

“The fool”

“I’ll say to myself:
Take life easy, eat, drink, and be merry”

From the first reading of this parable, this rich man does not seem as fool as God calls him. Because he possesses a lot of wealth and he seems to be managing it well. Also when the ground produced a good crop and he began having a problem where to store the crops, we notice that he immediately found what he should do.

This rich man can, probably, be the ideal example to many of us. He is a rich man, and that’s good. He is an intelligent and lucky in life, it does not seem that he had done any bad deeds, and he is in the same time a good manager and realist in life. Yet why did God call him “fool”? There are many reasons.

Initially, admittedly, he seems to be congratulating himself, and saying: eat, drink, and be merry...you have plenty of good things laid up for many years... but actually his describing of how his soul, himself, can be merry, sowed that he is ignoring the true life of himself, so he appears as a fool. Indeed, according to divine words man cannot live by bread only, a matter that this rich man has ignored. His mistake is that he is

confused between his goods and the manner in which he himself can be merry. He should in his case buy his happiness with his goods. He should use this abundance of things to nourish himself with true food.

Subsequently, this rich man was, unfortunately, a fool because he could manage his business in life very well, but by contrast, he couldn't make the best use of it. He was a successful manager but an unsuccessful user. He worked well for himself, yet conversely he gained nothing. He appeared a good sower but, at the same time, he was shown a bad harvester.

The essential question provoked by this parable is: Is it possible that good things make a good life? And if so When and How? Can a rich man not be a fool, but wise instead?

It is evident that the Christian answer would be Yes, in the case we make Christian use of things. St. John Chrysostom compares the good wealth to the Manna, which God sent to the Jewish people when they were wandering in the Desert of Sinai. Then, every one could take as much as he could satisfy his need. When at the same time many wanted, by their avarice to collect more than their needs to store it, they discovered that this latter quantity went mould immediately. Consequently, when good things are stored they rot. Despite these things are given generously they become fruitful. Good things are similar to a crop: when we sow it in charity it become fruitful, just as when we store it selfishly it rots.

Good things could, really, feed humankind and give him merry, not through it, but only when we use it in a right way. Building by it good relationships with others. Good things are the best and stronger means to connect with others. The best use of plenty is to by love with. Generally the rich man could be more capable to show charity, if he knew how to use his goods, as he ought to.

Good things must remind us of God their loving giver, and to provoke in us prayers of thanksgiving, and to prove the Divine providence. Good things must be destined to satisfy our needs and to serve others. God lavishes on us plenty of things to make good us of, in thanking God-prayers, and serving men-charity.

In the book of the Revelation God does not rebuke the angel of Laodicea because of his richness, not at all, but because when he became rich he began to leave his love to God. Good things mustn't take the place of God. In contrary, things are good only when they relate us with God and man in love. Things are, briefly, to thank God and to serve man. Things could be good if they are given to others instead to be stored, and towards God more than for ourselves.

Amen