

From Here to ETERNITY

Luke 12:13-21

You Have an Appointment

There is one appointment none of us will miss. In fact none of us will even be able to be late for this appointment. ***"It is appointed unto man once to die and after this to face judgement."*** Hebrews 9:27. There is nothing more certain than death and nothing as uncertain as the time of dying. We should therefore be ready at all times for that which may come at any time.

Beware of Greed

Someone in the crowd urged the Lord Jesus to help him obtain from his brother a better share of the inheritance. The Lord responded with a warning: ***"Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed, a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."*** Luke 12:13

Life is More Than Possessions

And He told them this parable: There was a rich man - a productive man who had plenty. He had power and prosperity and possessions and could live for pleasure - ***"Take life easy, eat, drink and be merry."***

But God said to him: ***"You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get, what you have prepared for yourself?"*** This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich towards God.

Purpose in Life

This rich man was productive. He had plenty of possessions. He had power and prosperity and he could live for pleasure. But he was **unprepared for eternity**. He had no greater purpose than accumulating wealth and living for pleasure. The Lord Jesus calls him a fool.

Practical Atheism

Psalm 14:1 declares that ***"The fool says in his heart, 'there is no God.' They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no-one who does good."*** This rich man was living like a practical atheist - as if God did not exist.

The Complacency of Fools

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Proverbs 9:10. But this man did not fear God - he did not even seem to think about God. That is foolish. Proverbs 1 teaches that those who do not choose to fear the Lord - ***"the waywardness of the simple will kill them and the complacency of fools will destroy them."*** Proverbs 1:29-32.

Unprepared for Eternity

The rich man was a fool because he was unprepared for eternity. Each of us should constantly be ready to die and face God's judgement - because death can strike us at any moment.

Foolishness

The rich man in this parable was a self-centred fool. Eleven times in these 3 verses the man says: ***"Me" "myself" and "I"***, He was a self-centred fool. A godless fool. Purposeless. Unprepared for eternity and therefore a doomed fool.

Where is Your Treasure?

Jesus warned us: ***"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."*** Matthew 6:19-21

The more of heaven we cherish, the less of earth we will covet.

The Trap of Temptation

"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it! But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people eager for money have wandered from the Faith and pierced themselves with many griefs." 1 Timothy 6:6-10

Never Satisfied

"Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied..." Ecclesiastes 5:10

"A greedy man brings trouble to his family..." Proverbs 15:27. In the end his wealth will desert him and he will prove to be a fool (Jeremiah 17:11).

Facing the Inevitable

We do not know when, or under what circumstances, our lives will come to an end. But we do know that when we die we will stand before Almighty God - our Creator and Eternal Judge - and we will have to give an account of our lives - to Him.

"Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear His voice and come out - those who have done good will rise to live and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned." John 5:28-29

A Date with Destiny

"For we must all appear before the Judgement seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due to him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad." 2 Corinthians 5:10

"I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve." Jeremiah 17:10

"And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the Throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. If anyone's name was not found written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." Revelation 20:12-15

A Question of Character

At death we leave behind everything we **have** and we take with us all that we **are**. The character with which we die is the character with which we will appear at the Judgement.

Prepared for Eternity

If you are prepared to die then you are ready for anything. Until you are free to die - you are not free to live. It ought to be our business of every day to prepare for our last day. If we take care of our life - then God will take care of our death.

Live in the Light of Eternity

In the Bible we are told that it is better to go to a funeral than to a party - because the living should always be reminded that death waits for us all (Ecclesiastes 7:2).

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven; a time to be born and a time to die..." Ecclesiastes 3:1-2

"Our days on earth are like a shadow..." 1 Chronicles 29:15

"Each man's life is but a breath." Psalm 39:5

"No man has power over the wind to contain it; so no one has power over the day of his death..." Ecclesiastes 8:8

"Why you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes." James 4:14

"Like water spilled on the ground which cannot be recovered, so we must die..." 2 Samuel 14:14

Being mindful of death should make us serious, industrious and conscientious.

"Only one life, it will soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last"

A Matter of Priorities

The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing. We need to work out our priorities in the light of eternity. We need to invest our time and talents and treasure into those things that are going to last for eternity; the people of God, the Word of God and the Kingdom of God. These are what are ultimately important.

What Really Matters?

In the light of eternity, knowing that you are going to die and stand before the Creator and Eternal Judge, you need to review your life's work, your family relationships, habits and activities.

A Sobering Thought

One day you will be standing before the Judgement throne of Christ where ***"God will judge men's secrets..."*** Romans 2:16, ***"all the harsh words..."*** Jude 15 and ***"judge each man's work impartially..."*** 1 Peter 1:17

Everything Has Consequences

"But I tell you that men will have to give account on the Day of Judgement for every careless word they have spoken." Matthew 12:36

Accountability

"So then, each of us will have to give an account of himself to God," Romans 14:12

In eternity: will any of us regret praying too much? Studying the Bible too intently? Sacrificing too much for God's Kingdom? Being too forgiving? Being too generous? Too evangelistic?

If you knew that you were to die next year - what would you do differently this year?

Work out your priorities in the light of eternity.

You must be ready at all times for that which may happen at any time. Are you ready?

Can you say: "**For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain!**" Philippians 1:21

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