

Luke 12:13-24 The Distraction of Riches

- ✚ Jesus warns first about false teaching and then His second overarching warning comes in Luke 12:15. Think about it: the two major things that are leading people away from God and eternal life are 1, false teaching, and 2, the distraction of riches. Why aren't people coming to a saving faith in the real Jesus who has died and rose again to save them from and eternity in Hell? The deadly virus of false teaching and the distraction of riches. Remember the parable of the soils?, in that parable the thorns choked out the good seed so that it didn't grow, remember what that was? Matthew 13:22, the Pharisees taught a false doctrine, but they also ran a material racket, highly respected religiously so they took advantage of people materially: Luke 16:14.
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1. How distracting are riches?, Luke 12:13.

- ✓ Very disturbing, Jesus is warning about false religion, counseling them on how to be rightly related to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to miss any of it is eternal death and this guy cannot wait for Jesus to stop talking so that they can discuss important stuff?! How powerful is the distraction of money and things!! Second only to false teaching is the distraction of riches in potency to send someone to Hell.

2. Leveraging Jesus

- ✓ Notice: this guy is not asking a question; he's making a demand. "Tell my brother..." He's just simply taking advantage of Jesus' authority so he can get what he wants. Not unlike the teachers and their teachings we see on TV, leveraging Jesus to get earthly riches.

3. Drinking Salt Water

- ✓ "Covetousness," literally means to thirst for more, but in the case of material things, it's like drinking salt water, it only makes you thirstier, Ecclesiastes 5:10. It's not the sin of having more but the sin of being discontent. There are plenty of people who have more and do not sin with it: in the Bible Abraham, Solomon, David, Joseph of Arimathea, others who used their large houses for the use of the early church. It's not about the amount that you have, it's about how you feel about the amount that you have. What are you after anyway, real life, or real living that can only come from immaterial things? Only God gives us a life that quenches our thirst: John 4:14; John 10:10.

4. A Sobering Parable, Luke 12:16-21.

- ✓ "Very productive," is the word euphoreo in the Greek, which is where we get our word euphoria. Nothing wrong with God blessing us is there? God's blessings didn't make him greedy; it just revealed his greed. Not a better test of a person than when everything starts coming up roses! How did this man do? He immediately started thinking about himself and not God.

5. Principles to Glean

- 1) When our hearts are focused on ourselves we do not give God credit for what He's done.
 - ✓ There is no, "thank you God," "let's be sure to tithe this and ask God what He would have us do." Even though God controls all the factors that brought this wealth to him (rain, sun, soil, chance), the man doesn't even mention God. There is only "I" and "my," six "I's" and five "my's." He lived in the singular: he has a conversation with only himself, "I will say to my soul..."
 - 2) When our hearts are focused on ourselves we make plans but leave God out. We move ahead as if we don't need God anymore, **James 4:13-16.**
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3) When our hearts are focused on ourselves we store our treasure in the wrong places, Luke 12:20. The first storage unit ever mentioned in literature!

- ✓ "Fool" is not a description of mental ability, foolishness can be the condition of the very smart as well as the not so smart. A fool is someone who operates as if God does not exist Psalm 14:1. It's not just the saying of it, in fact many who say they believe in God live as though they don't.

When we don't act like all our material possessions are from God, and we don't recognize our obligations to Him to use them as He sees fit, We Are Fools! One of the most remarkable things about this parable is that what God calls a fool, we/our society calls a success. Riches have one major flaw: they lose all their purchasing power after death! Instead, we should be investing in things that will outlast this life, the Word of God and the souls of people.
