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The Parables of Jesus Christ: A Fool in a Fix

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PARABLES OF JESUS CHRIST

PARABLE TWENTY-FIVE: A Fool In a Fix (Lk. 12:16-21)

SURVEY

The farm of a rich man had yielded such a bumper harvest one year that his barns could not contain it. This foolish and materialistic farmer, assuming he would live many years, decided to build bigger barns and spend the rest of his life in luxury and total self-indulgence. However, that very night God demanded from him his immortal soul!

SIGNIFICANCE

- This parable records the only occasion in the Bible in which God Himself personally calls a man a fool.

SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- Jesus related this parable to warn a listener concerning the sin of covetousness (Lk. 12:13-15). Warren Wiersbe writes:

"Covetousness is a desire for things and it can be the beginning of all kinds of sin. Eve coveted being like God and took the forbidden fruit. Lot's wife coveted Sodom and was killed on the spot. Achan coveted some spoils of war and destroyed himself and his family. David coveted his neighbor's wife and plunged himself, his family, and his nation into trouble. The last of the Ten Commandments is, 'Thou shalt not covet'. By coveting, we can break all the other nine commandments." (*Meet Yourself in the Parables*, Victor Books, Wheaton, IL., 1979, p. 115.)

In the New Testament, Paul confessed that this command, more than any other, caused him to realize his own wretched, sinful condition (Rom. 7:7-9).

- A pastor once visited a stingy and bitter old man whose great wealth had apparently not brought him the slightest joy or peace. During the conversation as the miser complained about his lot in life, the pastor suddenly asked him to look out the window of his room.

Pastor: "Tell me, what did you see?"

Man: "Well I saw little children playing, mothers laughing, and men going about their daily work."

The minister then handed the old man a mirror and asked him to gaze into it.

Pastor: "Now, what do you see?"

Man: "I see myself."

After a moment of silent contemplation the pastor quietly observed:

"You have just looked at two glasses. The first allowed you to see happy and productive people, the second, only yourself. But why this difference? Simply this—the second glass was coated by a thin layer of silver!"

- Why was the rich man called a fool by God?

1. Because he thought he could satisfy his eternal soul with materialistic goods

Note this statement:

"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up" (Lk. 12:19). (See Jesus' statement in Mt. 4:4; 16:26.)

The only real soul food is the Word of God. Our Lord had warned concerning this on two previous occasions:

"But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Mt. 4:4).

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt. 16:26)

2. Because he smugly assumed he would naturally live to a ripe old age

Again, observe his misplaced confidence: *"Thou hast much goods laid up for many years."* (See Prov. 27:1; 29:1; James 4:13-15.)

3. Because he was totally self-centered

The personal pronouns "me, mine, and I" are to be found twelve times in this short account.