

Gain that is Loss (Luke 12:13-21)

A Small Group Outline



1. Praise *(Purpose: To worship God)*

- What are you thankful for this week? *(let the group's secretary write these down in an A4 hardcover or some notebook)*
- Song Service
 - Sing a few songs of praise to God

2. Pray *(Purpose: To carry each others' burdens and to seek the Lord)*

- What challenges did you have this week? *(write these down in an A4 hardcover or some notebook)*
- Go into a season of prayer

3. Review *(Purpose: To learn accountability)*

- Tell us how it went with what you promised to do in last week's meeting? *(e.g. Who did your share your faith with this past week? Who did you minister to? How did actioning your I WILL STATEMENT go?)*
- Where people have failed to fulfil what they said they would, do not be harsh with them but gently encourage them to try again in the coming week. Give them more support by phoning or joining them in the week.

4. Give *(Purpose: To be good stewards of our monies)*

- This is the time to return tithes and offerings. If done electronically, kindly ensure that you get the bank account details of your local church from your treasurer. Don't forget to complete an envelope and to send the breakdown to him/her.

5. Discover *(Purpose: To learn to listen to God, and be obedient to His Word)*

- **Notes for the facilitator**

- Read *Christ's Object Lessons (COL)*, pp. 252-259
- "'And one of the company said unto Him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.' Through Moses, God had given directions concerning the transmission of property. The eldest son received a double portion of the father's estate (Deuteronomy 21:17), while the younger brothers were to share alike. **This man thinks that his brother has defrauded him of his inheritance. His own efforts have failed to secure what he regards as his due, but if Christ will interpose the end will surely be gained.** He has heard Christ's stirring appeals, and His solemn denunciations of the scribes and Pharisees. If words of such command could be spoken to this brother, he would not dare to refuse the aggrieved man his portion" (COL 253).
- "In the midst of the solemn instruction that Christ had given, this man had revealed his selfish disposition. He could appreciate that ability of the Lord which might work for the advancement of his own temporal affairs; but **spiritual truths had taken no hold on his mind and heart. The gaining of the inheritance was his absorbing theme**" (COL 253).
- "**Jesus could have told this man just what was right.** He knew the right in the case; but the brothers were in a quarrel because both were covetous. Christ virtually said, It is not My work to settle controversies of this kind. **He came for another purpose, to preach the gospel,** and thus to arouse men to a sense of eternal realities" (COL 254)
- "In Christ's treatment of this case is a lesson for all who minister in His name.... They were not to settle the temporal affairs of the people. Their work was to persuade men to be reconciled to God. In this work lay their power to bless humanity. The only remedy for the sins and sorrows of men is Christ. The gospel of His grace alone can cure the evils that curse society. The injustice of the rich toward the poor, the hatred of the poor toward the rich, alike have their root in selfishness, and this can be eradicated

only through submission to Christ. He alone, for the selfish heart of sin, gives the new heart of love” (COL 254).

- **“By the parable of the foolish rich man, Christ showed the folly of those who make the world their all. This man had received everything from God.** The sun had been permitted to shine upon his land; for its rays fall on the just and on the unjust. The showers of heaven descend on the evil and on the good. The Lord had caused vegetation to flourish, and the fields to bring forth abundantly. The rich man was in perplexity as to what he should do with his produce. **His barns were full to overflowing,** and he had no place to put the surplus of his harvest. **He did not think of God, from whom all his mercies had come.** He did not realize that God had made him a steward of His goods that he might help the needy” (COL 256).
- “The situation of the poor, the orphan, the widow, the suffering, the afflicted, was brought to this rich man's attention; there were many places in which to bestow his goods. **He could easily have relieved himself of a portion of his abundance, and many homes would have been freed from want, many who were hungry would have been fed, many naked clothed, many hearts made glad, many prayers for bread and clothing answered, and a melody of praise would have ascended to heaven....** But he closed his heart to the cry of the needy, and said to his servants, “This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods” (COL 256).
- **“This man ... lived as if there were no God, no heaven, no future life;** as if everything he possessed were his own, and he owed nothing to God or man” (COL 257).
- **“While the rich man is looking forward to years of enjoyment, the Lord is making far different plans.** The message comes to this unfaithful steward, ‘Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.’ Here is a demand that money cannot supply. The wealth he has treasured can purchase no reprieve. **In one moment that which he has toiled through his whole life to secure becomes worthless to him”** (COL 258).
- **“To live for self is to perish.** Covetousness, the desire of benefit for self's sake, cuts the soul off from life. **It is the spirit of Satan to get, to draw to self. It is the spirit of Christ to give, to sacrifice self for the good of others”** (COL 259).
- *Read Luke 12:13-21. Preferably let one person read it. Let everyone then put down their Bibles and get the group to reconstruct the passage in their own words. This teaches the group to be careful in quotation Scripture correctly and to use it as the basis of their discussions.*
- **Discussion Questions** (use only a few).
 - What do you think Jesus meant by the words: “Be on your guard against all kinds of greed”?
 - What signs of greed can show up in a person's life?
 - In what ways do people act as if they have many, many years to live?
 - Why is it so difficult for us to accept the fact that our life and things are temporary?
 - Why is it often hard for people to trust God with their money?
 - Share an experience where you saw greed affecting relationships?
 - Why do you think wealth is not equal to happiness, even though many people falsely believe this?
 - How can we practically honour God through the way we think about, and handle our wealth and possessions? (*in other words, how can we be rich to God?*)
 - Why do a number of people run to alcohol, drugs or commit suicide when they lose earthly wealth? Does it say anything about their attachment to material things? (*ask one question at a time*)
 - What compromises to character are Christians sometimes willing to make in order to make money?
 - Do you think people can overestimate, or underestimate, their generosity? In which way?
 - How can we cultivate a greater sensitivity to the practical needs of people around us?

- **Application Questions** (*select a few depending on your time. One has to be the I WILL STATEMENT*)
 - Do you feel you are **rich** toward God in your wealth and possessions?
 - With which of your possessions do you want to be more generous? In which way?
 - Is there someone in need of your generosity at the moment? How do you think you can help?
 - The following test of 5 rhetorical questions can be done (privately in your heart), to stimulate thinking regarding greed and for personal reflection (*it should be read slowly by the facilitator*):
 - Do my thoughts more often run after material things than after God Himself?
 - Do I ever compromise godly character in the pursuit of material gain?
 - Do I enjoy material things more than I enjoy knowing God?
 - How do I respond when I lose material things?
 - What would I do if I suddenly came into a fortune?
 - I WILL STATEMENT: Formulate an I will statement in response to what you have discovered in the Word. Let the group's secretary also record these in an A4 notebook. Ensure that everyone gets a chance to give their I WILL STATEMENT. You have to be specific. E.g. "I will spend the disposable income of my next salary in a way to honour God, and bless people. I would like to do that with my future salaries as well, but for now am committing only to my next salary."

6. Share (*Purpose: To be witnesses of our faith*)

- Do you have anyone you could share today's lesson with this week? *Be specific.*

7. Closing prayer

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