

RICH TOWARD GOD

WILLIS 10/11/09

Lk12:13-21

I want to speak to you today concerning the command of Christ for all of us to become rich. **In a day where many are living in fear of scarcity and want, isn't it amazing to think Jesus exhorted us all to become rich.**

- No His focus wasn't rich in relationship to dollars and cents; the heart of the Lord was for all of us to become rich in our posture before God.
- I have entitled what I want to share with is today "Rich Toward God." Our focus these past few weeks has been wealth from a Kingdom perspective. Two weeks ago we looked at the practicing of generosity as the distinguishing factor of the believer.
- It was Randy Alcorn who said, **"We are most like God when we give. Look upon Christ long enough and you will become a giver. Give long enough and you will become like Christ."**
- Man's richness toward God is measured more by what a person gives than by what a person keeps. We give because He first gave. The more we give of ourselves the richer we become toward God.

Lk12:13-21

Life affords us opportunity to become rich in many things. Those who pursue can become rich in experience, rich in knowledge, rich in possessions, rich in retirement, rich in inheritance... All of which are fine, even encouraged provided none of them make us poor toward God.

- **At the end of the day what defines our true measure of wealth is not what we have in the bank; man's true measure of wealth will always be determined by how rich we are toward God.**
- The rich man Jesus spoke of in our text was very rich toward himself but had no riches stored up toward God. His was not a worldview of generosity; his was a worldview of greed. Rich in the standards of this world but he was worthless in his treasures in heaven.
- Greed is a worldview fueled by the religion of humanism. Greed is the opposite spirit of becoming rich toward God. Greed is the central value of the here and now whereas giving is the core value of the eternal.

Richness toward God is never measured by what a person saves up here on earth, to be rich toward God one must store up treasures in heaven.

In Mt19 Jesus said to the rich young ruler, “Do you wish to be complete (perfect, mature, really rich in the truest sense of the word), sell your possessions, give to the poor and you will have treasures in heaven.”

- Treasures in heaven? Wait a minute; I thought you can’t take it with you? **No you can’t take it with you but as Randy Alcorn says, “you can send it on ahead.”** Storing up treasure in heaven is not man’s attempt to take it with us; it is God’s means to send it on ahead.

Mt 6:10-21 “Store up treasures in heaven...” It is a enlightened self interest that is permitted.

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth...” Isn’t it concerning how much focus is given doing what Jesus said not to do and how little time is spent doing what Jesus said to do? Entire industries have been built around financial earth investments but where do we go for eternal treasure investments?

- **I know who to talk to if I want spendable income at retirement but who do I talk to if I want spendable income in heaven?**
- **I know who to talk to if I want to save up an inheritance for my children’s children but what do I do to store up treasures in heaven?**
- **I know what I must have to be rich in the eyes of this world but what must I have to be rich in the eyes of God?**
- **I know I can’t take it with me but what can I send on ahead?**

Let’s take a look at the currency that makes one rich toward God. These are attributes the Bible places economic value upon thereby giving us riches toward God and perhaps, spendable income in heaven. (Have you ever considered you would need spendable income in heaven?)

1. **Rich in humility, integrity and the fear of the Lord: Pr22:1; 4** Humility is a wealth we can send on ahead. The integrity of name and reputation is a wealth we can send on ahead. The fear of the Lord translates into riches that can be sent on ahead.
 - **To store up treasures in heaven is to abound in humility, integrity and the fear of the Lord.** To get humility, integrity and the fear of the Lord is to become rich before God.
2. **Rich in Wisdom: Pr8:18** “With wisdom are riches, honor, enduring wealth and righteousness.” Enduring wealth is wealth that is being stored up in heaven. The fact that it endures means it must be needed. Apparently heaven is not the ultimate socialist state.
 - **To store treasures up in heaven is to get wisdom. No wonder Solomon tells us in all of our getting, get wisdom.** Wisdom is an enduring wealth spendable in heaven. To get wisdom is to become rich toward God.
3. **Rich in Faith: Jm2:5** “Has not God chosen those who are poor in this world to be rich in faith.” Faith is the currency of the Kingdom. Faith was never meant to be the means for man’s selfish gain; rather faith is the means into the pleasure of God.

- **To store up treasures in heaven is to step out into opportunities of faith.** Those who walk on water will be rich in heaven. Those who live out on the limb will dwell with treasures in heaven. Spend faith now and you will become rich toward God.
4. **Rich in the Preservation of Truth: 2Jn8** Though truth is enduring, many change their minds like it was fleeting. Though stewardship is eternal, many change convictions as if commitments had no consequences. Entrustments preserved = eternal reward.
- **To store up treasures in heaven is to abide in the entrustments given by God even at the cost of personal desire.** To hold on to truth, convictions and commitments through the time of testing is to become rich toward God.
5. **Rich in Giving: Mk10:21** “Give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven.” Giving is everything to those who have nothing they did not receive. All that we have we have because we have been made rich in the grace of God. But to keep it we must give it away.
- **To store up treasure in heaven we must elevate our giving in response to the grace we have received.** One writer said, “Giving is a reflexive response to the grace of God. Grace is the action, giving is the reaction. We give because He first gave.”
 - We are most like God when we give; consequently every act of giving is to be seen not as expenditure but as an investment. As we invest through giving we become rich toward God.

Gen11:1-9

The Tower of Babel is the story of temporal success at the cost of eternal reward. It's the consequence of human ambition void of divine initiative. **It's at the point of God's evaluation that the true prosperity of man's work is measured.**

- Every house looks good before God comes down, the question however is, how does it look after He came down? Did you build with brick (the product of man's hands) or did you build with stone? (the product of God's hands)
- **Did you spend your life becoming rich toward self or invest your life to become rich toward God?**

If God came down today what would be the value of your eternal treasure? Yes, saved by grace and going to heaven by faith but will you have treasure once you get there. Begin now to invest in those things that make you rich toward God and give you spendable income in heaven.