

**MISTAKES OF THE RICH FARMER**  
**Lk.12:13-21**  
**Ed Dye**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. One of Jesus' methods of teaching (perhaps one of his favorite methods) was the use of parables.
2. Almost half of all the parables of Jesus are teaching on how to handle material possessions.
3. The obvious importance of the proper attitude toward and use of material possessions is made evident by the multiplied hundreds of times they are discussed and we are so often warned about their danger to our spiritual welfare. Cf. Lk.8:14.
4. In Lk.12:13-21 Jesus teaches one of his greatest lessons on covetousness and material possessions.
5. In this parable, to warn us to "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth," he reveals the mistakes of a rich farmer who failed to heed the very thing about which the Lord herein warned and for which his soul was required of him.
6. Before we discuss his mistakes that cost him his soul, please take note of the qualities of this man which, in and of themselves, were not responsible for his loss.
  - a. He was rich, V.16. But as far as we know he was an honest rich man and had obtained his riches honestly.
    - (1) Being rich is not sinful.
      - (a) God blessed both Abraham and Solomon with great material wealth.
      - (b) Some Christians in N.T. days were wealthy and were told how to use their wealth in order to lay hold on eternal life, 1Tim.6:17-19.
    - (2) It's trusting in riches that is wrong and will keep one out of heaven, Mk.10:23-25.
  - b. He was quiet successful as a farmer, Vv.16,17.
  - c. As far as we know he was a good moral man – yet he acted foolishly, V.20.
7. What, then, were his mistakes which brought about his condemnation?

## **II. DISCUSSION**

### **A. OBVIOUSLY, HE WAS COVETOUS WHICH WAS WHY JESUS SPOKE THIS PARABLE, 12:13-16a.**

1. See 1Cor.6:10; Eph.5:5; Col.3:5,6; Heb.13:5.
2. This is something no one will admit to being guilty of.
3. Something for which no one is ever disciplined.

### **B. HE WAS SELFISH; HE THOUGHT ONLY OF SELF; HE FORGOT ABOUT THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE OF HIS LABOR, Vv.16-19.**

1. This is indicated by some twelve personal pronouns in three verses: "I"; "My"; "Thine"
  - a. Note them in Vv.17-19.
  - b. It was over and over again: "My fruits"; "My barns"; "My goods"; "My soul".
2. His thoughts were centered on self and his welfare to the exclusion of others which was and is a violation of the principle of spiritual service in both Testaments, Mt.25:31-46.
3. Consider Mt.22:3-40; Ac.20:34,35; Eph.4:28; 1Tim.6:17-19; Heb.6:10.

### **C. HE FOOLISHLY FORGOT THAT THE NEEDS OF HIS SOUL COULD NOT BE SATISFIED BY THE ABUNDANCE OF MATERIAL THINGS, Vv.19-21.**

1. Thus he lacked spiritual understanding to go along with his business skills.
2. He either had not learned or he ignored what Jesus taught in Mt.4:4 and in Mt.16:25,26.
3. And he evidently learned too late what Solomon learned by experience that all material possessions are vanity and vexation of spirit, Eccl.2:10,11.
4. Mt.6:24-33 teaches something that this man and so many others never learn which is, that making a living must not interfere with making a life, or that it is better to make a life rather than a living!
5. This man did not understand that all material things perish. Cf. Jno.6:27

### **D. HE FORGOT GOD; HE LEFT GOD OUT OF HIS LIFE, Vv.16-19.**

1. There is not a word, not even a hint, about God in his thinking, in his planning, either in the present or in his future thinking, in spite of his abundant physical blessings.
2. Cf. Jas.1:17.
3. He forgot that he was to be a partaker with God; that he was merely the steward of what really belonged to God; his to use to God's glory.

**E. HE MADE THE MISTAKE OF LAYING UP HIS RICH TREASURES IN THE WRONG PLACE AND FOR HIMSELF INSTEAD OF BEING RICH TOWARD GOD, Vv.16-21, emp. Vv.20,21.**

1. Therefore his heart was in the wrong place, Mt.6:19-21.

**F. HE FORGOT ABOUT THE TENURE OF HIS LIFE AND THE JUDGMENT TO COME, Vv.19-21.**

1. He thought he had "many years", but he actually had only one day left, V.20.
2. He had a good title for earth, but no lease, and he had no title for heaven.
3. Jas.4:14-16. No one has a lease on life here.
4. All of us face the final judgment to come prepared or unprepared, 2Cor.5:10; Heb.9:27,28; Eccl.12:13,14.

**III. CONCLUSION**

1. You may not be materially rich as this man was nor making the same mistakes he was making to the same degree he was making them concerning material possessions, and yet be guilty of the wrong attitude toward and wrong use of such things and your soul be in jeopardy as a result!
2. One doesn't have to be rich or have a dime in the bank or a dollar in one's pocket in order to be guilty of covetousness or to possess "the love of money" which is the "root of all kinds of evil," 1Tim.6:10.
3. Don't forget what the rich man said to himself, Vv.17-19.
4. Also, don't forget what God said to the rich man, Vv.20,21. Cf. Rev.3:17,18.
5. Death cuts off the soul from his earthly, worldly possessions; if he has not used them to lay up treasures in heaven, they are of no future benefit to him, but rather a detriment.
6. Oh, how full of warning is this man's mistakes!
  - a. It's a warning against avarice.

- b. A warning against the wrong attitude and improper use of material possessions.
  - c. Warning against merely making a living instead of making a life.
  - d. Against living for self rather than for God.
  - e. Against being rich in material wealth and not rich toward God.
  - f. Against selfish love of ease and pleasure.
  - g. Against saying “What shall I do?” rather than “What should I do?”
  - h. Against making more room for material goods, but making no room for God!
  - i. Against being so shortsighted as to be able to see the need to provide for physical needs both present and future, but not for spiritual needs.
  - j. Against failing to “seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness,” Mt.6:33.
7. May we ever learn the lesson of this parable and forever be warned!