

THREE FATAL MISTAKES

"The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully. And he thought within himself saying What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said... I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasures for himself and is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:13-21)

Everyone makes mistakes. There is not a person on the face of the earth who hasn't made a mistake at one time or another. You can get by with some mistakes, but there are other mistakes that are fatal. This man didn't just make one fatal mistake; he made three fatal mistakes.

THE FIRST FATAL MISTAKE: HE MISTOOK HIMSELF FOR GOD

The first mistake that this man made was that he mistook himself for God. Multitudes of people think that they are God, and there is none other besides them. They think that they have all the power in heaven and earth, that they control their life and destiny. Self-made men, whatever they set their mind to do, they can do. It is the philosophy of positive thinking; never say "can't"; all you have to do is believe in yourself, be successful!

Little do people realize how fragile they are. They are not God. This man thought he was God. He was making plans, and talking like those were his goods and fruits. You would have thought that he was the one who sent the rain upon the earth and created the miracle of a little seed germinating and springing into life, who caused the seasons to come. But I will guarantee you that you do not breathe a breath of air unless God gives you the power to. Your heart won't beat another beat unless the power of Jesus Christ energizes it.

God says, ***"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?." (Psalms 8:4), "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?" (Matthew 6:27)***

Be careful, when you start using the word "I" and "my", you are in bad shape. This was the downfall of Satan, lifted up in pride and filled with unbelief, Satan said ***"I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north, I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the most High." (Isaiah 14:13-14)***

THE SECOND FATAL MISTAKE: HE MISTOOK HIS BODY FOR HIS SOUL

The second fatal mistake this man made was that he mistook his body for his soul. He spent his money for that which was temporal. Today, in America and almost all over the world, a man is valued, not for his character, or his honesty, or his integrity, or his decency, but he is assessed by what he possesses. And this man spent his money, time, and energies upon himself.

You might say, "Yes, I can bestow all my goods upon the poor, but if I have not love, it has profited me nothing." But if you do have love, and it causes you to give all you goods to the poor, it will profit you quite a bit. However, just giving your goods to the poor is not going to make you holy, but someone who has really met Jesus will never bathe himself in luxury while he is surrounded by an ocean of people with tremendous needs.

"If any man teach otherwise and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifem, railings, evil surmising, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content."

Where do the prophets of the positive, and the "peace and prosperity" teachers, get their authority to make men and women discontent with the estate that they find themselves in? If you have a Volkswagon, be content with it! Most of the world would give anything for a Volkswagon.

What is God going to say to a generation of people who have fallen to the temptation of riches, and have spent all their time, money, and resources on that which was temporal and will soon pass away. One day they will wake, white with shock and terror when they realize that they mistook their body for their soul, with nothing to show for eternity.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

You had better be careful the next time you walk by the department store and say "Oh, I just love that dress! I love this and that..." You had better watch out what you are loving! Some of us are so unspiritual, because we're trying to run this race with a big weight on our back. It's pretty hard to run a race and fight the good fight of faith, when you have a TV strapped to your back!

Jesus has promised to meet our needs, but He has pronounced judgement upon those that fall into the sin of covetousness and greed, and who ignore the needs of their brothers.

YOU CAN'T TELL THE SAINTS FROM THE AINT'S

"But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.

Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep." (Luke 6:24-25),

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." (James 4:4)

We are supposed to be pilgrims, strangers, and sojourners, just passing through this land. Yet how many of us project that kind of image to the world, our relatives, friends, neighbors, so that they come to us and ask why we live such a frugal and modest life? Not very many of us! We're living just like they're living! You can't tell the saved from the unsaved.

The great French infidel, Voltaire, said... "When it comes to money, all men are of the same religion." One of the outstanding marks of early Christians was this ***"And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all [men], as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (Acts 2:44-47)***

In other words, they put their money where their mouth was!

Don't miss understand me, capital need not be given away, but all income should be given to the poor and spreading of the gospel, after the bare necessities are taken care of. Unfortunately, there is not one Christian in 500 today who obeys Jesus' command which simply demonstrates that

most professing believers are living men, but dead Christians. Any Christian, who takes for himself anything more than the plain necessities for life, lives in an open, habitual denial of the Lord; he has gained riches and hellfire.

THE THIRD FATAL MISTAKE: HE MISTOOK TIME FOR ETERNITY!

The last fatal mistake this man made was he mistook time for eternity. He thought he had all kinds of time. **"I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry."** And God said, **"Thou fool,"** I get chills up and down my spine just to imagine God saying those words, **"This night thy soul shall be required of thee."** You say, but God, I'm not ready to go yet; I've just retired; I was planning a vacation; I wanted to spend time with my family... **"Then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?"** He mistook time for eternity.

Churches talk about Jesus coming soon, and then they build million dollar edifices that will last 500 years! Have you been making the same mistake? God is God, and we are but His creation, made to serve Him and glorify Him. We need to find our place of submission to the will of God, from now on. Let God be God. I'm going to start taking care of my soul, even if I have to suffer physically in order that my spiritual man might grow and prosper. We must realize that we only have a little time left on the face of this earth, and by God's grace we can quit procrastinating and saying "tomorrow...".

Let's get with it! Hallelujah! Let's start praying, giving, singing, testifying, and be a living testimony to the Love of God, preach the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in action and word to all the world... right now!