

FOLLOW-THROUGH

Small Group Discussion around the Sunday Message
Luke 12:13-21, The Parable of the Rich Fool
November 05, 2006



Introduction

1. Read Luke 12:13-21
2. There are two parts to this passage. The question asked of Jesus, and his parable in response. In the culture of the time, the elder son is entitled to 2/3 of the inheritance and the younger to 1/3. What vice does Jesus seem to be addressing in this passage?
3. A little introspection: On average the amount consumed by one adult male in the USA over a lifetime is the same as the average for 560 Ethiopians. What evidence of greed and a consumer mentality do you see in our culture?
4. John Wesley once said, "Earn all you can, Save all you can, and Give all you can." Do you know anyone who is a living example of this kind of living? Share with the group.

Getting Inside the Parable

1. The phrase, "Watch out!" is emphatic. In other words, be on your guard against greed. What are some ways that we can be, "on our guard"?
2. This is a parable of perspective. In the world's eyes this man would have been highly successful and highly regarded in the public eye. Yet, God calls him a fool. What do you think makes him a fool in God's eyes?
3. The basic premise of greed is that I am entitled to have what I want when I want it. A common symptom is to take for granted what you have and complain about what you don't have. Take a minute and share some of the things in your life that you often take for granted.
4. In the parable the rich fool accumulates great wealth for himself, but seems to think nothing of his eternity. His life is taken from him that very night. If able, share a time when you were faced with your own mortality? (A time when you were moved to think about what happens after death and the knowledge that you won't live forever)
5. In the book of Ecclesiastes it tells us that the day of death is better than the day of birth. Most people always think of death in terms of loss, pain and sorrow. If that statement is true it is actually something we should look forward to. Can you share a funeral, or person that you know that embodied that kind of joy with death? What does that say about our faith?

Digging Deeper

1. Greed tells us that we deserve what we have, in fact, that we deserve more than what we have. In God's eyes, the truth is that we deserve nothing. In other words, everything that we have is by grace... everything. How does it change your perspective to think of everything that you have as by grace, a gift from God?
2. In our culture, we love titles, accomplishment and success. We give each other trophies, we congratulate with honor, rewards and fame. Those are the things that we honor, what are the things that God looks for?
3. One day every one of us will stand in judgment before God. Bill Hybels says, "The death rate is still hovering somewhere around 100%." When we stand before him there will be only one thing that we can hold onto. It won't be a name, an accomplishment, a thing or a title. We will be faced with the undeniable fact that we are unworthy. But, there is one thing that we will take with us. Grace. That is where we see that everything that really matters, really is about Jesus and his sacrifice on the cross. Share with the group how the truth of Jesus sacrifice and grace have shaped you?
4. Look at Proverbs 30:8-9. What kind of perspective does that verse give us?

5. One big reason Christians don't take risks in Jesus name is because we have become too comfortable. Comfort leads to Apathy, and Apathy (spiritually speaking) leads to Death. Why do you think people are afraid to risk socially, financially or otherwise for the gospel?
6. What bold steps can we take to live out our faith with an eternal perspective?
7. Close with prayer, read Proverbs 30:8-9 as a group to close your prayer time.