

The Messenger



“... How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!” Romans 10:15

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On Building Bigger Barns

by John Bassford

As Luke the 12th chapter opens, Jesus is surrounded by thousands of people wanting to hear His teaching. He has just left the house of the Pharisee after eating lunch with him when He encounters a multitude. He first speaks to His disciples before being interrupted by someone in the crowd saying, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me” (v. 13). This statement was purely selfish in nature, made possibly by a younger brother upset by the fact that his older brother had received a double portion of the family wealth. It provided Jesus an opportunity to give the crowd a warning (v. 15) and tell them a parable (vs. 16-21). Notice that the interests of men haven’t changed much in two thousand years.

“And He told them a parable saying, The land of a certain rich man was very productive. And he began reasoning to himself, saying, What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops? And he said, This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and all my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come, take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said to him, You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared? So is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God” (vs. 16-21).

This rich man wasn’t dishonest. He gained his wealth honestly from the fruitfulness of his ground. In pulling down his barns and building bigger ones, he wasn’t directly hurting anyone or doing anything mean. In fact, he may have helped some by providing them with employment. The rich man didn’t even purpose a life of drunkenness, dissipation, or crime. But he was consumed with self. Like the rich young ruler in Luke 18, he was most likely a good man but one who was unwilling to sacrifice his own comforts. He proposed to selfishly hoard everything for himself. He planned to enjoy ease, not considering the ease of anyone else. He planned to eat, drink, and be merry; he wanted to be comfortable and happy.

Our desires are strikingly similar. We make our money by honest means and live a clean, moral life. We don’t want to hurt anyone. We just want to be comfortable and happy. If that means having to build a bigger barn or two now and again, then so be it. But as the rich man showed us,

barn building can be dangerous. We can become so consumed with self, with comfort, with happiness, that we lose sight of what is really important. Building barns in itself isn't wrong. It's our attitude towards those barns and the emphasis we place on them that can cost us our souls.

When we find ourselves caught up in barn-building at the expense of all else, it helps to keep in mind a few pertinent passages of scripture. *"For what does a man profit if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?"* We may have the biggest barn collection in the world when we die, but if we have neglected spiritual things we haven't profited at all. We've simply exchanged seasonal comfort for eternal agony! Anyone with good business sense knows the long term benefits are more important than the short term. Yet it seems those Christians with the best business sense can't see that simple truth in the spiritual realm. They continue laying up earthly treasures which are only short term investments and neglect heavenly treasures which are certainly long term! Jesus tells the disciples how to reap these long term rewards: *"Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves purses which do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near, nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is there will your heart be also"* (Luke 12:33-34).

Instead of building so many barns, let's begin building today on a "house not made with hands" – a home in heaven!



Nine Great Ideas: "All Mine"

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|---------------------------------|---|---|
| 1. My idea of visitation | - | Everybody comes to see me |
| 2. My idea of sympathy | - | Everyone suffering with me |
| 3. My idea of a sinner | - | The man for whom I have a great dislike |
| 4. My idea of a meek man | - | The man who yields to me |
| 5. My idea of a contentious man | - | The man who takes issue with me |
| 6. My idea of a wise man | - | The man who listens to me |
| 7. My idea of unity | - | Everybody agreeing with me |
| 8. My idea of cooperation | - | Everybody working with me |
| 9. My idea of a good sermon | - | One that fits and hits everybody but me |

News and Notes:

Remember to check the prayer list for those with ongoing spiritual weaknesses and physical illnesses.

"...Pray for one another...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."
James 5:16