

ARE YOU RICH TOWARD GOD?

Luke 12:13-21

Consider these words of our Lord Jesus: *"Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also"* (Luke 12:34). He's teaching us that the movement of our money reveals the direction and the priority of our heart. What we do with our finances is a sure indicator of what our heart truly values. We must then ask ourselves the question: Is Jesus Christ the supreme treasure that my heart ultimately values? Or is it money or material possession the functional idol of my heart? In the language of Jesus, "Are you rich toward God? Or are you a fool who lays up earthly treasure for yourself?" To answer this question, let's consider three vital lessons about the riches that really matter to God.

1. The Lesson on Being

While Jesus was teaching a crowd of people, a man interrupted our Lord to ask Him to settle a dispute over a family inheritance. Jesus declined his request (Luke 12:13-14). Instead, knowing the real heart problem of this man, He seized that moment to teach him and the entire crowd a crucial lesson on the sin of covetousness. He issued a serious warning saying, *"Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions"* (Luke 12:15). Covetousness or greed refers not only to the sinful love for money or for material riches. Covetousness signifies the excessive desire to acquire and keep for oneself more and more material possessions to the point where you begin to believe the lie that the essence and meaning of life is found in the possession of material wealth.

2. The Lesson on Being

Jesus further explains the hazard of covetousness by relating a parable about the rich fool (Luke 12:16-20). The main question of this parable is: Why did God call this rich man a fool? God condemns this man as a fool not because he was a profitable farmer but because of what he did with his God-given riches. The way this rich man used the increase of his material wealth shows that he believed the lie that his life consists in the abundance of his possessions. That's why he built bigger barns to store his abundant crops for his own benefit and selfish indulgence. Life for this man is all about relaxing, eating, drinking and merrymaking without any regard for God or the eternal state of his soul (Luke 12:19; Psalm 49:16-17). The sin of greed is a soul damning sin. Greed could cast your soul into hell (Matt. 16:26; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 1 Tim. 6:9-10; Col. 3:5-6).

3. The Lesson on Being

Jesus concludes his parable with these words of application: *"So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God"* (Luke 12:21). The rich man in the parable is denounced as a fool because he is not rich toward God. Being rich toward God is having God as the supreme riches of your life. It means counting our Lord Jesus Christ far more precious and exceedingly and ultimately valuable more than anything on the earth (Psalm 73:25). Being rich toward God is finding life's meaning and purpose in knowing the true God and trusting in Jesus as Lord and Savior (John 17:3; Phil. 3:8). Being rich toward God is seeking your ultimate satisfaction in Jesus and keeping your heart contented in Christ (John 6:35). Being rich toward God is seeking first God's kingdom, prioritizing the mission of Christ's church and laying up treasures in heaven (Luke 12:31-34; Matt. 6:33; Lev. 27:30; Mal. 3:8-10; Phil. 4:19).
