

The Gospel of Luke

Guard Yourself from Every Form of Greed

Luke 12:13-21

1. A Family Affair (vs.13-14)

Jesus' teaching is interrupted by a man who wants Him to intervene in a dispute over an inheritance (cf. Ex 18:13; Judg 4:4-5). Jesus declines to render the demanded verdict, but He does not refrain from speaking to the fundamental issues raised by the man's command (cf. Matt 20:21-28; John 21:21-22).

2. A Preamble on Greed (v.15)

A. The Danger of **Persistent** Greed

The teaching (Luke 8:14; 18:25) and ministry of Jesus (Matt 26:15; John 12:4-6) repeatedly provide warnings concerning the unique danger posed by money and greed. Jesus instructs His disciples to be ever-vigilant in the struggle against greed (1 Tim 6:9-10; cf. Prov 30:8-9).

B. The Emptiness of **Fulfilled** Greed

Even if one seems to achieve material success, life is not bound up in what you possess. The deadly deception of greed is that you can never satisfy it and it can never satisfy you (Ecc 2:11; 5:10-11; Luke 16:19ff; cf. Prov 30:15-16).

3. The Parable of the Rich Fool (vs.16-20)

A. A **Good** Complication (vs.16-17)

There is no indication that the rich man was immoral or unethical in his agricultural business, only that he was exceedingly blessed by God.

B. A **Reasonable** Solution (v.18)

This man makes a prudent decision to build bigger barns so that he can store his grain as well as all of the things that he acquires.

C. A **Selfish** Motivation (v.19)

This man made decisions without consideration for God or others (James 1:26; 4:13-17; cf. Luke 6:34-35).

D. A **Tragic** Conclusion (v.20)

It is no small thing to be called a fool by God (Prov 1:7; Matt 7:26). The reward he was planning to enjoy was denied to him and left for others (Ecc 2:21).

4. A Lesson on Greed (v.21)

Prioritizing the temporal over the eternal always ends in foolishness (Matt 6:19-21; cf. Luke 12:4-5; 16:13); even if you acquire that for which you strive, you cannot keep it and it cannot save you.