

LOVE GOD MORE THAN ANYTHING

One day, our Lord Jesus told this parable. A parable is a story that has a special meaning. He said, "Once there was a very rich man. One year, the man's crops grew so well that he didn't know what to do! He had too much grain to fit into his barns. 'What should I do?' the man wondered.

"Then he got an idea. 'I know what I'll do. I will tear down these old barns and build great big ones! Then I can store all of my grain AND all of my stuff! Then I will tell myself, 'Self, you have plenty of food, and stuff to last you for many years. Relax! Eat all you want! Drink what you want! Be happy!'"

"But God said to that greedy rich man, 'You are foolish. Tonight you will die. All that stuff you worked for and kept to yourself will be left behind. You will not have it.'"

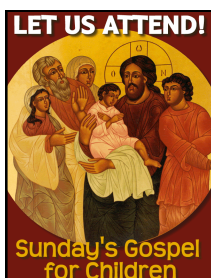
Then Jesus said, "That is what it is like for someone who works hard to get money and things just for himself and is not rich in the things of God. Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear!"



Icon courtesy of Iconographics (www.theologic.com)

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Where did the rich man store his crops?
2. What problem did he have in this story?
3. When the man died, could he take all of his things with him?
4. Our Lord Jesus wanted us to learn what is really important. Is our stuff important? What is?
5. How can you show that the things of God are important to you?



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Pre-12



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Materials:

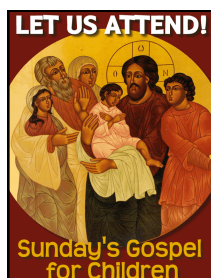
- icon of Christ
- bag of treasured items that belong to your child (prepare this ahead of time)
- 2 cards prepared ahead of time, one that says, "Love God" with a picture of Jesus, and one that says, "Love Stuff" with a picture of a toy.



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Procedure:

1. After reading the gospel story to your child, take time to review the discussion questions following the story.
2. Present your child with their bag of treasured belongings prepared by you ahead of time. Have your child dump the contents out on the table. Ask your child to tell you how they feel about those things and discuss how important these material items may seem to us.
3. Remind your child that when we go to heaven, we will not be taking any of our belongings with us. What waits for us in heaven is much better than anything we could possibly ever have on earth. Discuss with your child how we need to be thinking about God more than our treasures on earth because we want to be living our lives on earth in a way that is pleasing to God so that we can enjoy eternal life with God in heaven.
4. Ask your child once again about the importance of our belongings. Are they really as important as we sometimes think they are?
5. Discuss with your child what we can do to focus on things of God rather than our things on earth. How can we show that we love God more than our "stuff"? (By giving to others, praying, reading scriptures, going to church, helping others, thanking God for the things we have, tithing our money, etc.)
6. Tell your child that you will be playing a game. The object of the game is to take steps toward you as you hold the icon of Christ. If they reach you, they win! Tell your child that you will read a sentence. If that sentence is an example of Loving God, they will hold up the appropriate card and take a step toward you. If that sentence is an example of Loving "stuff", they will hold up the appropriate card and stay where they are.
7. Read the following sentences in any order:
 - ~ Michael decided to give 3 of his toys away because he got 3 new ones for his birthday.
 - ~ At Christmas time, Anna and her family served food at the local soup kitchen.
 - ~ One Sunday morning, Sam decided to stay home and play with his fun new video game instead of going to church.
 - ~ When Elizabeth received her allowance, she saved part of it to take to church for tithing.
 - ~ Rachel was jealous and angry when her friend earned a better prize than she did.
 - ~ Jared hid all his good toys when his friend came over so he didn't have to share them.
 - ~ Ashley remembered to thank God before eating dinner.
 - ~ Adam chose to listen to a gospel story instead of watching his favorite TV show.
8. Allow your child to come up with examples of loving God more than "stuff" if the game is still not completed. Have your child take a step closer to you for each example stated.
9. Remind your child that God does want us to have things that make us happy, but he does not want us to love those things more than we love Him. Strive to always love God more than anything.



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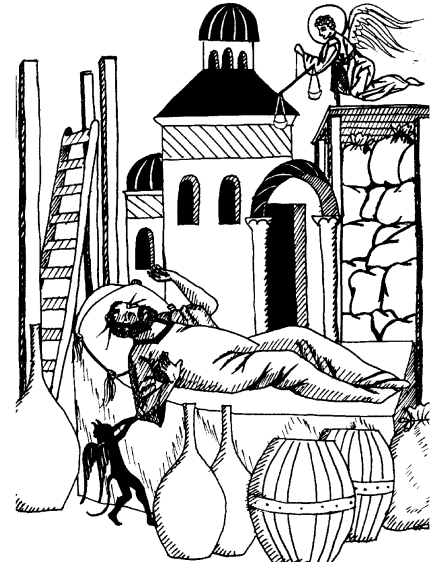
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"Then he got an idea. 'I know what I'll do. I will tear down these old barns and build great big ones! Then I can store all of my grain and all of my stuff! Then I will tell myself, 'Self, you have plenty of food, and stuff to last you for many years. Relax! Eat all you want! Drink what you want! Be happy!'"

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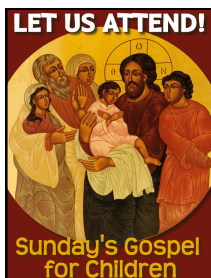
Then Jesus said, "That is what it is like for someone who works hard to get money and things just for himself and is not rich in the things of God. Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear!" Jesus really wants everyone to learn from this story!



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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Where did the rich man store his crops?
2. What problem did he have in this story?
3. When the man died, could he take all of his things with him?
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The Lord spoke this parable,

“The land of a rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ And he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones; and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat,

drink, be merry.’ But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

As he said these things, Jesus cried out: “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

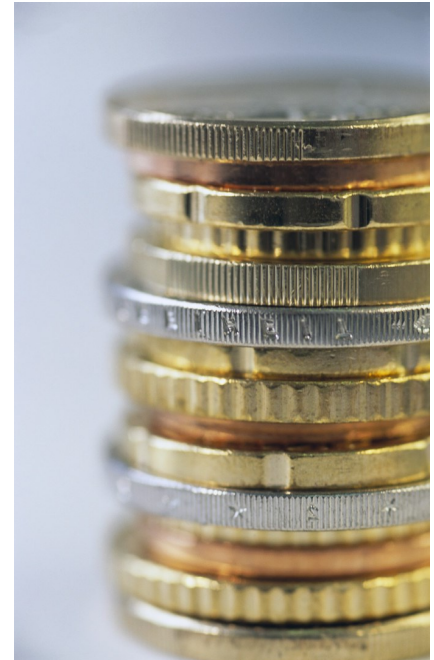
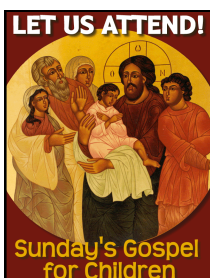


Image courtesy of sxc.hu

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Who does the Lord tell a parable about?
2. What does the rich man want to do with his crops? Have you ever wanted to save something for another day? What did you want to save?
3. What did God mean when he said that this night the man’s soul would be required of him? Where will his crops be, then?
4. What is your “barn”? Are the things you own more important to you than your relationship with Jesus?
5. What does the Gospel mean when it says be “rich toward God”? Why should we be rich toward God?



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Characters: Narrator, Jesus, Man, God

Narrator: The Lord spoke this parable,

Jesus: The land of a rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought to himself,

Man: What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?

Jesus: And he said,

Man: I will do this: I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones; and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.'

Jesus: But God said to him,

God: Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?

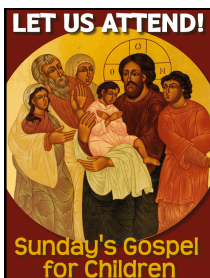
Jesus: So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

Narrator: As he said these things, Jesus cried out:

Jesus: He who has ears to hear, let him hear.



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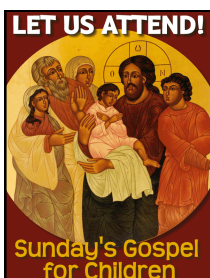
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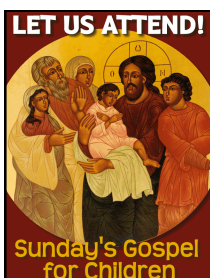
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