

## Preparing to Live; Ready to Die Luke 12:15-21

### Introduction:

1. Our text today will be Luke 12:15-21. This text is one of Christ's parables about a man described by two phrases.
  - A "rich man." vs. 16
  - A "fool." vs. 20
2. On this earth, money talks. Money can buy you power and respect from a lot of people, but not from God. God created everything; He owns it all. Therefore, God is not one bit impressed with a person's net worth. And God will call a rich man a fool if he is one.
3. Why did God call this rich man a fool? It is because this man was truly unprepared to **live** life the way God intended, and he was totally unprepared to die. That's never good nor is it wise.
4. Ironically, this man really thought he had it together. He thought he had a strategic plan for his life, but God said, "You fool." **Proverbs 14:12**
5. Unlike this foolish man, Jesus provides great insight as to how you can truly live a life that counts, while being prepared if death should come.
6. How do we prepare our hearts to truly live life with no regrets?

### First, invest in what really matters.

1. Reading verses 16-17, there is no apparent problem with this guy.
  - There is nothing wrong with doing a good job at work and being successful. (God's perspective: **being** successful does not make you a success.) vs. 16
  - There is nothing wrong with reflecting on your blessings and strategizing on how to move forward in your life. He did, in fact, have more stuff than he could store. (Some of you are like, "I wish I had that problem."). vs. 17
2. In verses 18-19, he wavers off course. He begins to veer off the road, onto the shoulder and is heading for the woods. Upon thinking and questioning, he decides to take all his blessings and use them for himself (notice how many times "I" is used).
3. The sad thing about this fictitious, yet real-life situation is, there was no thought of God and no thought of others. There were no thoughts of God's work, only his work. This man was self-consumed. What did his plans consist of? His plans were to pull down, build greater, and lay up for the future.
4. This is called **materialism**, which states, "physical matter is the only reality." It's the belief that the highest values and objectives lie in material well-being and in the furtherance of material progress. In other words, all that matters in life are the material things that you possess for selfish purposes. So, what did Jesus say about this?
  - "...a man's life consists not in the abundance of the things..." vs. 15
  - "The **life** is **more** than meat, and the body is **more** than raiment." vs. 23

- Boldly refuting materialism, Jesus said, “There is more to life than your stuff.”
5. In our culture, people live this way, even Christians. This makes for a miserable way to live life and an even worse way to die. Many people die with regrets, but by then it’s too late.
  6. A true, meaningful life of impact comes by giving of ourselves and of our resources to others (Ephesians 4:28).
  7. If his barns were too small to hold his surplus, weren’t there others he could have shared his blessings with? He had plenty! However, he kept it all for himself.
    - A true life of impact comes when we are rich toward God by giving and sharing of what we have with others (vs. 21).

**Second, put God at the center of all your plans.**

1. This guy had big plans; ultimately, his plans were to eat, drink, and be merry (vs. 19). But here is the question: “Where was God in his plans?” He looked at his bumper crop, and all he saw was himself. He was living life like God didn’t exist. This is why he was called a fool. Psalm 14:1 says, *“The fool has said in his heart there is no God.”*
  - The term *“fool”* in the Bible speaks not of an intellectual deficiency, but a lack of spiritual discernment. This man felt no obligation to God in the use of his time or resources.
2. There are two ways to live life according to verse 21:
  - Live a life for yourself (pursue personal comfort).
  - Live a life toward God (pursue God).
3. The choices we make are the difference between foolishness and wisdom.
  - Materialism says that you are just a material being, but this is not true.
  - You are a spirit, soul, **and** body. Man was created to be in fellowship with God by our relationship with Him.
  - There is a big difference between making a living and making a life.
4. Your relationship with God should be the central influence on all the choices you make and of **everything** you do.
5. Children are usually very interested in God and Jesus. They see clearly the importance of faith. As they progress into adolescence and into adulthood, their vision gets distorted concerning the things of God. They become consumed with going places, doing things, buying things, having fun, and playing. Often to the point, they lose sight of what’s important – loving, serving, and worshiping God.
  - This rich man possessed things only money could buy, but he lost the only thing that money can’t buy. Why? He wasn’t rich toward God.

**Third, never presume upon the future.**

1. Notice verse 19, this man thought his surplus would last for *“many years;”* he thought he had plenty of time. He said, “I am going to retire and party, and I’m going to do whatever I want to do.” This was a huge assumption. Look at verse 20, it says *“This night...”* In 24 hours, everything would change. But

circumstances changing so drastically would never really happen, right? I mean this is a parable, not a true story, right?

2. This man made the grave assumption he would be around to enjoy his wealth. He was so wrapped up in making plans for his **life** he failed to prepare for **death**.
3. The biblical principle here is to never presume upon the future. Make the decisions you need to make today! Don't put them off for tomorrow.  
James 4:13-14
  - Did you notice that word used when talking about the future? The word used was "*tomorrow*." It's such a dangerous word. Proverbs 27:1
  - You can lose your soul by waiting for the right time. Don't make the mistake of thinking that you can live any way you want to (sow wild oats), and in a few years (when I'm older), you'll get your heart right with God.
4. Oftentimes, we don't live in the reality that we are one heartbeat, one breath, or one accident away from eternity. If you aren't at total peace with God, you can and need to settle that **today**. You aren't promised tomorrow!
5. God is offering eternal life through Jesus Christ today. Don't lose your immortal soul by failing to respond to His offer. Don't be like this rich fool. Be wise and trust Christ.

### **Conclusion:**

1. Everything you have, even your life, is a gift from God. One day your life on earth will end, and everything you possess will be left behind. It's in your power to decide what you'll do with your life and possessions.
2. The good news is, if we are alive and breathing, we are able to make choices and decisions. None of us can do anything about yesterday, but we can control our choices and attitudes today. Having free will, you decide what direction you will go.
3. Will you say, "I want to prepare to live my life in a way that really counts, while simultaneously preparing to die, if death should come knocking today."
4. Today, we must decide to be rich toward God.
  - By investing your life and resources in what really matters.
  - By putting God at the center of all your plans.