

It is human nature to crave for material possessions. Those who covet riches assume that such things can give them a sense of security and happiness. In reality, it is not so. Greed for wealth and other earthly pleasures can destroy personal joy and family harmony because true living does not depend on possessions alone.

The Story of the rich fool

The Lord Jesus tells us a story to illustrate this truth.

There was once a rich man who had land which bore good crops. He began to think to himself. “I don’t have enough space to keep all my crops. What can I do?

This is what I will do, he told himself; “I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, where I will store my corn and all my other goods. Then I will say to myself, Lucky man! You have all the good things you need for many years. Take life easy, eat, drink and enjoy

yourself!” but God said to him, ‘you fool! This very night you will have to give up your life; then who will get all these things you have kept for yourself?

And Jesus concluded, “This is how it is with those who pile up riches for themselves but are not rich in God’s sight.”

(Luke 12: 16-21)

The uncertainty of riches

Jesus warns all who attach permanent value in earthly treasures against the fatality of their pursuits.

Do not store up riches for yourselves here on earth, where moths and rust destroy, and robbers break in and steal. Instead, store up riches for yourselves in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and robbers cannot break in and steal. For your heart will always be where your riches are.

(Matthew 6:19-21)

Seek the real treasure

Jesus’s emphasis on seeking the real and lasting treasure should serve as a warning to us in life. He assures us that those who seek it earnestly will find it.

“The Kingdom of heaven is like this. A man happens to find a treasure hidden in a field. He covers it up again, and is so happy that he goes and sells everything he has, and then goes back and buys that field.

Also, the Kingdom of heaven is like this. A man is looking for fine pearls, and when he finds one that is unusually fine, he goes and sells everything he has and buys that pearl.”

(Matthew 13:44-45)

“Ask, and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you, for everyone who asks will receive, and anyone who seeks will find, and the door will be opened to him who knocks.

(Matthew 13:7; 7-8)

God’s assurance of his care

Jesus taught that true detachment from earthly desires can be achieved only by those who trust in God’s care for their needs in the present and in the future. This is the true basis of eternal happiness.

This is why I tell you not to be worried about the food and drink you need in order to stay alive, or about clothes

for your body. After all, isn’t life worth more than food? And isn’t the body worth more than clothes? Look at the birds flying around; they do not sow seeds, gather a harvest and put it in barns; yet your Father in heaven takes care of them! Aren’t you worth much more than birds?

Can any of you live a bit longer by worrying about it?

And why worry about clothes Look how the wild flowers grow: they do not work or make clothes for themselves. But I tell you that not even King Solomon with all his wealth had clothes as beautiful as one of these flowers. It is God who clothes the wild grass – grass that is here today and gone tomorrow, burnt up in the oven. Won’t he be all the more sure to clothe you? How little faith you have!

So do not start worrying: Where will my food come from? Or my drink? Or my clothes?

(These are the things the pagans are always concerned about.) Your Father

in heaven knows that you need all these things. *(Matthew 6:25-32)*

True riches

There was a sage named St. Paul, a disciple of Jesus. He had this to share about true riches.

Well, religion does make a person very rich, if he is satisfied with what he has. What did we bring into the world? Nothing! What can we take out of the world? Nothing! So then, if we have food and clothes, that should be enough for us. But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and are caught in the trap of many foolish and harmful desires, which pull them down to ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a source of all kinds of evil. Some have been so eager to have it that they have wandered away from the faith and have broken their hearts with many sorrows. Command those who are rich in the things of this life not to be proud, but to place their hope, not in such an uncertain thing as riches but in God, who generously gives us everything for our enjoyment. Command them

to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share with others. In this way they will store up for themselves a treasure which will be a solid foundation for the future. And then they will be able to win the life which is true life. *(1 Timothy 6:6-10; 17-19)*

What should we seek?

The Bible answers:

"So do not start worrying... Your Father in heaven knows... Instead, be concerned above everything else with the Kingdom of God and with what he requires of you, and he will provide you with all these other things.

(Matthew 6:31-33)

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