

RICH

by Beth Troop



CHRISTIAN PUBLISHERS

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CHRISTIAN PUBLISHERS EDUCATIONAL SERIES

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Parable: The Rich Fool

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SYNOPSIS: A man keeps building his business empire at the expense of relationships. Then his Realtor, Angel, makes him an appointment with God, to whom spiritual bankruptcy speaks louder than material wealth.

BIBLE VERSE: Luke 12:16-21

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 female, 1 male, 2 either)

READER (m/f) Reads Scripture to start and end the performance. *(2 lines)*

NARRATOR (m/f) Part may be combined with Reader if desired. *(6 lines)*

RICH (m) An ambitious and wealthy man. *(22 lines)*

ANGEL (f) A Realtor. *(16 lines)*

DURATION: 10 minutes.

SETTING: Outdoors, looking at properties for sale.

TIME: Present.

SET

Two microphones on stands, each with a music stand in front if preferred (for holding scripts), one stage left and one stage right, out of the way of the actors. Reader stands at one and the Narrator at the other. There should also be a folding chair at upstage center.

COSTUMES

Modern-day attire for Reader and Narrator. Rich wears a fancy suit and tie. Angel wears a white business suit and watch to start, changing into a white “flowy” dress for her second appearance.

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PROPS

- ☐ Manila folders
- ☐ Electronic tablet
- ☐ Pen
- ☐ Cell phone

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Parables are earthly stories intended to reveal a heavenly meaning. They are by nature stories that people could relate to and which would inspire questions and discussion, thus providing the opportunity for revelation of the truth. We have brought these parables into present time where the listener can relate and once again ask questions, which will reveal the true meaning.

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PARABLE: ¹⁶And he told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. ¹⁷He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’ ¹⁸“Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. ¹⁹And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.”’ ²⁰“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?’ ²¹“This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God (*Luke 12:16-21*).



AT START: *READER and NARRATOR take their places.*

READER: Then Jesus said, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions” (*Luke 12:15*).

NARRATOR: This is the story of Rich, a man who could have anything money could buy.

RICH walks in from the side opposite the NARRATOR, talking on a cell phone.

NARRATOR: Nothing was too expensive for him. If he wanted it, he bought it, and yet none of it was ever enough to fully satisfy him—until one day he thought he finally had it all. Unfortunately, he did not know the words of Jesus.

RICH: (*Into phone.*) Like I was saying, John, stocks have been selling strong, and my business is producing way beyond my expectations. Life is good! Now I need a bigger and better place for continued expansion. If I could combine expansion with eventual retirement all near the same complex, that would really make my life easier. The way the money’s rolling in, I only need to work a couple more years before I have life right where I want it—on easy street! Hey! No sense making money if you can’t enjoy it, right? (*Pause.*) You know

a good Realtor? *(Pause.)* Great! Tomorrow at noon it is! *(Exits stage right, as if on a mission to go somewhere important.)*

NARRATOR: You see, Rich was a savvy, successful businessman. He knew how and when to invest to get the best return. He managed to buy low and sell high when it came to stocks, land, you name it. He would swindle his own mother if he could make a buck on the deal. And he always justified his transactions with his motto: spend money, make money, make-a-me happy! But there was one thing he just never figured out.

RICH and ANGEL walk down center aisle to front. ANGEL wears a white business suit and carries a few folders and a cell phone or tablet. RICH is talking on his phone as they walk, lagging slightly behind ANGEL. They stop at center stage and face audience. ANGEL waits a little impatiently while RICH completes phone call.

RICH: Yes, that's great! We'll work out the details tomorrow over coffee. I look forward to doing business with you. *(Pause.)* Great—see you then!

RICH hangs up. He looks at ANGEL, who is glancing at her watch.

RICH: Sorry. Had to take this call. Just lined up another buyer. You know, another day another dollar... or ten... or a thousand! *(Chuckles to himself.)*

ANGEL: *(Quick smile.)* I suppose, but I do have other clients waiting for me, so we'll need to stay on schedule.

RICH: Yes, I promise—no more phone calls. *(Puts phone away, then rubs hands together.)* So, show me this amazing property I've heard so much about!

They move a few steps from where they were standing. ANGEL sweeps one arm around, as though showing RICH an amazing view. RICH looks out over audience in awe.

ANGEL: As you can see, this place has beautiful vistas, and we are looking at only a fraction of the property, which includes a total of one hundred fifty acres. The main house is a refurbished three-story Victorian with three thousand square feet—plenty of room for both relaxing and entertaining. I understand you need extra space for your business, so the outbuildings over there might fit your needs. Each one offers an additional one thousand square feet. There is another house on this property that you could use as a guest house—you know, for the in-laws and such.

RICH: (*Shakes head.*) No. No in-laws. No time for relationships, marriage, family, and all that. They're just distractions. I've spent all my time and energy building my business and making something of myself. Money talks, and I listen. (*Chuckles to self again, then shrugs.*) But maybe now that I'm finally reaching financial security... who knows? (*Continues looking around, surveying the area.*)

ANGEL: So, what kind of business are you in?

RICH: Commodities and manufacturing. I buy and sell corn in a variety of markets. I've done that for years. But then I started looking for something to do with corn cobs, so I began manufacturing floor mats with corn cobs as the primary material. Sounds crazy, doesn't it? I mean, who would think of using leftover corn cobs to make floor mats?

ANGEL: (*Folds arms.*) I guess you did.

RICH: Well, that's right. I mean, corn cobs can be used for a lot of things, like soup thickeners and cat litter. Sorry—shouldn't have put them in the same sentence. But I was sure we could do something more. Then one day I had this brainstorm--what about floor mats? People make thatched roofs out of leaves. Why not floor mats out of corn cobs?

ANGEL starts looking at her watch again.

RICH: (*Noticing ANGEL'S impatience, shrugs.*) Anyway, that's what I do. And it all leads to money.

ANGEL: So, you actually make a good profit from this manufacturing?

RICH: Oh, it's unbelievable. Like I said, I started with just buying and selling, so that's where I first made all my money, and the floor mats were just an add-on so I didn't waste resources. But this year we've

had such amazing bumper crops. Not only did I make a ton of money in the stock market, but I also have an excess of corn cobs that I need to store somewhere. They can be kept for a couple years if I store them in the right conditions where mice won't eat them, increasing my available inventory,

ANGEL: As well as moth and rust...

RICH: What?

ANGEL: Never mind. So you see this as a stable source of income for the long term?

RICH: Oh, yes. I have business connections all around the world. I don't see this letting up anytime soon. I've found a niche that has unending potential. After all, floor mats do eventually wear out and need replacing. And corn is a renewable resource. It can be regrown year after year. And I'm still relatively young, so I can continue this for many years to come and keep raking in the money.

ANGEL: (*To RICH.*) Sounds like an ambitious plan. (*Aside, to audience.*) Perhaps a bit lonely, if you ask me.

RICH: What's that?

ANGEL: Nothing. I just wonder what you gain by having all this land, a large house, and an abundance of money and possessions without anyone to share them with or any worthy cause to donate to. Sounds like a heavy burden, living up to the standards you've set for yourself—but a lonely life. A house full of stuff, but a heart empty of love.

RICH: Money first, life later. That has always been my motto—besides my *other* motto, of course. It makes total sense.

ANGEL: (*Shrugs.*) To you, perhaps.

RICH: Are you here to sell me property or save my soul?

ANGEL: (*Looking intently at RICH.*) Maybe both, but certainly one should be a priority over the other. The important thing is knowing which one is more important. We live—and die—by our decisions. (*Shakes her head and seems to gain control of her "Realtor" self again.*) Anyway, let's take a look inside the main house, shall we?

ANGEL and RICH exit stage left.

NARRATOR: Rich bought that land, adding a large climate-controlled facility in which to store corn cobs. With bumper crops beyond his

wildest dreams, Rich was certain that he had the perfect plan leading up to retirement. He could foresee a long, leisurely life with a large house, plenty of land, and a storage facility that would provide him with financial security for the rest of his days. Life was in his hands. And it was good.

RICH: *(Enters down center aisle, talking on phone.)* Yeah, Ron. The building is finally finished. I want all the corn cobs at the other two plants transferred to my new property. I have a storage facility that will take your breath away. Everything will be in one place. That will cost me less in the long run and increase my profits. I like how that sounds! OK, first thing in the morning. Yes, see you then.

Walks to chair and moves it downstage, facing audience. Looks out as if admiring his land and his new facility.

RICH: Yep, Rich, you did it up good this time. You're all set. Your hard work is paying off. You have everything you need for a secure and relaxing retirement. Eat, drink, and be merry! You've earned this! *(Puts his hands behind his head, leans back, and closes his eyes.)*

NARRATOR: As I said earlier, there is one thing Rich never figured out: money does not buy happiness; God is our only true source of happiness. And while we may make plans, God controls the outcome. Rich did not realize that his preplanned life was about to take a drastic turn.

ANGEL enters from stage left and stands next to RICH while his eyes are closed. She is wearing a white, flowy outfit. When RICH doesn't open his eyes right away, ANGEL coughs lightly to get his attention. RICH'S eyes open wide and he jumps up, startled at seeing ANGEL.

RICH: Oh, hi, Angel. I didn't expect my real estate agent to make a house call, but it's nice of you to stop by.

ANGEL: Hello, Rich. It's nice to see you again, but you may not be happy with the reason for my visit.

RICH: Why? Is something wrong?

ANGEL: You could say that. You see, I'm actually a real estate *angel*, and my boss has asked me to stop by on a matter of repossession.

RICH: Repossession?! But I'm not behind on any payments. I own this land fair and square!

ANGEL: Well, you did purchase the land, but that's not the problem. You see, the land is staying, but you are the one who is going. You've spent all your life building up your savings and purchasing stuff that you thought would make you happy. In the process of your life, however, you lost sight of who really owns it: God. You have focused all your time and energy on making money and providing a comfortable life for yourself. Basically, you've lived the life of a fool. You are rich in material things, but your soul is empty. You are not rich toward God. All these possessions will do you no good. Who will receive what you have worked so hard to accumulate now?

RICH: This is ridiculous! I want to see your boss!

ANGEL: *(Starts walking away and beckoning RICH to follow.)* Oh, you will. We have an appointment with him this very night.

RICH: Just who is your boss?

ANGEL: God. *(Turns and begins to exit.)*

RICH: What?! *(Runs after ANGEL.)*

NARRATOR: Rich was a fool for not allowing God into his plans, and his possessions got him nowhere when God demanded his life of him. "So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God" *(Luke 12: 21).*

READER: "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin 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 END



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