

The Man God Called A Fool!

When God calls someone a “Fool” -- we had better set up & take notice! It is no light thing to be called a fool by Almighty God! **Why would God label someone a fool?** That is exactly what I ask myself as I read the story concerning the Rich Farmer, recorded in Luke’s gospel, chapter 12.

Farming, in itself, is a very noble profession! I was born on a farm; I have worked on many farms; I have lived most of my life in or near farming communities. I have had many church members across the years who were farmers! Good hard working men, & some of them godly men!

As a young pastor in a farming community, I would sometimes call up a farmer, & ask: “What time is breakfast?” I knew their work day began early, & it was very likely that the only time I could visit them was at the start of their day. Breakfast was often at 6:00 a.m., so I would make arrangements to join them for breakfast, visit with them & have prayer with them, & then we would both go on to our work day.

As a pastor, I sometimes felt like the farmer who was being audited by the IRS. The auditor asked the farmer: “How far do you drive to work?” The farmer looked at him, & replied: **“Drive to work? I wake up & it’s all around me!”**

Surely God is not calling this man a fool just because he was a farmer! Nor even just because he had a bumper crop! There must be a deeper reason for God to give a man the label of a “fool” --

Let’s look at this story together: **Luke 12:16-21.**

And (Jesus) spake a parable unto them, saying,

“The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

And he thought within himself, saying,

What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?’

And he said, ‘This will I do: I will pull down my barns, & build greater; & there will I bestow all my fruits & my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years:

Take thine ease, eat, drink, & be merry.’

But God said unto him, ‘Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee:

then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?’

So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, & is not rich toward God.”

Oh, how forceful are those words found in verse 20, **“God said unto him, ‘Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.’”** Verse 21 sheds some light on the meaning of the story when it says: “So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, & is not rich toward God.” Yes, a person is a fool to store up earthly wealth, but not have a rich relationship with God!

There is a key expression found in verse 17: **“He thought to himself.”** You see, he is filled with **himself**; -- the fool magnifies **himself**. In three brief verses, the personal pronoun “I” is used six times -- & the term “my” is used five times! His conversation is an index to the contents of his inner life. He was so filled with **himself** -- that he had no room for **God!**

I would like for you to observe with me this morning three reasons as to why God would call this rich farmer a fool: --

1. He was a fool because -- **he Thought More of the Temporal -- than he did of the Spiritual!**

The man thought **things** would satisfy the soul! In verse 19, the man says: “I will say to my soul, Soul, you have much goods laid up for many years.” What a fool! He thought he could feed his soul on things! He was thinking that the material is the main part of life. He was thinking of the **temporal** things of life, & not about the **spiritual!** **He thought things would satisfy his soul!**

Have you lived long enough to discover that is not true? The more we get, the more we want, because **things** never satisfy! **Things have never satisfied the human soul!** If **we** are not careful, everyone of us can fall into this same trap, thinking about things -- the temporal -- material things -- **rather than thinking about the spiritual!** We can get too concerned about clothing -- about houses -- about cars -- about salary -- about security -- about bank accounts -- about money -- things -- things -- things!

Fulfillment doesn’t come from having more things! A larger house won’t do it; -- you’ll just have more to clean! The latest car won’t do it; -- you’ll just end up with bigger payments. A job promotion won’t do it; -- you’ll just have more stress & longer hours. Yes, you’ll make more money, but after taxes & buying what you need to maintain your new image, you’ll be back to square one.

We can get to the place where we no longer possess things, but **things possess us!** We can reach the place where we have so much property & things, that all we think about is our possessions; -- “my things.” But my friends, the temporal will all pass away someday! The automobile -- the house -- property -- will all pass away! But that which is **spiritual** will last for time & for eternity! Some of the most miserable people in the world are millionaires who are constantly worried about their money! **Things do not satisfy the human soul!**

Somebody said: "Money talks." One fellow said: "Yeah. Mine says, 'Goodbye'."

The world is full of **wealthy paupers** -- people who have everything except for the **true riches** that are found only in Christ Jesus! Many of them have a lovely house, but not a home. They can lay claim to all the comforts that money can buy, but they lack the real joy that only peace with God can bring.

There are some people who are filled with **anxiety** because they have become prosperous through fraud -- deceit -- or the misuse of friendships -- & now a troubled conscience is their constant tormentor.

Cecil Rhodes was considered by many to be the instigator of the war between the English & the South African Boers. His main purpose was to obtain the rich natural resources of that region of South Africa. When he was about to die, however, he cried out in remorse: "I've found much in Africa -- diamonds, gold, & land are mine, but now I must leave them all behind. Not a thing I've gained can be taken with me. Eternal treasures that abide I have not sought; therefore I actually have nothing at all!" Oh, what a fool! Such a deathbed scene dramatically portrays the **transient nature** of the riches that this world has to offer. The rich farmer was a fool because he thought more of the temporal than he did of the spiritual!

2. He was a fool because -- **he Thought More of Pleasure -- than he did of God!**

The fool said in verse 19: "Eat, drink, & be merry!" This is the philosophy of far too many people even in our day! They think that pleasure is the whole of life! But it really speaks of a dead soul & an empty heart! Millions of people are living only for today! They live only for the moment forgetting that they have in the words of Charles Wesley, "**A never-dying soul to save, And fit it for the sky.**"

That old adage: "Eat, drink, & be merry, for tomorrow we may die" -- is one of the Devil's many lies! In the first place, you can't be merry simply by eating & drinking! In the second place, tomorrow you don't really die! **Your soul lives forever & ever!** There was a time when you did not exist, but there will never come a time when your **soul** will cease to be! **Your soul is going to live somewhere forever!**

The greatest thought that we can entertain, is that **we must live somewhere forever!**

There is a well-known & popular song titled "*I Want It All*" -- produced by the British rock band, called Queen. The song has been used in advertisement for Dr Pepper & for Chase Bank. In the new Chase Credit Card commercial, a wife has had it with their family television. She says to the man, "You're right, we need a new TV." He brightens up & goes shopping for a new High Definition TV. Then the music starts, "*I Want It All, & I Want It Now!*" But suppose he gets it all. Suppose he achieves his dreams, & gets his hands on everything his heart is set upon. Will he be happy? Will he be fulfilled?

No! For God has set **eternity** in the human heart. We cannot be content simply because we achieve success, & possess things in abundance. Without God material wealth cannot satisfy! With God -- material wealth does not matter. **God has made us for Himself & we are fulfilled only in fellowship with Him!**

The biggest question of life should be: "**What is the will of God for my life?**" The Bible says: "You are not your own, for you are bought with a price" (1 Cor. 6:19-20). It is not the tenth, but the whole dollar that belongs to God; -- not only the dollar, but the billfold the dollar is in; -- not only the billfold, but the pants the billfold is in; -- & not only the pants, but the man in the pants. Everything you have belongs to God -- lock -- stock -- & barrel!

If you want real joy & peace & pleasure then give yourself totally, completely, 100% over to God! That is true Sanctification! That is where real satisfaction is found! The pleasures of this world will never satisfy; only Jesus Christ can truly satisfy the longing of the human heart! There is **more** real joy & pleasure in Jesus Christ than this world could ever give! The rich farmer was foolish because he thought more of pleasure than he did of God.

3. He was a fool because -- **he Thought More of Time -- than he did of Eternity!**

No wonder Jesus stated that God called this man a fool! He had made no preparation for eternity! So God gave the divine judgment: "This night thy soul shall be required of thee!" (vr. 20). The fatal mistake that most people make is that they forget eternity!

This rich farmer **thought he had plenty of time!** But we just don't know, do we? Life can end so abruptly! We don't know when, or under what circumstances, our life will come to an end!

The rich man, who was really "the poor rich man" thought only of time; **he forgot eternity!** This was a serious oversight as he was now about to discover. **He had made plans for time, but not for eternity!**

Young people sometimes say: "Religion is for old people who are ready to die; I have plenty of time; -- I want to live it up." But the man in our story thought he had "many years" -- however, he died **that very night!** Little did he know that the flowers which would be put on his grave were already in the florist shop! Little did he know that his would be the next funeral conducted in that city! Little did he know that he would never see another sunrise! **You & I don't have plenty of time!** That's the most idiotic foolish thing you can think! My dear friend, if sometime between now & tomorrow morning, the same divine voice calls for **you** that called for this rich farmer, would it find **you** unprepared?

One day a little girl overheard her **uncle** talking about her **father**. The uncle said: "My brother Bob has his business insured. He's made preparations; but I wonder about Bob's soul. I wonder if he has trusted Christ as his Savior." The little girl went home & that night at supper she said: "Daddy, Uncle Joe said today that you had your property & your business insured; but, Daddy, do you have **your soul** insured?" He looked at her & sadly said: "No, honey, I don't." He had made plans for **time**, but not for **eternity**!

Isn't it strange? We are only going to be **here** for about 80 years or so, yet we make most of our plans for **time** rather than for **eternity**. After a soul has been in **hell** for thousands of years, he/she will still look back & say, "How foolish I was to give so much time, effort, planning, energy & money for the few short years I lived on earth!"

Conclusion: -- Don't make the same mistake as did this rich fool: -- he thought more of the **temporal** -- than he did of the **spiritual**! He thought more of **pleasure** than he did of **God**! He thought more of **time** than he did of **eternity**! **There is nothing quite so foolish** as to live for the temporal & forget the spiritual -- to live for self & forget God -- to live for time & forget eternity!

The Bible says: "**Behold, now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation**" (2 Cor. 6:2). On the end of Billy Sunday's tabernacles was printed a sign in large letters: **GET RIGHT WITH GOD; DO IT NOW!**

So many of you look so well dressed this morning. You have on your Sunday best; you look so nice & neat. You are all dressed up for church, but I ask, are you dressed up for Heaven? That beautiful dress, that nice suit, will either go out of fashion, or wear out someday! The **only robe** that you can wear to Heaven, & the robe that will **never** wear out, is the **robe of righteousness** provided for you through God's only Son -- Jesus Christ. **Do you have on the robe of righteousness today? Are you wearing the robe of righteousness?**

Just as I am, without one plea -- But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee, O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am & waiting not -- To rid my soul of one dark blot.
To Thee whose blood can cleanse each spot, O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, though tossed about -- With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings & fears within, without, O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am - Thou wilt receive, -- Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve.
Because Thy promise I believe, O Lamb of God, I come!
-- Charlotte Elliott

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