

Luke 12:13-34

Verses 13-15:

--*Then one from the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."*

But He said to him, "Man, who made Me a judge and arbitrator over you?" And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."

--(13) In a very human moment, Jesus' teaching is interrupted. He uses the interruption as a moment of teaching, and returns to a similar theme in **22** from what He left off with in **4-12**.

Even Jesus' teaching didn't cut through everyone's nonsense!

--Again, it is always bad when you have to command Jesus to command other people.

--We have no idea if this man had a just cause. There were laws regarding inheritance in **Num. 27:8-11; Deut. 21:15-17**. If Jesus refused to judge the righteousness of his cause, we must do the same.

--(14) To judge between petty squabbles was not Christ's purpose. This man's whole concern was with material inheritance. Jesus' whole concern was with eternal life!

--Our "legal" rights might not always be the godly path.

1 Corinthians 6:7: Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated?

--Jesus will never be used. He will be Savior and King! He will make manifest—not be manipulated.

--(15) **Take heed and beware of covetousness.** . . . Jesus warns this man, and everyone else, to beware of covetousness! We do not adequately weigh the life-stealing and life-destroying nature of covetousness. *Adam & Eve, Balaam, Achan, David, Gehazi, Judas, etc.*

--Covetousness is a continual thirst for more that can be the driving factor behind so many of our actions. Jesus warns His listeners to take an honest assessment. Why are we not content *now* Vs. When we have a little more?

Hebrews 13:5: Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

--*for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.* Do we find life in our possessions? How would we know? Is life over when they are gone? Or is Christian character over when they are removed? *Phone, car, house, etc.*

--Many live perfectly fine without riches. Many live miserably with riches.

--To prove His point, Jesus tells a parable.

Verses 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 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."

--(16-17) Plenty for a farmer is not evil, but it is dangerous! The Scriptures are clear that riches are far more dangerous than poverty because they make it harder for a man to enter into the kingdom of God.

--The farmer is pondering what to do with excess crops.

(18-19) His answer? Barns! Joining the self-storage insanity of his day.

--Notice all of the *I*'s and *my*'s in this section. Jesus is giving the true picture of a soul trying to live life based on the abundance of the things possessed.

--(20) **Fool!** O that God would never need to address us as fools! The ultimate foolish act is to leave God out of the consideration when speaking to your soul. Considering your soul is good, but souls care nothing for material goods. The life of the soul is not in material wealth.

Psalm 14:1: *The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."*

--***This night.*** . . . What if our souls were required tonight? What have we lived for? *Barclay's story about three demons and the devil: no heaven, no hell, no hurry. . .*

--***then whose will those things be?*** What he laid up for *himself* ends up being taken by *others*.

--(21) The great danger of covetousness is the temptation to find our life in things.

--The foolish farmer didn't sin by working hard and having excess, but by neglecting what he should have lived for. Forgetfulness of God is a terrible sin!

--What if we only offer our job, our friends, our kids, or our spouse half of what we should? Would that be bad enough? What about God?!

*Boreham (The Whisper of God, pg. 99): *"So is it with the advent into this world of many an immortal soul. It comes, endowed with possibilities and opportunities that angels envy, but, instead of achieving vast and eternal purposes, it is content to gather together "goods and fruits into barns with which it may be at ease for many years!" Angels weep and devils grin at such insanity. Charles the Seventh was dancing at one of his innumerable balls when the English armies were marching into Paris. One of the nobles hurried into the Royal presence for instructions at such a crisis. The King frivolously showed him the program for the next day's sport, and asked the Count what he thought of it. "I think, sire," replied the nobleman with indignation, "that it is absolutely impossible for anyone to lose his kingdom more pleasantly than Your Majesty is doing now!" That was a fine rebuke; and its fine edge need not be wasted*

on a giddy monarch. It cuts all men who, amid their “fruits, and goods, and barns, and wealth,” are losing the Kingdom of Heaven pleasantly.”

--Material wealth is given so that we can be rich toward God!

1 Timothy 6:17-19: Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

--How do we handle our excess? Yes, we should take care of family. *Joseph Vs. Corban*

Proverbs 19:14: Houses and riches are an inheritance from fathers,

--All material excess requires stewardship **toward God**, or in God’s presence/direction.

--Has God given you excess just to leave as an inheritance for others when you die, or to be rich toward Him now, today, while you still live?

Verses 22-28:

--Then He said to His disciples, “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing. Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? If you then are not able to do the least, why are you anxious for the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will He clothe you, O you of little faith?

--(22-23) Jesus now speaks to His disciples, of course, as the perfect Example of all He is speaking to them about. Look at how He lived!

--Disciples of Jesus Christ must be defined by trust in God more than trust in riches or possessions.

--(24) Disciples should learn something by observing ravens. They are the total opposite of the foolish farmer! The foolish farmer sowed, reaped, built barns, and died. The ravens don’t sow, reap, or build barns are yet they live on God’s provision alone. *Ravens end up feeding God’s prophets (1 Kings 17:6).*

--God hears the cries of ravens!

Job 38:41: Who provides food for the raven, when its young ones cry to God, and wander about for lack of food?

Psalm 147:9: He gives to the beast its food, and to the young ravens that cry.

--If so, how much more will He care for us?

--(25-26) Worry, as the dominating and deciding factor in our actions, is foolish.

--Our culture is dominated by worry and anxiety. 38 million Americans (almost 15% of the population!) are medicated because of it. (Disclaimer: Scripture never condemns the proper use of medication, or physicians, I am only making a social observation about the prevalence of worry in our society. Anxiety can have physical, social, and spiritual causes. Usually, it is a mix.)

--John the apostle uses the Greek word for **stature** in reference to age (**Jn. 9:21+23**) but Luke always uses it in terms of height or size (**2:52; 19:3**). Either way, worry will not accomplish another inch, step, or moment of life. *Is our worry evidenced by our constant attempts at manipulation or control?*

--**(27-28)** Look at the lilies. Flowers grow quickly and beautifully without a single thought or concern. And God oversees this despite their fragile existence.

--If that is how He treats flowers, what about us? ***O you of little faith?***

--Large worry is a byproduct of little faith. When God is small, or far away, everything becomes frightening and ghostly. *Think of the disciples in the storm Vs. Elisha surrounded.*

Verses 29-31:

--***And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.***

--**(29-30)** Do we live thinking and worrying about the same things as the unsaved world around us that doesn't know God, and doesn't have anything other than this life to live for? The Christian man or woman should be ashamed to worry like the unsaved. *I would be heartbroken if my two daughters constantly worried that I wouldn't provide their basic needs!*

--**(31)** God did not give us life and bodies just for homes, food, and clothing (or as we might say, *A happy life*). We are His, and have life, for His kingdom—His purposes and pleasure.

--What are our bodies for? When having to choose between the kingdom of God and the material, the disciples gave up their jobs, homes, nice clothes, regular meals, and eventually their lives. Our great worry should be seeking His kingdom.

--We should always be asking ourselves: *How does my life fit within the context of the kingdom of God?* God will take care of the rest. *Solomon asked God for wisdom to rule over His people and got the rest.*

****Psalm 37:25: I have been young, and now am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his descendants begging bread.****

Verses 32-34:

--***Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.***

--(32) If we knew the giving nature of God our Father, we wouldn't be so afraid. God is pleased to give all the good gifts of His kingdom to His kids.

--God is more ready to give than we are to receive. That too is proven at the cross.

Acts 20:35: *And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."*

Romans 8:32: *He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?*

James 1:17: *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.*

--God the Father, God our Father, is The cheerful Giver.

--(33) Christ's encouragement to sell to give is a litmus test. What do we covet? What do we trust? What do we love? What is our aim? How will we use our excess?

--You don't have to be rich to be a giver like God. Jesus Christ wasn't rich yet still gave to the poor despite Judas' thievery with their money box (**Jn. 12:4-6 + 13:28-29**)!

--Our heavenly riches are not just *as real* as what we give. Heavenly riches are *more real* because they are meant to be eternal! Jesus calls them **true riches (Lk. 16:11)**.

--(34) **For** . . . puts everything in perspective. Do we trust God to give? Are we aiming for eternal wealth? Where is our treasure in the end?

--When you think of eternity, if your soul was required of you tonight, are you thinking more about what you are leaving or what you sent ahead?

--The wise use of earthly possessions seals our hearts for His courts above.

Alcorn (The Law Of Rewards, pg. 34+42-43): *"But what we do with our money doesn't simply indicate where our heart is. According to Jesus, it determines where our heart goes. This is an amazing and exciting truth. If I want my heart to be in one particular place and not in another, then I need to put my money in that place and not in another. . . Every day, the person whose treasure is on earth is headed away from his treasure. Every day, the person whose treasure is in heaven is headed toward his treasure. Whoever spends his life heading away from his treasure has reason to despair. Whoever spends his life headed toward his treasure has reason to rejoice."*

--Seek God's kingdom first in all your life. Your Father is pleased to give it.