

Has Your Christmas Lost Its Merry? Luke 12:15-21

Introduction:

1. Do we have any Christmas scrooges in here today? Many people are scrooges because Christmas has become so associated with material possessions, money, shopping, debt, the economy, etc. Many businesses make it or break it based on their Christmas profits.
 - Many individuals and families will go into the hole financially and never recover from it. For many people, they dread Christmas because of this.
 - They either cannot afford to buy what they want to buy for loved ones or they cannot afford to pay back what they borrowed to purchase things. This is depressing. Our culture puts a lot of pressure on people to focus on things during the Christmas season.
2. And the sad part is that material possessions don't last. Can you name three things you got for Christmas last year or three things that you use all the time? Material possessions are rather unstable and unreliable. The man in Luke 12 learned this truth.
3. In verse 19, there is a word that caught my attention, and it is the word "merry." We are very familiar with this word. We use it a lot this time of the year. We say, "Merry Christmas."
 - The word "merry" means "jovial; exhilarated to laughter." It is a Bible word. Proverbs 17:22; 15:13
4. This man thought he had found the secret to happiness, how to have a merry life, but sadly, he missed it.
5. There are many this Christmas season that will also miss it, and they will make the same mistakes that this man made.
6. Maybe Christmas hasn't been a merry time for you in the past. The good news is this: if your Christmas has lost its merry, you can do something about it. How?

First, by placing your emphasis on relationships, not possessions.

1. What does your house, car, jewelry, TV and cell phone all have in common?
 - They are all dead, inanimate things. They have no spirit. They can't speak, listen, relate, love, hug, cry, show emotion or affection, etc.
2. We can pour the best years of our lives into acquiring dead, inanimate objects. Do you know what the result is? We come up empty. This is what happened to this man in our text. Look at verses 17-19.
 - *"Thought within himself," "I do," "I have no room," "my fruits,"* etc.
 - You get the idea from the text that this guy is all alone. He is an island to himself; he's got nobody. It's just him and his stuff, and God called him a fool. vs. 20
3. What is the point that Jesus is trying to teach through this story? Look at verse 15, *"... a man's life consisteth **not** in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."*
4. So, what does a man's life consist of? Colossians 1:16-17 states, *"... all things were created by him (Christ), and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."*
5. It all begins with a relationship with Jesus Christ—trusting and believing on Him. The moment you believe on Christ you are brought into a living union with Him as God places His Spirit within you. Now you have the very life of God within you!
6. What does Christ's Spirit teach us regarding the purpose and meaning of life? Think about Christ. He didn't come to earth to gather possessions, but rather He came to form relationships with people. He invested His life in people! He gave His life for people.

7. Satan's world system has fed people a big lie. Do you know what it is? More money and more possessions equal more happiness. Nothing could be further from the truth.
 - There will be many lonely people on Christmas day, and do you know the reason why they will be lonely? Because for their entire life, they have emphasized building bank accounts instead of building relationships.
8. When you pour your life into possessions, you leave an estate when you die.
 - Research states that an estate will most likely be squandered in between two to four years.
9. When you pour your life into your relationship with Christ and people, you leave a legacy when you die.
 - A legacy that will be carried on for generations through the people that you have impacted.
10. If your Christmas has lost its merry, place your emphasis on people, not possessions. Christmas is supposed to be about a person—Jesus Christ!

Second, by using your blessings to be a blessing.

1. As you read this story, it is obvious that this guy was blessed. vs. 16
2. How did he respond to God's blessings? Do verses 17-18 say, "I will bestow all my fruits and my goods on the poor?" No, now let's read verse 19. Did he say, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, use them to be a blessing to others?"
3. That is **not** what he said. We see total self-centeredness. He said to himself, "*...take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.*" This man thought he was the center of everything.
 - This man's heart is a picture of Israel's heart at that time. They were God's chosen people. Chosen to take God's blessings and the spiritual light God had given them to be a blessing to the heathen nations (Genesis 12:1-3; Psalm 96). Instead they were materialistic and spiritually apathetic.
4. What was God's response to this man? Notice the words in verse 21, "*for himself.*"
 - Like a sponge, he soaked up the blessings, but never gave anything back out.
 - This man had **not** learned the secret of true joy. True joy comes through giving, not hoarding. Acts 20:35
 - **Illustration:** a funnel
 - But remember, God doesn't expect you to give what you don't have. The Bible says that you give according to the ability that God gives you. You give as God has prospered you.
 - You shouldn't go into debt to give stuff to people that you know you will not be able to pay back. By doing this, you are jeopardizing your family's security.
 - But on the other hand, if you have been blessed with more than you really need, God expects you to take your blessings and be a blessing—to others, to Christ's work on earth, etc. Selfishness never brings true joy.
5. Here is a prescription for joy: take your blessings and use them to be a blessing to others. God has blessed you to be a blessing. 1 Timothy 6:17-18
 - If God has given you time, health, money, talents, and abilities, He has given them so you can be a blessing to others.
6. If your Christmas has lost its merry, remember this; God hasn't blessed you to be a sponge, but a funnel.

In Conclusion:

1. Many people are very vocal that they hate Christmas due to the way it has been commercialized, and it definitely has.
2. But remember, Christian, you have no control over the way the world treats the birth of Christ, but you do have control over your actions and attitudes.
3. You can choose to be like this rich fool in our text, or you can choose to be wise this Christmas season by:
 - Placing your emphasis on relationships, not possessions; your relationship with Christ should be top priority.
 - Using your blessings to be a blessing.