

We want the "utilitarian" Christ. Oh, the things we want to "use" Christ Jesus for! **He does not consent.** Here is wisdom, to know my assignment – to say "no" to things outside the sphere of power God has given (2 Cor. 10:12-18). Even the omnipotent Son of God "cannot" do that which is against His office and nature. He is not the personal property claims lawyer of those who love the possessions of this world.

BUT, He uses the occasion to be our Prophet to give warning and instruction concerning our relationship to our work and possessions. "Beware, be on guard, be vigilant concerning greed in its multiple forms! It is "idolatry" (Col. 3:5; Job 31:24, 25).

Because the imperative requires extra force to reach our dull hearts, **Jesus reinforces His command with an illustrative story.** "Here, let Me give you an example of the kind of man who made the mistake I just warned you against."

Here we are in this world, constantly seeing, thinking, deciding, and acting. **The challenge is to interpret circumstances correctly** from the standpoint of God's wisdom. Two people can look at the same circumstances and come to completely opposite conclusions. Remember the temptation in the Garden.

First of all, **call them Providences.** They are allotted by the Divine Hand. Remember that God frequently gives lots of this world's riches to those He hates. (Edwards)

What do I see? Superabundance. **He talks to himself.** There are 11 "I's" and "my's" in his self-speech. He is not presented as a ruthless tyrant. He is probably a "nice" guy. But He is a selfish man. "How shall I interpret these circumstances of plenty?" The problem and solution were wrongly defined. "I need more space." A bigger problem would be, "Why has my Creator given so generously? How can I learn to thank Him appropriately?" As he reasons with himself, he speaks to his soul. "Soul, you have it made! Take it easy. Eat, drink, and be merry."

But God also speaks to this man's soul. This night a demand is made. Is it "I demand..." or "They are demanding...?" "These things you have served and owned, yet you did not own them, they owned you. Who gets them now? You cannot keep them. Why were you not as concerned about your soul as your possessions?"

"Fool!" Starkly harsh and abrupt, but true. **What a contrast** – "many years; no, this night." "Do not boast about tomorrow. You do not know what a day may bring forth" (Prov. 27:1). "The universe does not present a more affecting sight than an aged sinner, with one foot in the grave, losing all in the world, infinitely more in eternity. A moment, and he is gone." (Charles Bridges)

Here you have it - the result, **the consequences of choices.** "Hoard up treasure for yourself or live with a view to what God considers true riches."

How can a person be "rich toward God?" What does that mean? "To be rich in God is to have the wealth that is found in God. This wealth consists of pardon, peace, and salvation in union with God, and "in God" signifies faith.... Such a man is truly rich, however, little he may have of earthly goods; nor will earthly possessions interfere with his true wealth since he will treat them as Abraham, David, and others did by making them wholly subservient to God." (Lenski)

"God is willing to give those that He hates plenty of earthly things, yes, is willing to give them the best of them, the choicest things that the earth can afford; yet He never bestows upon them any degree of spiritual blessings. No, these things are precious in God's sight, and therefore, too grand to be bestowed on those that He hates... Though He is willing to give those that He hates the best jewels – crowns; yet He never gives them any degree of that pure divine light – holy love – that spiritual anointing – that divine seed - spiritual joy – peace – a foretaste of heaven. By no means will they have the least degree of things of this nature." (Jonathan Edwards) These are gifts far greater than any the world can afford. "Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"

It is NOT enough to refuse to live for the accumulation of worldly riches. What WILL you choose to live for? Only God's riches will satisfy.