

Gaining to Lose

Lesson # 38: (Lk. 12:13-30; I Tim. 6:9-10, 17-19; James 5:1-3; COL 252-259)

In our lesson today we will study the parable of the rich fool. Though the parable itself is found in Luke 12:15-21, the immediately preceding and succeeding contexts must also be taken into account. Immediately before Jesus told the parable, an event transpired which provided Him with the opportunity to tell the parable (Lk. 12:13-14). Then, after telling the parable, Jesus further amplified its lessons (Lk. 12:22-30) Let's begin by taking a look at how Jesus handled a case of sibling rivalry.

The Parable's Setting and Occasion

1. What was the innermost desire of many of those who heard Jesus? "But there were many who desired the grace of heaven only to serve their _____ purposes. . . . Would He [Jesus] not lend His power for their _____ benefit?" (COL 252)
2. What did the law of Moses teach concerning the transmission of property from parents to children? "The eldest son received a _____ portion of the father's estate (Deut. 21:17), while the _____ brothers were to share alike." (COL 252)
3. How did the younger brother hope to use Jesus for his own benefit? "He has heard Christ's stirring appeals, and His solemn _____ of the scribes and Pharisees. If words of such _____ could be spoken to this brother, he would not dare to refuse the aggrieved man his portion." (COL 253)
4. What attitude prompted this young man to seek Jesus as an arbiter? "He could appreciate that ability of the Lord which might work for the advancement of his own _____ affairs; but spiritual truths had taken no hold on his mind and heart. The gaining of the inheritance was his _____ theme." (COL 253)
5. What other Bible person had the same evil character trait? _____ In which particular sense were they alike? _____ (COL 253)
6. What was the Holy Spirit seeking to do with this young man? "The Holy Spirit was _____ with him to become an heir of the _____ that is 'incorruptible, and undefiled, and that _____ not away.' 1 Peter 1:4." (COL 253)
7. Why didn't Jesus resolve this sibling feud? "Christ virtually said, It is not My _____ to settle controversies of this kind. He came for another _____, to preach the gospel, and thus to arouse men to a sense of _____ realities." (COL 254)
8. What lessons can Christ's workers today learn from this episode? They were not to settle the _____ affairs of the people. Their work was to _____ men to be reconciled to God. In this work lay their _____ to bless humanity." (COL 254)

9. In which way are both rich and poor many times alike? “The injustice of the rich toward the poor, the hatred of the poor toward the rich, alike have their root in _____, and this can be eradicated only through _____ to Christ. He alone, for the selfish heart of sin, gives the _____ heart of love.” (COL 254)
10. What did Jesus say which got to the very root of this young man’s problem? “Take heed, and beware of _____; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the _____ which he possesseth.” (Lk. 12:15)

The Source of all Riches

1. What central lesson did Jesus seek to teach in the parable of the rich fool? “By the parable of the foolish rich man, Christ showed the _____ of those who make the _____ their all.” (COL 256)
2. Who made it possible for the rich man to acquire riches? “This man had received _____ from God. The sun had been permitted to shine upon his land; for its rays fall on the just and on the unjust. The _____ of heaven descend on the evil and on the good. The Lord had caused vegetation to _____, and the fields to bring forth abundantly.” (COL 256)
3. What solemn words of warning did Jesus speak to Israel in the Old Testament? “But thou shalt _____ the LORD thy God: for it is _____ that giveth thee power to get _____, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.” (Deut. 8:18)

Note: It is God who gives us life, strength, time, talents, influence, speech and other endowments. Without these blessings from on high we could not earn even one penny.

4. Why has God endowed us with wealth to any degree? “An extensive fortune, or any degree of wealth will not secure the _____ of God. All these bounties and blessings come from Him, to _____, test, and develop the _____ of man.” (Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 39)

Hoarding Riches

1. Which personal pronoun did the rich man employ repeatedly to describe his plans for the future? “What shall ___ do, because I have no room where to bestow _____ fruits? And he said, This will ___ do: I will pull down _____ barns, and build greater; and there will ___ bestow all _____ fruits and _____ goods. And I will say to _____ soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.” (Lk. 12:17-19)

Note: In the parable of the talents Jesus has made it abundantly clear that nothing we possess is really ours: The master “delivered unto his servants **his** goods” (Mt. 25:14). The unfaithful

servant hid “**his lord’s** money” (Mt. 25:18) and then when his master called him to account, he said to him: “there thou hast that is **thine**” (Mt. 25:25) The master later said to his servant “thou oughtest therefore to have put **my** money to the exchangers (Mt. 25:27). We speak in terms of “my house, my car, my money” but absolutely nothing is really ours!

2. What did the rich fool fail to think of? “He did not think of _____ from whom all his mercies had come. He did not realize that God had made him a _____ of His goods that he might _____ the needy.” (COL 256)
3. Had the rich fool employed honest business principles to acquire his wealth? “He had over-reached in trade, had made _____ bargains, and had not exercised _____ or the love of God. He had _____ the fatherless and widow, and defrauded his fellow men, to add to his increasing _____ of worldly possessions.” (Testimonies for the Church, volume 3, p. 402)

Note: Like the rich man in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:19, 21), the rich fool did not necessarily mistreat people. He defrauded the needy by neglecting them! The sin of omission is just as serious in the sight of God as the sin of commission.

4. What should the rich man have done when his barns were bursting at the seams? “He could easily have _____ himself of a portion of his abundance, and many homes would have been freed from _____, many who were hungry would have been fed, many naked clothed, many hearts made glad, many _____ for bread and clothing answered, and a melody of praise would have ascended to heaven.” (COL 257)
5. What was this rich man’s philosophy of life? “This man's aims were no higher than those of the _____ that perish. He lived as if there were no God, no _____, no future life; as if everything he possessed were his _____, and he owed nothing to God or man.” (COL 257-58)

Treasures in Heaven

1. How did Jesus explain to the rich young ruler what it means to lay up treasures in heaven? “Yet lackest thou one thing: _____ all that thou hast, and _____ unto the poor, and thou shalt have _____ in heaven.” (Lk. 18:22)

Note: Jesus made it crystal clear that the only way we can send our money on ahead to the “Bank of Heaven” is by investing it now on earth in the “Bank of Human Need”. After Jesus told the story of the rich fool he explained how we invest in heaven and what happens to our money when we invest on earth: “Sell that ye have, and give alms, provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither the moth corrupteth.” (Lk. 12:33)

2. According the Ellen White, how can God’s people today lay up treasures in the bank of heaven? “Those who use their wealth in doing _____ will see no necessity for large accumulations in this world; for the treasure which is used to _____ the cause of God and which is given

to the needy in Christ's name is given to Christ, and _____ lays it up for us in the bank of heaven in _____ which wax not old.” (Testimonies for the Church, volume 3, p. 546)

Note: Many people in the church today are obsessed with hoarding for retirement. In doing this, they neither enjoy the present nor are investing for eternity. There is nothing wrong per se in saving for retirement. But when padding our 401K becomes an all-absorbing passion to the neglect of God’s cause and the needs of our fellow men, our priorities are skewed. According to Jesus it is the Gentiles (those who do not claim to be Christians) who worry unceasingly about saving for a rainy day. (Mt. 6:32)

3. How is the rich man’s philosophy of life shared by many professed Christians today? “They [many present day Christians] have the _____ of believing that Christ is soon to come, that the end of all things is at hand; yet they have no spirit of _____. They are plunging deeper and deeper into the _____. . . . Yet these men profess to believe that this world is not their _____, that they are merely pilgrims and strangers upon the earth, preparing to _____ to a better country.” (Testimonies for the Church, volume 2, p. 663)

How was this rich man looked upon by his fellow town folk? “He is _____ by his fellow townsmen as a man of good _____ and a prosperous citizen.” (COL 258)

Note: Is it just possible that many wealthy people in the church today are looked upon by others as model citizens and as a great blessing to the cause when in actuality their hearts are weighed down with covetousness? This man was rich in the sight of **men** but he was not rich toward **God** (Lk. 12:21)

4. What couldn’t this man’s money buy? “The wealth he has treasured can purchase no reprieve. In one _____ that which he has toiled through his whole life to secure becomes _____ to him. ‘Then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?’ His broad fields and well-filled granaries _____ from under his control. ‘He heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.’ Ps. 39:6” (COL 258)
5. According to Ellen White, what relationship exists between love and life? “The only thing that would be of _____ to him [the rich fool] now he has not secured. In living for _____ he has rejected that divine love which would have flowed out in mercy to his fellow men. Thus he has _____ life. For God is love, and love is life.” (COL 258)
6. What will money not do for man in the day of divine reckoning? “You may plan for merely selfish good, you may _____ together treasure, you may build _____ great and high, as did the builders of ancient Babylon; but you cannot build wall so _____ or gate so _____ as to shut out the messengers of doom.” (COL 259)
7. When are riches of great value in the sight of God? “They have a value when used for the _____ of others and the _____ of God; but no earthly treasure is to be your portion, your _____, or your savior.” (Testimonies for the Church, volume 5, p. 261)

8. What cuts off the soul from life? “To live for _____ is to perish. Covetousness, the desire of benefit for self’s sake, _____ the soul off from life.” (COL 259)
9. **Thought Questions:** What do you think Solomon meant when he said: “There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing; there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches.”? (Prov. 13:7) _____
 How does Solomon’s statement compare with Paul’s about Jesus: “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”? (II Cor. 8:9) _____

10. When the rich fool died, he took nothing with him. How does the apostle Paul amplify this thought in I Timothy 6:7-8? “For we brought _____ into this world, and it is certain we can carry _____ out. And having and let us be therewith content.”
11. How did the apostle Paul describe the potential danger of money? “But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful _____, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the _____ of money is the root of all evil, which while some _____ after, they have _____ from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” (I Tim. 6:9-10; see also, Ps. 49:16-20)
12. **Thought Question:** At the conclusion of the parable, Jesus asked the rich fool the following open ended question: “Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?” (Lk. 12:20) Who do you think got what the rich fool forfeited? (**Hint:** The answer is in the Parable of the Talents) _____

Note: As James well expresses it: “But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth, so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.” (James 1:10-11) The psalmist remarks: “Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: Surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.” (Ps. 39:6)

Recognizing God First

1. What great maxim did Jesus share with the populace after He told the story of the rich fool? “But seek ye _____ the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be _____ unto you.” { Mt. 6:33}
2. Had the rich man been faithful in the tithing principle? “That one _____ the rich man had _____ from God. If he had not done this, if he had loved God supremely instead of loving and serving himself, he would not have _____ so great treasures that there would be lack of room to _____ them.” (Testimonies for the Church, volume 3, p. 546)

3. What did Ellen White once say about a brother P and his similarity to the rich fool? “You have made yourself nearly as unimpressible as a piece of _____. Your gold and your silver are cankered, and have become an eating _____ to the soul. Had your benevolence _____ with your riches, you would have regarded money as a _____ by which you could do good.” (Testimonies for the Church, volume 3, p. 548).
4. What is the only remedy which can totally cure the mortal disease of covetousness? “_____, self-denying benevolence is God's remedy for the cankering sins of selfishness and covetousness. . . . He has ordained that giving should become a _____, that it may counteract the dangerous and _____ sin of covetousness. Continual giving _____ covetousness to death.” (Testimonies for the Church, volume 3, p. 548)
5. What example did Jesus give to contrast those who give from their abundance and those who truly sacrifice? He pointed to a widow who put her two mites into the treasury and then said: “Verily I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast _____ in, than all they which have cast into the treasury; for all they did cast in of their _____, but she of her want did cast in _____ that she had, even _____ her living.” (Mk. 12:43-44)

Note: The widow’s generosity was not measured by the amount she gave but rather by what she had left over after she gave. Sacrifice is not measured by the size of the gift but by the spirit with which it is given.

6. **Thought Question:** Study the story of the widow of Zarephath (I Kings 17:7-16). How did the spirit of this widow contrast with that of the rich fool? To whom did the widow give first? What did God do in response to her faithfulness?

Rich Fools at the End

1. What did James, the brother of Jesus, have to say about money hoarders at the end of time? “Go to now, ye rich men, _____ and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your _____ are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is _____; and the rust of them shall be a witness _____ you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire.” (James 5:1-3)
2. What terrible mistake did these money hoarders commit? “Ye have heaped _____ together for the _____ days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by _____, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the _____ of the Lord of sabaoth. (James 5:3, 4)
3. What did these end-time rich fools do with their money? “Ye have lived in _____ on the earth, and been _____; ye have nourished your hearts.” (James 5:5)

4. What covetous spirit will spell the doom of end-time Babylon? “And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with _____, and with precious stones and _____! For in one hour so great riches is come to _____.” (Rev. 18:16-17)

Note: End-time Babylon represents the combined powers of the world whose philosophy of life is centered on money, power and prestige. All this will come crashing down when the judge of the earth shall measure what has been done with His assets.

5. Who is the real spirit behind Babylon’s obsession with material prosperity? “With thy [Lucifer’s] wisdom and with thine understanding thou hast gotten thee _____, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy _____. By thy great wisdom and by thy traffick hast thou _____ thy riches, and thine heart is _____ up because of thy riches.” (Eze. 28:4-5)
6. According to Ezekiel, what will occur in the day of judgment with those who have hoarded riches? “They shall _____ their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed: their silver and their gold shall not be able to _____ them in the day of the wrath of the LORD: they shall not _____ their souls, neither _____ their bowels: because it is the stumblingblock of their iniquity.” (Ez. 7:19)
7. When Jesus said to His disciples: “How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!” (Mk. 10:23), did He mean that it is morally wrong to be rich? “Children, how hard is it for them that _____ in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!” (Mk. 10:24)
8. What did Jesus say about faithfulness in this life and the next? “If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous _____, who will commit to your _____ the true riches?” (Lk. 16:11)

A Matter of Conversion

1. How did Zacchaeus’ concept of money change in consequence of his conversion? “And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the _____ of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him _____.” (Lk.19:8)
2. How did the disciples employ their possessions after they received the gift of the Holy Spirit? “And _____ their possessions and goods, and _____ them to all men, as every man had need.” (Acts 2:45)
- 3.. What wise counsel does the apostle Paul give to those who are rich in this life? ? “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not _____, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who _____ us richly all things to enjoy; that they do _____, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store

for themselves a good _____ against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.” (I Tim. 6:17-19)