in need,

had he not been so self-centered and greedy.

He's only thinking of himself, *hoarding what he could never use, and ultimately losing what he could never keep.*

His priorities are backwards!

Jim Elliott had it right: *"He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose!"*

Excess will ultimately be squandered away by scoundrels who have no use for, nor need for it, and who would not know how to use it wisely anyway.

How much better it would be to distribute it to those in need, and allow it to be used for God's glory.

Wrong view of God: Doesn't have God's perspective

He doesn't view God as the Center of everything.

He fails to take God into account.

He has enough goods for many years

Will he ever live to see them?

He rejoices in things which can never satisfy the soul

He can impress the crowd with his wealth, but will he ever fill his real need for love and value with massive material possessions?

Is he looking in the wrong place for his satisfaction in life?

Hebrew Proverb: "Who seeks more than he needs,

hinders himself from enjoying what he has."

The enjoyment of what we possess is lost when we covet more!

Swindoll: talking to a businessman who has finally come to terms with his business. "Chuck, that business was my god!

I was anxious, preoccupied, seldom at home, and nursing an ulcer.

I thought my work would bring me the satisfaction I needed.

But I have finally come to see that it won't.

At last I'm operating my life with an eternal dimension in mind.

I have put the Lord in a perspective I've never had Him in before, and I've never been happier."

For all practical purposes, **the rich fool is an atheist—a practical atheist.**

It isn't that he doesn't believe in God.

It's just that God makes no practical difference in his life.

He owes no gratitude to God, nor responsibility to Him for what he has received.

We say, "Too bad! Poor guy! Wish I had that problem—too much wealth!"

Our response may indicate the covetousness in our own heart.

The parable of the rich fool describes the foolishness of hoarding personal fortune and failing to consider God.

He isn't concerned about using his wealth wisely.

He isn't concerned about helping others.

He isn't even concerned about having a richer, fuller life.

All he cares about is self-indulgence. Live it up!

His wealth was held only to please himself.

He never thought about pleasing God with it.

Notice his commentary— he *already* has enough accumulated wealth for many years. 12:19

He has no reason to accumulate more.

What a foolish way to live! 12:20

There's nothing wrong with saving for the future.

God never condemns Abraham, Job or Solomon for possessing great wealth.

But there comes a point when saving more is meaningless.

This man has no need to trust God, and no desire to please Him.

All he's after is a greater accumulation for himself.

You can lose everything overnight.

Are all our treasures in material things?

Dr. Nutt's house—put everything into his possessions and lost it all

—died of a broken heart.

When John D. Rockefeller died, a man asked one of his aides, "How much did

Rockefeller leave behind?" The aide answered: "All of it!"

20-21—the rich fool dedicated his life to accumulation of wealth for himself,
when he died he lost it all!

Cp. Orville Mitchell, Jr.

**Life doesn't consist in the amount of possessions we accumulate;
nor does success, nor contentment, nor peace, nor security!**

One of the highest goals in life is to enjoy it—to satisfy every fleshly desire.

**He's a fool who hoards up possessions for himself,
and has no concern for hoarding up treasure that counts for God. 12:21**

What are we living for?

Vance Havner: "Never have we had more to live on, and less to live for!"

Are all our treasures stored up in material things?

What does it mean to be "rich toward God"?

—to be grateful for what He has given to us.

—to use what He gives us for the good of others and for God's glory.

If we desire to invest in a portfolio that will make us "rich toward God",

what will we invest in? How will we do it? (1 Tim. 6:6-10, 17-19; James 1:10)

Ps. 37:4— "Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart"

Matt. 6:33— "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness;

and all these things shall be added to you."

What is worth living for that WE ought to pursue?

A tribe in Africa has a strange practice: Every 7 years a king is elected, and the previous leader is killed. The new ruler is pampered by his subjects and lavished with possessions.

During his reign his authority is absolute. But in the end, he must die. Every member of the village knows the custom, yet there's never a lack of applicants for the post.

How foolish! Yet in the proudest civilizations of our day, civilized, intelligent people are no different than those tribesmen.

[Even Christian people!]

We desire so intensely to have wealth and power for a brief time here on earth that we willfully neglect God and risk spiritual bankruptcy hereafter.

"Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face,

And the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace"