

## The Key to Being Truly Rich

*Luke 12: 13-21*

### Introduction

Heavenly riches must take precedence over earthly riches. It is important to maintain a correct perspective with regard to our possessions. The man in Luke chapter twelve was in conflict with his family over earthly possessions. He was focused on asking Jesus to solve his financial situation by intervening in a fight between siblings over their inheritance. Jesus used this opportunity to teach about the pitfalls of greed and delusion of value found in storing up riches.

Like the man in Luke 12, our focus on earthly riches can produce conflict – internally as we experience discontent and externally as we experience conflict with others. A focus on earthly riches can also distort our spiritual perspective. The man sought Jesus' help to solve an earthly matter without also inviting a spiritual perspective; he just wanted his money. An unhealthy focus on earthly treasure can distract us from the real meaning of life. True life does not simply consist of what you have.

Jesus then goes on to tell a parable about a greedy man in verses 16-20. Greed defines life in terms of things. The rich man felt that he was maximizing life through all that he could accumulate and all that he could enjoy. He was more interested in being a "container" of blessing than a "conduit" for blessing. Greed reflects a misunderstanding of the temporary nature of life. The rich man did not know that very night he would die and not be able to enjoy what he had accumulated.

Believers must beware not to be "gripped by greed." Life should not be defined by your possessions nor should possessions only be selfishly stored for yourself. You are gripped by greed when what you accumulate in time is more important than what you accumulate for eternity. If you are not rich in God's sight, you are poor no matter how many possessions you have or how much money you have in your bank account.

### Getting Started

1. Think back on known characters throughout history either fictional or nonfictional. Who would you consider greedy? What characteristics define that person? How did people react to that person?
2. Last week you were challenged to read the book of Ecclesiastes and to discover principles about the brevity of life you find. What did you find and what plan did you make based on this knowledge? Share your discoveries with your group.
3. Do you know of anyone who is poor according to worldly standards but rich in God's eyes? Describe this person to your group.

### Let's Get Personal

1. It is easy to recognize greediness in others but do you notice it in your own life? Do you struggle with greediness as Dr. Evans described the problem of greed in this week's sermon?
2. Take a moment to think honestly about how you live your life. Are you as passionate about God as you are about things? How do you know? How would those who know you well answer this question?
3. How do you employ the blessings that God gives you for the benefit of others?

### Take the Next Step

1. If God suddenly called you home, would you be spiritually rich? Why or why not?
2. Do you know of anyone who is spiritually rich? Based on the example of the person who comes to mind, share with your group what it *looks* like to be spiritually rich.
3. What changes do you need to make in your financial decisions, attitude, or daily activities to have an eternal perspective regarding earthly treasures?

### Renew Your Mind

*"...be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions."*

*Luke 12:15*