

## **FOLLIES OF A FOOL**

HE DIDN'T EVEN HEAR THE WORDS JESUS WAS SPEAKING TO THE LARGE GATHERING,

“I TELL YOU, WHOEVER ACKNOWLEDGES ME BEFORE MEN, THE SON OF MAN WILL ALSO ACKNOWLEDGE HIM BEFORE THE ANGELS OF GOD...”

NO, HE HAD COME FOR ANOTHER REASON. CERTAINLY JESUS WOULD HELP HIM. HE PRESSED TOWARD THE FRONT, WAITING FOR THE RIGHT MOMENT. FINALLY, HE SEIZED HIS OPPORTUNITY.

“TEACHER!”

JESUS' EYES MET HIS.

NOW WAS HIS CHANCE.

“TEACHER...TELL MY BROTHER TO DIVIDE THE INHERITANCE WITH ME.”

HE LOOKED BACK INTO THE AUDIENCE WHERE HE HAD LEFT HIS BROTHER, FLASHING HIM AN

“I GOT YOU NOW” LOOK!

JESUS WAS ALREADY ADDRESSING HIM,

LET'S TURN IN OUR BIBLES TO LUKE 12:14 TO CAPTURE HIS WORDS,

“JESUS REPLIED, “MAN, WHO APPOINTED ME A JUDGE OR AN ARBITER BETWEEN YOU?”

HOW WOULD YOU HAVE FELT IF YOU WERE THAT YOUNG MAN?  
WOULDN'T YOU HAVE EXPECTED JESUS TO SUPPORT JUSTICE...TO SET  
THINGS STRAIGHT.

I HAVE A FEELING THAT JESUS' REACTIONS WOULD MANY TIMES CATCH  
US BY SURPRISE. WHEREAS WE CAN ONLY SEE THE OUTSIDE, JESUS IS  
ABLE TO READ THE HEART.

NOTICE WHAT JESUS PICKED UP ABOUT THIS YOUNG MAN'S MOTIVES,  
LUKE 12:15, "THEN JESUS SAID TO THEM, 'WATCH OUT! BE ON YOUR  
GUARD AGAINST ALL KINDS OF GREED; A MAN'S LIFE DOES NOT CONSIST  
IN THE ABUNDANCE OF HIS POSSESSIONS.'"

KNOWING MANY IN HIS AUDIENCE FACED THE SAME WORLDLY  
DISTRACTIONS, JESUS TAKES THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESS HIS POINT  
FURTHER THROUGH A PARABLE,

READ LUKE 12:16-21

HAVE YOU EVER BOUGHT APPLES THAT HAVE BEEN IN COLD STORAGE?  
THE RICH MAN IN THIS PARABLE REMINDS ME OF ONE OF THOSE APPLES  
THAT DIDN'T STORE TOO WELL.  
ON THIS OUTSIDE HE LOOKED GOOD.

HE WAS A SUCCESSFUL FARMER. MANY FAMILIES WERE SUPPORTED THROUGH THE EMPLOYMENT HE PROVIDED. HE ENJOYED LIFE. HE PROBABLY WAS GOOD AT ENTERTAINING PEOPLE IN HIS HOME. HOWEVER, THIS SHINY APPLE WAS ROTTEN AT THE CORE.

THE RICH FOOLS 1<sup>ST</sup> FOLLY:

HE HAD AN "I" PROBLEM.

NOTICE THE WORDS-- I AND MY-- IN VERSES 17, 18.

"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 ALL MY GRAIN AND MY GOODS."

THE FIRST FOLLY THIS RICH FOOL HAD IS THAT HE FORGOT WHO OWNS EVERYTHING. HE THOUGHT THE HARVEST AND BARNs WERE HIS.

IN HIS WORDS THERE IS NO RECOGNITION OF GOD'S BLESSING IN HIS LIFE.

DEUTERONOMY 8:17 READS,

"YOU MAY SAY TO YOURSELF, 'MY POWER AND THE STRENGTH OF MY HAND HAVE PRODUCED THIS WEALTH FOR ME.'..." DOESN'T THAT SOUND CONTEMPORARY? LET'S START THE VERSE AGAIN...AND COMPLETE IT THIS TIME,

"YOU MAY SAY 'MY POWER AND THE STRENGTH OF MY HAND HAVE PRODUCED THIS WEALTH FOR ME' BUT REMEMBER THE LORD YOUR GOD FOR IT IS HE WHO GIVES YOU THE ABILITY TO PRODUCE WEALTH."

GOD HAS BLESSED US SO MUCH. WE LIVE IN ONE OF THE MOST AFFLUENT AREAS OF THE MOST AFFLUENT COUNTRY IN THE WORLD. GOD HAS BLESSED US AND HE SAYS, "I JUST DON'T WANT YOU TO FORGET THAT I'M THE ONE WHO GIVES YOU THE ABILITY. I'M THE ONE WHO GAVE YOU THE CREATIVE ABILITY AND THE DESIRE TO WORK AND THE DESIRE TO PRODUCE AND THE DESIRE TO INVENT AND TO CHANGE AND DEVELOP AND MANAGE. THAT'S WHAT I PUT YOU HERE FOR AND I GET PLEASURE OUT OF WATCHING YOU DO A GOOD JOB OF IT. BUT DON'T FORGET I'M THE OWNER AND YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE TO ME." NEVER FORGET THE LORD YOUR GOD FOR IT IS HE WHO GIVES YOU THE ABILITY TO PRODUCE WEALTH.

THERE WAS A CHURCH GROWING SO FAST IT RAN OUT OF PARKING SPACE. THEY WENT ACROSS THE STREET TO A SUPER-MARKET THAT WAS CLOSED ON SUNDAYS AND MADE A DEAL WITH THE OWNER OF THE SUPERMARKET TO USE THEIR PARKING LOT. THE OWNER OF THE SUPERMARKET SAID, "YOU CAN USE THE PARKING LOT 51 SUNDAYS OUT OF THE YEAR, BUT ON THE 52ND SUNDAY, I'M GOING TO CHAIN IT OFF." THE CHURCH PEOPLE WERE CONFUSED, "WHY? WE DON'T UNDERSTAND. WHY WOULD YOU LET US USE IN 51 TIME A YEAR AND CHAIN IT OFF THE 52ND?" THE STORE MANAGER REPLIED, "BECAUSE I NEVER WANT YOU TO FORGET THAT THE PARKING LOT BELONGS TO THE GROCERY STORE, NOT THE CHURCH."

THE FIRST FOLLY OF THE RICH FOOL WAS THAT HE THOUGHT HE OWNED EVERYTHING.

THE RICH FOOL'S 2<sup>ND</sup> FOLLY WAS: GREED.

NOTICE THAT HIS BARNs WERE ALREADY FULL. SEE VERSE 18.

AN INTERVIEWER ASKED MR. ROCKEFELLER, ONE OF THE RICHEST MEN IN THE WORLD, "HOW MUCH MONEY IS ENOUGH?"

ROCKEFELLER REPLIED, "JUST A LITTLE BIT MORE."

BY THE TIME ROCKEFELLER WAS FIFTY-THREE HIS LIFE WAS A WRECK. THROUGHOUT HIS BUSINESS CAREER HE SAID, "I NEVER PLACED MY HEAD UPON THE PILLOW AT NIGHT WITHOUT REMINDING MYSELF THAT MY SUCCESS MIGHT ONLY BE TEMPORARY." HE WAS THE RICHEST MAN IN THE WORLD AND YET HE WAS MISERABLE IN EVERY SENSE OF THE WORD. HE WAS SICK PHYSICALLY, MENTALLY, AND EMOTIONALLY. THERE WAS NO HUMOR, BALANCE, OR JOY IN HIS LIFE.

THEN A TRANSFORMATION OCCURRED. HE DETERMINED TO BECOME A GIVER RATHER THAN AN ACCUMULATOR. HE BEGAN TO GIVE HIS MILLIONS AWAY. HE FOUNDED THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION, DEDICATED TO FIGHTING DISEASE AND FUND EDUCATION AROUND THE WORLD. HE LIVED TO BE NINETY-EIGHT YEARS OLD AND WAS A HAPPY MAN IN THOSE YEARS BECAUSE OF HIS NEW AND REVITALIZED DEFINITION OF SUCCESS.

THE ANTIDOTE TO GREED IS GENEROSITY...GIVING.

THE WORD "GIVE" IS USED OVER 1500 TIMES IN THE BIBLE.

THE ESSENCE OF CHRISTIANITY IS GIVING. THE BIBLE SAYS THAT GOD IS A GIVER.

THE BIBLE SAYS "GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE." WHEN GOD WANTS US TO GIVE, ALL HE WANTS US TO DO IS BECOME LIKE HIMSELF. GOD IS A GIVER. HE'S GIVEN TO US. HE WANTS US TO LEARN TO BE GIVERS. GENEROSITY SHOULD BE THE STANDARD WE LIVE BY.

A BARBER IN A SMALL TOWN WAS BUSY CUTTING HAIR ONE DAY WHEN THE LOCAL COP WALKED IN TO GET A HAIRCUT. AND THE BARBER WAS FEELING A BIT GENEROUS THAT DAY, SO HE SAID TO THE COP...

"SINCE YOU DO SUCH A GOOD JOB PROTECTING US, AND WATCHING OVER US... TODAY'S HAIRCUT IS FREE."

THE COP SAID HE APPRECIATED THAT, AND THE NEXT DAY WHEN THE BARBER SHOWED UP AT HIS SHOP, THERE WERE A DOZEN DONUTS WAITING FOR HIM.

IN WALKS A LOCAL FLORIST. THE BARBER TELLS HIM HOW MUCH HE APPRECIATES ALL THE WORK THAT HE HAS DONE AROUND TOWN, PLANTING BUSHES AND FLOWERS AND MAKING THE TOWN LOOK REAL NICE, SO HE GIVES HIM A FREE HAIRCUT.

THE NEXT DAY, THE BARBER SHOWS UP AT HIS SHOP AND THERE ARE A DOZEN FLOWERS WAITING FOR HIM.

IN WALKS THE LOCAL PREACHER, THE BARBER TELLS HIM HOW HE IS FEELING GENEROUS THAT DAY, AND HOW MUCH HE APPRECIATES ALL HIS HARD WORK WITH THE CHILDREN AND TAKING CARE OF THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE, SO THE PREACHER GETS A FREE HAIRCUT.

THE NEXT DAY, THE BARBER SHOWS UP AT HIS SHOP, AND THERE ARE A DOZEN PREACHERS WAITING THERE FOR HIM.

I WANT TO LOOK AT ANOTHER WORD THAT IS OPPOSITE OF GREED...CONTENTMENT.

THE RICH FOOL WASN'T CONTENT WITH HAVING SMALL, FULL BARNS. HE WANTED BIG FULL BARNS.

YET, HOW OFTEN I STRUGGLE WITH THE ISSUE OF CONTENTMENT.

RATHER THAN THANKING GOD FOR THE CAR I DRIVE...I IMAGINE HAVING A YUKON XL. I HAVE TO LEARN WITH THE APOSTLE PAUL WHO PENNED THESE WORDS FROM PRISON, "I HAVE LEARNED IN WHATEVER STATE I AM TO BE CONTENT." PHILIPPIANS 4:11

RICH OR POOR, PERSECUTED OR PRAISED, ALONE OR SURROUNDED BY FRIENDS...

WHAT WAS PAUL'S KEY TO FINDING CONTENTMENT?

PHILIPPIANS 4:13, "I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHO STRENGTHENS ME."

I TIM. 6:6 "GODLINESS WITH CONTENTMENT IS GREAT GAIN."

THE THIRD FOLLY OF THE RICH FOOL IS THAT HE LIVED ONLY FOR THE PRESENT.

READ LUKE 12:19-21

NOTICE THE FINAL CONTRAST IN VERSE 21... FOR HIMSELF VS. TOWARD GOD.

WHERE IS OUR FOCUS TODAY. LIVING FOR TEMPORARY PLEASURE.

TRYING TO FILL THE VOID IN OUR LIVES WITH THE PLEASURES OF THIS WORLD. FOLLOWING THE PATH OF NOAH'S DAY...EATING, DRINKING AND BEING MERRY. NOT RECOGNIZING THE TEMPORARY NATURE OF LIFE.

YOU'VE HEARD THE SAY, "HE WHO DIES WITH THE MOST TOYS WINS."

SOMEONE MORE PERCEPTIVELY CHANGED THE LINE TO, "HE WHO DIES WITH THE MOST TOYS STILL DIES."

THE THINGS OF THIS EARTH ARE TEMPORARY! THE PARTING LINE OF THIS PARABLE IS A CHALLENGE TO BECOME RICH TOWARD GOD.

LIVE A LIFE OF SERVICE, SHARE THE BLESSINGS GOD HAS GIVEN, AND SHARE THE MESSAGE OF ETERNAL LIFE WITH OTHERS.

LET'S AVOID THE RICH FOOL'S FOLLIES.

1. RECOGNIZE GOD'S BLESSINGS.
2. LIVE A LIFE OF GENEROSITY
3. FOCUS OUR RESOURCES TOWARD HEAVEN