

Subject: *Living for God*

Scripture: *Luke 12:13-21*

Someone from the crowd wanted Christ to tell his brother to divide the inheritance with him. Christ is the appointed Judge of all men, but He declined to get involved in this petty dispute over money and material things. Christ took the opportunity to teach a lesson about the danger of coveting things. He said the most important thing in life is not the things we have. To teach the lesson Christ told a parable (a simple) story about a rich farmer. It is called “The Parable of the Rich Fool.” It begins in verse 16 and continues to verse 20. Then in verse 21 Christ concludes with a final statement.

This parable is a simple story about a farmer who had abundant crops and had to build bigger barns for his huge harvest. The farmer was content and enjoyed his wealth. He thought he had many years to enjoy himself, but his life was cut short and he died suddenly one night. God called him a fool because he had lived for things and not for God. It is a powerful story we should think about carefully and deeply. This man had plenty to live on, but nothing to live for. The farmer was a man of means, but his life had no meaning. In verse 21 Christ gives the main point of the story. This man lived for himself and laid up treasure for himself, but he was not rich toward God. What does it mean to be rich toward God or to live for God?

1. A life committed to Christ

Philippians 1:21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Paul couldn't always say that. For many years he would have said to live is to be religious and be respected by others. He had such zeal (enthusiasm) as a Jew that he wanted to persecute Christians and fight against the spread of the Christian faith.

Philippians 3:5-11

Paul was converted and committed himself to Christ on the road to Damascus. We read about his conversion in Acts 9. He asked Christ two questions: “Who are you, Lord?” and “What do you want me to do?” Those questions settle everything in a person's life. From that point on Paul was committed to Christ.

2 Timothy 1:12 I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

Living for God means you are committed to Christ. Are you fully committed to Him?

2. A life rooted in Scripture

The farmer in the parable had misplaced priorities and values. He lived for the wrong world. He was only interested in earthly riches and had no concern for heavenly riches. He lived for himself and not for God. Why? He was worldly wise and spiritually ignorant.

Psalms 1:1-3

Jeremiah 6:16 *Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.*

Almighty God, through the prophet, commands the people to “stand in,” “see,” and “ask” for the “old paths.” For that is the “good way,” His way. God has commanded His people to live this way. It is His way of great blessing. The people are commanded to “walk” in His way and receive glorious rest for their souls. Surely, we all want this great promise. The "old paths" in His Word are the only place we should seek guidance for this life and the next.

Living for God means you are rooted in Scripture. Is your life rooted in Scripture?

3. A life saturated in prayer

Prayer is to your soul what breathing is to your body. In Christ’s parable there is no mention of the rich farmer praying. He talked to himself about building bigger barns and about enjoying his wealth, but no record of him thanking God or asking God for wisdom.

1 Thessalonians 5:17-18 ¹⁷ *Pray without ceasing.* ¹⁸ *In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*

Living for God means you are saturated in prayer. Is your life saturated in prayer?

4. A life concerned about others

The farmer was only concerned about himself, not others.

Philippians 2:4 *Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.*

One of the all-time great movies is “It’s a Wonderful Life” in which the main actor gets to see what a difference his life made in the world. The key was the impact his life made on others.

William Booth started a ministry called the Salvation Army. When his health was failing and was no longer able to attend his annual conference, he sent a message for someone to read. It was one word written on a card: “Others.”

Church life can be summed up in two words: Christ and others. That’s why we exist. We worship and serve Christ and we serve others using our spiritual gifts and abilities.

Romans 12:9-16

Living for God means you are concerned about others. Are you concerned about others?

5. A life devoted to God and His glory

What does that look like? It is a life of humility and fearing God. It is a life of obedience and doing God’s will. It is a life of worship. It is a life invested for God and His purpose in the world. It is a life that is rich toward God. A person can lay up treasure for himself or he can

be rich toward God, but he can't do both. To lay up means to store up, save, set aside. It is something you do on purpose. It is intentional.

Christ said in **Luke 12:34** *Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

A life devoted to God and His glory is what Paul had in mind...

Philippians 2:12-13 *...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God who works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

A life devoted to God is what Peter had in mind...

1 Peter 2:9 *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

If you are rich toward God, your time and energy are invested for God and His glory.

Living for God means you are devoted to God and His glory. Is that true of your life?