

The Rich Fool

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[0 : 00] Someone in the crowd said to him, Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me. Jesus replied, Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?

! Then he said to them, Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed. Life does not consist in an abundance of possessions. And he told them this parable.

The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. He thought to himself, What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.

Then he said, This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones. And there I will store my surplus grain. And I'll say to myself, You have plenty of grain laid up for many years.

Take life easy. Eat, drink, and be merry. But God said to him, You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you.

[1 : 06] Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself? This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves, but is not rich toward God. Then Jesus said to his disciples, Therefore I tell you, Do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear.

For life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. Consider the ravens. They do not sow or reap. They have no storeroom or barn.

Yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds. Who of you, by worrying, can add a single hour to your life?

Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest? Consider how the wild flowers grow. They do not labor or spin.

Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, you of little faith?

[2 : 23] And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink. Do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things. And your father knows that you need them.

But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. Amen. Thank you, Celia.

Very well read. That song, Ian, couldn't have been more fitting for where we're going. Well done.

Thank you. Where do you go for some joy?

Where do you go for some joy? The reason I ask is because truth is just about everything we do to get a little joy needs money.

And because so much of these things need money, it means that so many of us in life in general start making our ultimate goal.

[3 : 50] Something like that awful slogan that gets thrown around, get rich or die trying. And life's life's big, big focus easily, easily becomes more and more and more money.

And whether consciously or unconsciously, people everywhere are working hard to get rich.

and they are prepared to die trying. It's fat. But people are prepared to do whatever it takes to get more money.

Remember some years back when Scotland's very own Susan Boyle appeared on Britain's Got Talent. and the first audition YouTube videos were streamed in the millions all over the world.

I did think about plenty this morning but that's not. But if you have a look at the video, here's what I see. Susan comes out and introduces herself.

[5 : 11] In Simon Coyle's mind, there's no money to be made there. No money to be made. Scoffs her off. He's already made his decision in his mind.

Nope, she's not a money maker. Get the audition done. Get her off. Hopefully make a few pounds on an extras program or something. Then, then Susan begins to perform, begins to sing.

And Simon Coyle suddenly changes. Sees money. Sees lots of money. And he's thinking, I can make money with this.

And all of a sudden, there he is by the clip's end, charming her, befriending her, gaining her trust. Because it's about one thing and one thing alone.

More and more money. And making more and more of it. And whatever option or category has to be used, so be it because it will make more money. In our passage today, the rich fool from Luke, Jesus is posed with that very same attitude.

[6 : 22] When a guy who's in the middle of a family wrestle, separating the family inheritance, calls out there in verse 13, teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.

This wasn't unusual. Locals would often bring such matters to rabbis and the like. But Jesus' response was very unusual.

Because whereas many of the Pharisees loved the opportunity to delve into such quarrels, to take the high status as the judge, a position they felt they had worked for and rightly deserved.

Whereas the Pharisees responded like that, Jesus surprises his hearers by not jumping to that position.

But what Jesus does instead is turns his focus to the whole crowd of listeners, looks at them all and as he does he looks beyond even that crowd to the whole wide world including all of us here today and he says listen guys watch out be careful be on your guard against all the grades of the world because they are not life they are not life he's not against not against working out the family inheritance far from it but he is against the obsession of getting more and more money at whatever cost as always with Jesus it's about the position of someone's heart and so

[8 : 33] Jesus unravels another one of his wonderful little parables it's a earthly story with a heavenly meaning he tells a great but challenging story about a guy who happily gains an abundant harvest harvest and then looking at his abundant harvest he sees one thing and one thing alone money lots of money and in his thinking this is joy real joy and so to get that joy he makes an executive decision all other farming work stops all attention and focus turns to storing up this this mass amount of harvest because then then when that's all stored up I can

I can quit work I can settle down I can eat drink and be merry and live a very very merry life therefore I'll have lots of joy if I store that up put that away I can kick back and I'll have joy of course he's just a man an ordinary man with a normal beating heart like the rest of us and sadly on that same day of fulfilling this big life changing executive order this beating heart stops he passes as God seizes his life on earth and that massive amount of life changing harvest that massive amount all stored away there well I don't know it rots away it rusts fades out goes to someone else one thing is for sure it didn't bring this guy a single ounce of joy in fact it brought him the absolute opposite because as

Jesus often does he is of course speaking of things beyond this life the guy in our story clearly put the things of this world and his life here on earth first and he clearly had zero concern about the things beyond about heaven forgiveness love Jesus God which meant his life ended and he found himself in what Jesus could only call hell where joy doesn't exist and so Jesus conclusion here is the guy never had joy he never had it at another point in Jesus teaching he says what good is it to gain the whole world yet forfeit your soul or as the good news bible puts it do people gain anything if they gain the whole world but lose their life of course not of course not and that's where our friend in the story have got to he had built a mass treasure in his eyes he had gained the whole world which yeah had the potential to provide a little bit of temporary joy but ultimately he never thought about the reality that the realistic truth is this abundant harvest is just that it's earth's and it belongs to the world nothing more nothing less and because it is just an earthly bind and nothing more nothing less he didn't and he couldn't take a single piece of it with him and even more distressing it accredited for zero beyond this life it didn't stand for a single thing beyond this life for him for him it meant nothing it brought no hope no forgiveness no salvation no heaven no joy nothing he was so focused on building an earthly treasure that he never made time to seek

God his little bit of obsessive joy on earth cost him heaven he was now fully joyless by saying these words and sharing this story Jesus takes this destructive world of you that get rich or die trying thing and he completely ends its part Jesus says don't do it Jesus says don't lose your life over it and so if Jesus says don't do that don't get on like that what just does he say to do instead then on a reverse take of this guy's attitude on a reverse take Matthew chapter 13 44 14 if in Luke he tells us not to live like that then what does he tell us to do and we'll find it in

Matthew chapter 13 and verse 44 the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field when a man found it he hid it again and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which when a rambler happened to stumble over and find it he in the absolute reverse of the other story went and sold his entire life belongings he went and sold that abundant harvest he got rid of it he got the money from it and bought the field and got the treasure and then had joy the treasure is of course

[15 : 51] God and I'll say it in a complete reversal this guy gives all his earthly abundance away so that he can get God so he gives it all away not so he can get the money so he can get the treasure get God getting God means forgiveness love joy salvation heaven which means eternal never ending joy beyond this life Jesus is the creator of humanity Jesus is the king of heaven and this life here on earth comes and goes and everything absolutely everything we have built and built saved and saved stored and stored treasured and treasured all of it will stay here fade away and rust but and this is so very important we the human our souls our souls will not fade away or rust scripture is very clear the soul doesn't fade the soul is eternal our bodies will fade yes but the you the real you the inside the soul will live for eternity and so

Jesus is absolutely crystal clear the single most important thing you can spend your life aspiring for is where you your soul will be forever and ever beyond this life because your money and your treasures will end they will go they will disappear but your soul won't you will either be in hell or in heaven forever and if you choose today to give up building an earthly treasure and instead just build one above then and only then will you have real real everlasting joy because no matter what happens you know you will be in heaven with Jesus forever and living with that knowledge is joy real joy you may still face pressures and illnesses and everything else that the rest of the world faces but you have the knowledge that I will be in heaven with Jesus forever beyond this and that is real proper joy and if you don't have that knowledge you can't have solid joy having that knowledge gives solid joy and that's the big big massive difference between the two treasure builders and these two stories one focused on earth may have had a quick smile of joy but spent eternity joyless in hell the other focused his building earthly and his entire treasure in heaven things of above which meant he was content in this life having the joyful knowledge of going to heaven and very very importantly we should note within these words

Jesus expands his teaching well beyond activities we consider to be church things like prayer worship offerings of course build a treasure in heaven but Jesus goes beyond that with parables like the sheep and the goats and other things to say your very life the way you live the views you hold the things you say the things you do all play a part in building a treasure in heaven this includes fighting temptation to sin spending time in prayer meditating in God's word church activities good works visiting the sick helping the poor evangelizing witnessing worshipping him using your God-given skills and gifts and deepening your faith all of these build a treasure in heaven our salvation is secure and cannot be taken from us we can't lose that that's done that's sorted on the day and all we give our life to Jesus but the treasure that we build is built as we do these things and that's what waits for us in heaven the salvation will always be there once we believe in him none of these will fear the rust away none of these can be stolen they are your treasure built in heaven with Jesus forever for us who follow Jesus we should know Jesus is very clear he's very serious you cannot serve him on your money in the end one will take your full allegiance and because money and banking is all around us it's so easy it's so natural just to without even realized to slowly but surely give your allegiance to money Wester Hills Baptist Church this week today at home let's all myself as well spend some time genuinely and honestly and personally considering what really does take more of our thoughts what really does take more of our time money or God I wonder if after some real genuine consideration if you or I would need change a few things I wonder if you or I would need to reconsider where we're building what we're building build your treasure in heaven heaven and heaven alone because that and that alone is real joy and so for Jesus this approach to life and where one builds and stores up is much more than enough it's all that's needed and because that's all that's needed

Jesus turning and speaking to his disciples therefore again all of us here today who follow him and he then says right through you guys us today my followers because I am enough you see all of that bank building money story and everyday life focused stuff don't worry about it don't let it control you in fact don't worry about anything but how how can we avoid worry there seems to be so much to worry about money money the future our children relationships our mistakes regrets to name but a

few so again how this is a teaching lesson on its own really that I'd like to do at another point but for today just quickly only a deep and confident trust in God's care for us will be able to free us from all the anxiety that plagues our minds working and planning responsibly is good having an idea an idea about tomorrow is okay but dwelling desperately on all the ways it could go wrong is not good worry is pointless because it cannot fulfill our needs worry damages our health disrupts our productivity negatively affects how we treat others and affects our trust in God worry is in some ways rather foolish

[23 : 35] I've talked to myself as well it's foolish of us to worry because well because the creator of the universe loves us and he knows our needs he promises to meet them and so in a day and an age when worry seems much bigger than ever we need to get acquainted with help God's help to conquer worry overcoming worry requires the following a simple trust in our heavenly father's care for us and we express such trust when we pray rather than dwell in those thoughts we overcome worry by gaining a new perspective of our problems which can be gained by developing a good strategy for addressing and correcting rather than worrying we overcome worry by getting a good support team find believers you can depend on who will commit to praying for you listening to you and supporting you worry worry never solves tomorrow's problems but it does always destroy our peace and steal our joy from today and with you I want to conquer that as well hence why

Jesus adds these lines here and so it's back to where we started Jesus' summary is look the whole world is caught up in seeking a big earthly treasure for a very temporary joy but that does nothing about beyond this life and so true real joy is only found by firstly verse 31 seeking God's kingdom so do not worry about a single other thing just get this sorted just get the kingdom because then you are living life as you were created to and that's joy this joy that Jesus offers is a genuine joy and it can't be quenched this joy that Jesus offers can't be taken this joy cannot be threatened and as depression and illness and death and hurt and brokenness and addiction and all other things attack us this joy from Jesus remains steadfast steadfast on our minds steadfast in our hearts steadfast in our souls because this joy from Jesus assures us that even as all the things that we just mentioned happen it assures us heaven is real heaven is real

God is real his love is genuine and no matter what happens we know in the end we will live with God forever and ever this joy is a sacred delight it's a holy gladness it's heavenly it's from above do you have this joy do you want this joy it comes from God and God alone and it's within your reach and you can have it because do you know what gives Jesus joy is bringing you to heaven you're his daughters and sons and he wants you in heaven with him to keep you safe forever and ever and ever so let's make our allegiance to the only real and greatest king king Jesus his kingdom God and that money let's pray father we at a fellowship together pray for your help to live up to what you've described here in this story help us support and help each other reach the outcome of this story and live in accordance of it and Lord in a day and age when worry is filling our hospitals and packing of our prisons and disturbing our minds

Lord help us take the challenge on by your strength and your strength alone and help and support one another let these words lay in our hearts and help everyone in here consider where their heart is with regards to money and you Jesus as we now turn to communion Lord clear our minds give it a settled heart a focused heart a peaceful heart let us hear from you receive from you and know your joy Amen after this!

after this short song we're going to sing we will turn to communion where we invite all who know and love the Lord Jesus as their saviour the way we've talked about here to partake and if that's not you just yet feel free to let the cup and the bread pass on but please come and chat afterwards I'd love to chat but we now see God that he leads us to remember his sacrifice and so if you'll be able to stand please do for there is our redeemer miracle