

LOVE GOD MORE THAN ANYTHING

The Lord taught this lesson. A rich man had a large farm. He had lots and lots of food from his farm. He stored all the food and grain in his barn. Soon his barn was too small. He wondered what to do. Then he said, "I will build a bigger barn. Then I can take it easy and enjoy all the things that I own, for the rest of my life."

But God said to him, "You are very, very foolish! This is the night that you are to die. You have paid attention to the things that you own. You have not paid attention to living close to me in prayer and worship. You cannot take your barns and all your possessions with you. What good are they now?"

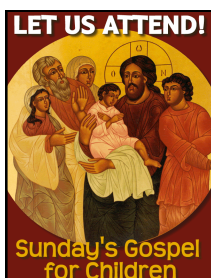
Jesus wanted us to listen carefully to this story and to learn the answer to this question. "What is most important in life?" Not things, but living close to God.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. In the story Jesus told, a farmer was very rich. Where did he store the food and grain and what he owned?
2. He had a problem and wondered what to do. What was his problem?
3. In the story, God told the man he was foolish because he was always thinking about what he owned. He should have paid attention to what instead?
4. When the man died, would he take his things with him?
5. Jesus wanted us to learn what is most important in life. Are things most important? What is most important?



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Pre-12



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Materials:

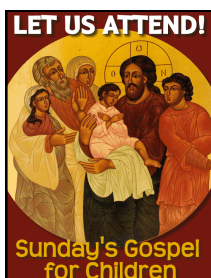
- * icon of Christ
- * bag of treasured items that belong to your child (prepare this ahead of time)
- * 2 cards prepared ahead of time, one that says, "Love God" with a picture of Jesus, and one that says, "Love Stuff" with a picture of a toy.

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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One day, our Lord Jesus told a 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.'"

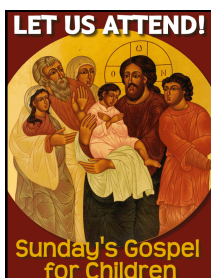
Then Jesus said, "That is what it is like for someone who works hard to get money and things just for himself and is not rich in the things of God. Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear!" Jesus really wants everyone to learn from this story!



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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. In the story Jesus told, a farmer was very rich. The rich farmer had a problem and wondered what to do. What was his problem?
2. What idea did he have to solve his problem?
3. In the story, God told the man he was foolish because he was always thinking about the stuff that he owned. What did God say was going to happen to the man that night?
4. Would he be able to take many things with him?
5. If we can't keep all of our stuff forever, then what is most important in life?
6. Do you have ears? Do you use them to hear? Our Lord Jesus said, "Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear!" He meant that we should not just listen to the lessons He teaches us. We should also DO what he teaches us!



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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.”

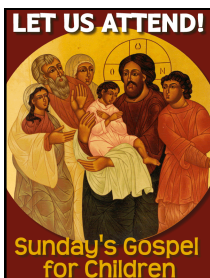
As he said these things, Jesus cried out: “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”



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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. What does it mean, that the land “brought forth plentifully”? Was that good or bad for the rich man?
2. What do you think of the man’s plans to build bigger barns?
3. Why do you think God didn’t like those plans?
4. If you were there, what would you have told the rich man to do with all his extra crops? Would God like your plan for them? Why or why not?
5. What does it mean to “lay up treasure” for yourself?
6. What can we learn from this parable?
7. What kind of treasure do you want to have in your life? What are you doing about it?



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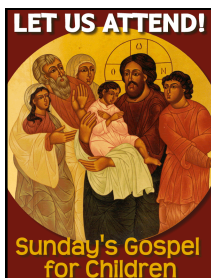
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Characters: Narrator, Jesus, Man, God

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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FOOL!

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.”

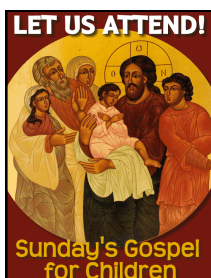
As he said these things, Jesus cried out: “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”



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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. What does the rich man have more of than he needs? What do you have more than enough of?
2. What does the rich man think he should do with his excess? What else could he do with it?
3. What is the problem with the man’s plan according to God?
4. What does this say about us?
5. What does the Gospel mean when it says be “rich toward God?” What could the man in this story do to be rich toward God?
6. What could you do to be rich toward God?



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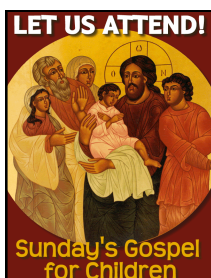
As he said these things, Jesus cried out: “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”



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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. What is the man in this story busy thinking about?
2. What should he be busy thinking about according to this Gospel? Why?
3. What does it mean to be rich? What does it mean to do an action toward someone?
4. What does a person have to do in order to be rich toward someone? So, what do you think being rich toward God means?
5. What are you busy worrying about? How can you give that part of your life away to God?
6. What would you have to do in order to be rich toward God with that part of your life?



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