

February 23, 2025

What Is in Your Storage Room?

Most of us spend much of our time earning money. We train for professions as young people, try to manage our careers as we mature, and then save toward retirement as we age. Money not only allows us to have the things we need and want; it also gives us a sense of financial security. If we have enough money, we can take care of ourselves and our loved ones. It's prudent and wise to be careful with our money and make sure that we have enough.

But the Gospel of Luke frequently highlights the tension between having wealth and following Jesus. Luke 12:13-21 begins when a man asks Jesus to adjudicate a disagreement with his brother about their inheritance. Jesus refused because he thought that the man was motivated by greed. Jesus wanted him to focus on his teaching, the source of spiritual wealth.

Then Jesus told a parable that contradicts what we've been taught about the wisdom of saving money and so seems disturbing. We want to be responsible and be able to take care of ourselves even in difficult times. The farmer had a bumper crop and hoped to save his bounty so that he could be secure for the rest of his life. He decided to tear down his barns and build bigger ones to store his grain, but on that day, he died. His careful planning was wasted, and God called him a fool. Why was he foolish? It's because he was completely focused on his own comfort and security and wasn't thinking about the kingdom of God. He didn't feel as though he was part of a community with the support and security he could find within it and didn't respond to the responsibilities of caring for others.

When God blessed the man with bounty, he only thought of how he could increase his own pleasure. Although he may have professed a belief in God, he lived as though God's call to service didn't matter. He planned to invest in a shallow life of hedonism instead of using his blessings to bless others. He rejected the calls of the kingdom and forgot that the kingdom is eternal, while life is fleeting.

Our work on earth is to invest in the kingdom of God by responding to the human need that is all around us. When God blesses us, we are to then be a blessing and ask ourselves how we can use our time, our talents, and our finances to further God's kingdom.

The rich fool thought he would be happy with possessions, living a life of ease. Jesus taught that true joy comes through a life of discipleship—trusting in God and being a member of the blessed community that serves the Lord.

1. How can you use your resources to bless others rather than just securing your own comfort?
2. How can you cultivate a mindset of generosity and recognize opportunities to serve within your community?
3. What changes do you need to make to prioritize trust in God and service over the pursuit of personal wealth and comfort?

Adapted from *Daily Bible Studies*, Winter 2024–2025, by Timothy Merrill (Cokesbury, 2024).