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Messages to Seekers of Success

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Sunday School Lesson

(By REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D. D. Teacher of English Bible in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)

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LESSON FOR DECEMBER 24

A LESSON IN TRUST AND PREPAREDNESS

LESSON TEXT—Luke 12:13-40.

GOLDEN TEXT—The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment—Luke 12:23.

PRIMARY TOPIC—The Story of a Foolish Rich Man.

JUNIOR TOPIC—A Foolish Rich Man.

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—Rich Toward God.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—True Riches.

Since on October 8 we had a lesson on the birth and childhood of Jesus many will doubtless prefer to have this new lesson instead of the Christmas lesson.

I. A Warning Against Covetousness (vv. 13-21).

1. The Occasion (vv. 13-15). One of the company requested Jesus to be umpire in a disputed estate. Two brothers were in trouble over an inheritance. Christ refused to enter the sphere of the civil law and warned against the spirit of avarice. Christ's mission was preeminently spiritual.

2. Enforcement of the Warning (vv. 16-21). The parable of the rich man shows clearly that to be concerned with earthly riches while neglecting God is the height of folly. The Lord's warning is of great importance today; for many are seeking gold and forgetting God. Note (1) his increase in goods (v. 16). His riches were rightly obtained, for the ground brought forth plentifully. This shows that a man may be rich because of the Lord's blessing upon him. (2) His perplexity (v. 17). His land was producing more than his barns would hold. He did not want it to go to waste. If he had possessed the right views of life and a sense of stewardship before God, he would have seen that his barns at least had enough for his personal needs and that he could have distributed his surplus to the needy and for benevolent purposes. (3) The fatal choice (vv. 18, 19). He chose to enlarge his barns and give up his life to ease and luxury. It ought to be a delightful task for men whom God has made rich to devote their time and energy to the distribution of their possessions to benevolent purposes. (4) The awful indictment (vv. 20, 21). God calls him a fool.

II. The Certain Cure for Anxiety (vv. 32-34).

Having shown the folly of the rich man who gained gold but lost God, He now urged the disciples to trust God and dismiss all anxious care. He assured them that they need not be anxious even for the necessities of life. Note:

1. The Argument (vv. 22, 23). This is summed up in one brief sentence: "The life is more than food, and the body is more than raiment." The God who gave the life and made the body should be trusted to provide food and clothing.

2. The Illustrations (vv. 24-28). (1) God's care for the fowls (vv. 24-26). The ravens do not sow nor reap—they have not storehouse or barn, yet they live, for God feeds them. If God does not forget the fowls, certainly He would do more for His children. (2) God's care for the flowers of the field (vv. 27, 28). If God is so careful of those flowers which appear but for a day, how much more will He clothe His children!

3. The Exhortations (vv. 29-34). (1) Make not the getting of food and clothes your chief concern. Trust God to provide them. (2) Seek the kingdom of God (v. 31). Those who make God's kingdom first shall have all their needs supplied (Phil. 4:19). (3) Be not afraid (v. 32). God's good pleasure is upon His own, and all good things will He give them. (4) Practice self-denial in order to be able to give gifts to those in need (vv. 33, 34). The doing of such deeds will tend to lift the thoughts upward to God—to trust Him.

III. Be Ready for the Coming of the Lord (vv. 35-40).

Having warned the disciples against the acquisition of worldly goods while forgetting God, and shown them the needlessness of anxiety for food and clothes, He shows them the blessedness of being in a state of readiness when the Lord shall come. Conviction as to the certainty of the Lord's coming is the sure cure for worldliness and anxious care. This attitude of heart He made clear by two parables—that of the returning of the Lord and that of the thief. The Lord will be so pleased with those who are waiting for Him that He will take delight in sitting at the banquet with them, and even serve them. The parable of the thief shows that the time of the Lord's coming is not known.

Paul's Wish.

I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.—Philippians 3:8-11.

So Many Ravens.

The Lord never had so many ravens as he has this morning.—T. DeWitt Talmage.

God Is Known Everywhere.

In Judah is God known; His name is great in Israel.—Psalm 76:1.

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HOBBS

Mrs. J. R. Ricards who has been spending some time with her sister Mrs. B. B. Allen in Washington has returned home.

Mrs. Manning Merriken spent the first of the week with her mother Mrs. Louise Moore in Federalsburg.

Christmas services will be held at Ames Church Sunday evening. The Program Training For Service will be used. There will also be service Christmas morning, preaching by the pastor followed by an old-fashioned testimony meeting.

Mr. Carroll Bright who has been working in Norrisville, Pa., has returned home to spend the Christmas holidays with his mother Mrs. C. E. Bright.

Mr. George Henry slaughtered the largest hog that has been slaughtered in this town this season, its weight being 707 pounds.

Mr. and Mrs. William Stafford had as their guest on Sunday Mr. Albert Dukes and family.

Miss Annia Tarr was in Hillsboro on Tuesday calling on friends.

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QUESTIONS and Bible Answers

If Parents will encourage children to look up and memorize the Bible Answers, it will prove a priceless heritage to them in after years.

Where do we find the fountain of life?—Psalm 36:7-9

What does a patient trust and delight in God bring?—Psalm 37:3-5

Why is a little that a righteous man hath, better than the riches of many wicked?—Psalm 37:32-37

CONCORD

Mr. and Mrs. Boston Teat of Baltimore are spending a few weeks with Mr. and Mrs. J. Ben Welch.

Miss Katherine Thawley and Mr. Earl Love spent last Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Maloney.

Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Lord made a business trip to Easton last Saturday.

Mr. N. W. Dukes visited friends in Easton last Sunday.

Mrs. Virginia St. John has gone to Washington for a two week stay.

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Miscellaneous

MONEY TO LOAN on mortgages. Fred R. Owens, Attorney-at-Law, Denton, Md.

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