

God Time – The Parable of the Rich Fool

These scriptures are selected to help you gain a deeper understanding of who Jesus is. They are intentionally designed for you to engage in your time alone with God. You will find them complementary to the teachings on the weekend (gatherings) and to the LIFE Group materials.

Some tips:

Use a Bible that is easy to read. The ESV or The NLT are both good translations.

Use a prayer journal. After you read the passages jot down what “jumped out” at you while reading. Then take a few minutes to write a prayer response to what you have read.

There are only five days of reading provided so if you miss a day you have time to catch up. Do not get legalistic! If you miss a day or even a week...God still loves you!

Monday: Ecclesiastes 5:10

Tuesday: Matthew 6:22-24

Wednesday: 1 Timothy 6:9-10

Thursday: Matthew 19:21-24

Friday: Proverbs 18:23

Diving Deeper

The Stories of Jesus - The Rich Fool Luke 12:13-31

The Parable of the Rich Fool is only found in the book of Luke. This Parable follows a request to Jesus to settle a family dispute. It was common in those days for one to seek a Rabbi or Teacher to help resolve a conflict. It is interesting to note that this man is seeking to bring Jesus into the dispute assuming that Jesus has authority that his brother respects and will listen to. Of equal importance is that he is turning to Jesus for answers because he thinks Jesus will side with him and his brother will accept Jesus' advice. The dispute is about wealth and involves the distribution of the family inheritance. This man has asked Jesus to be his judge regarding this earthly matter. Do you see the irony In this? The man does not recognize Jesus as the true and righteous Judge of heaven and earth. One thing is certain, this man did not

approach Jesus as the Messiah, Christ, the Son of God. He asks Jesus to help him for what he desires in this life, oblivious to what Jesus can offer forever.

Jesus then tells the story of the rich man who had been very productive but had no place to store his crops. He decided to tear down his barns and build bigger ones so that he would be able to store more grain. Then when he is finished, he would have enough to last for many years, and could sit back, eat, drink and be merry. But God said, you fool, do you not see that your very soul will be taken tonight and then who will own what you have prepared? So defines the man who stores up earthly treasures for himself and is not rich toward God.

What can we learn from this Parable and how does it affect our life?

1. When we are like the brother who seeks Jesus to help us through our earthly problems, we fail to value Jesus for what he has to offer. In a sense, we see Jesus as nothing more than a genie in a bottle. When we need something miraculous, something that will meet our desires for comfort or security, then we rub the bottle and poof here comes Jesus to our aid. When it doesn't work out the way we wanted, we are told we didn't rub the bottle right, didn't pray right, didn't have enough faith, or have some hidden sin that is holding us back. We simply ignore the fact that what we want is not God's will. We lack the understanding of who Jesus is.
2. Jesus knows our earthly greed and desire for wealth and when we focus on treasures on earth, we miss out on the greatest treasure of all. But greed is not just amassing more for yourself, it runs deeper than that. Greed is best described in Psalm 10:3-4: "For the wicked boasts of the heart's desire, and the greedy man curses and spurns the Lord. The wicked, in the haughtiness of his countenance, does not seek Him. All his thoughts are, "There is no God." Put simply, we are greedy when we want more than what God intends for us to have.
3. Life can be a waste of time when we spend it serving ourselves, rather than trusting the Lord, letting go and serving the Lord with confidence and peace knowing that God will provide all that we need. When we put our faith in Jesus and serve Him in this lifetime, not only will we be rewarded with life everlasting, but we can live life here with contentment and peace; and when we do, think about how pleased our Lord would be.
4. God is in control, and no matter what we do, we'll only achieve what He allows us to achieve. So, why worry about money, power, fame, and other worldly matters that at the end of the day mean nothing as it relates to eternal security. Instead serve God and leave it to Him to take care of those provisions. He faithfully provides daily for billions of birds who do not worry about tomorrow and are daily provided for. If He cares for the birds, would He not also care for you? Jesus says to stop worrying about these things. Instead, "seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you." In other words, our basic needs will always be met when we turn to God first.

Questions:

1. Do you know of or have friends who see Jesus as the genie in the bottle?
2. Do you see Jesus as a solver of problems in this world and how do you feel when the problem does not go away?
3. Is greed a response to worldly pursuits? Review Psalm 10:3-4 and think about how our greed leads to a rejection of God. How can you pursue your career and money while at the same time pursuing God?
4. Do you fully trust Jesus, and if, so, how has He enriched your life?