

Life Group #8: The Rich Fool
Luke 12:13-34

Objectives: We want to identify the source of fear/anxiety in our lives. We want to learn how to be on our guard against all kinds of greed. We want to treasure God and His Kingdom more than possessions. We want to reorient our life around God vs. food, clothing, security and money.

Launch Use your own words... (5 minutes)
What are things that cause you to be fearful or anxious?

Fear and anxiety are things that are dominating our culture right now. We are not the first culture to deal with these things. In Luke 12 Jesus addresses these very things. Our parable falls in the middle of a longer passage focused on fear and anxiety.

Explore

Read Luke 12:4-34

- **What are the main themes covered in these verses?** (*Trusting God vs. living in fear and anxiety*)
- **What are some things that brought Jesus' audience fear/anxiety?** (*persecution (4); People approval (8); Security/comfort (19); Provision of needs (22)*)
- **Which of these things cause you anxiety?**

First we want to look at the Parable.

Read 12:13-21

- **What is the point Jesus is trying to make with the parable?** (*the purpose of life is being "rich toward God" and not selfishly storing up wealth for ourselves*)
- **Right before the parable, Jesus say's to "watch out! Be on your guard..." against what?** (*all kinds of greed or covetousness*)
- **How would you define greed?** (*Greed is an excessive desire to possess wealth, goods, or abstract things of value with the intention to keep it for one's self. Wikipedia*)
- **Why does Jesus tell everyone they need to watch out or be on their guard against greed? I do not remember Jesus saying this for other sins.** (*because people are blind to greed. It is easy to justify our greed. Greed does not look as obvious as other sins...*)
- **What are some of the negative consequences of greed?** (*Ruins*)

community; people are used instead of cared for; families split; etc... c.f. 1 Tim. 6:9-10; Col. 3:5)

- **Jesus tells us to "watch out" for all kinds of greed. From the text, what are signs of greediness that we should look out for?**
 - *Thinking of yourself as the owner and not just the steward (v. 17-18- notice the use of "I" and "my")*
 - *Hoarding treasure for self without being rich toward God and His plans. (v. 18)*
 - *Trusting in money/stuff to bring you security and not trusting in God for that. (v.22-30)*
 - *Running/seeking after money (29 and 30)*
 - *Summary, if you worry about \$, resent those that have it, run after it, and won't give from your stuff and savings (or time) then greed is an issue for you. If you think of your property and \$ as your own to do what you want, then you are in danger of greed.*
- **This is the only parable where God speaks, how does God respond to the man in the parable?** (*You fool! (20). A fool in the OT is someone who acts without God*)
- **What can we take away from this parable?** (*To focus on material things and not be concerned with the spiritual things is a grave long term error- it is foolish*)

Of all the parables of Jesus this one is especially counter-cultural to the typical American view of money and stuff. **So what can we do about it?**

Apply (15 minutes)

- **Fear and anxiety point to the places where we are trusting in something other than God. It may be seeking people's approval, it may be hoarding stuff/money or time for ourselves or it could be an unhealthy obsession with security or comfort. Jesus say's that this is a foolish way to live.**

- **According to the passage, what are things we can do so we don't live a foolish life?**

There are at least 2 ways:

1. **Seek God's Kingdom first** (v. 31) or *be rich toward God* (v. 21)]. We need to not only stop running after money, but we need to invest in eternal things. We need to exchange our treasure from things of the world to eternal treasures. We need to run after God's rule and the things He cares about.
 - **What does it mean to "seek God's Kingdom"?** (*Seek after the things God cares about (Loving Him and loving people); allow him to be the King of your life vs you and your desires ruling your life*)
2. **We need a radical experience of God's grace** (read v.32). We do not need to be fearful and chase after things for security, because our loving Father knows our needs and has already given us the Kingdom! When we realize that God was **pleased** to give us the kingdom, then we can give radically. When we know that we already have been given the kingdom, we can choose to invest in eternal things.

- **What stands out to you in verse 32?**

(We are His little flock- He cares for us and will take care of us. He is our Father who is pleased to give us the Kingdom. He is not just giving us what we need but He is giving us the Kingdom!)

- **What is the contrast that Jesus is making in v. 34?** *[if you treasure yourself you will seek to gain stuff for you, if you treasure God and what He treasures (like people) you will use your stuff for His purposes]*
- **What is the next step you need to take in light of what we looked at today?** *[of course there are a lot of options. It could be changing what you seek (seeking God vs. security in things) or it could be changing your view of God and receiving his grace in your life. It also could mean practically choosing to invest in eternal things and not temporal things]*

•

- **Pray**
Announce