

Unholy Hoarder

Getting Our Eyes Off Our Shelves

September 20, 2026



Today we're learning to be rich toward God by getting our eyes off our shelves!

So: **How much is enough?** Literally. Imagine Jesus gives you *ten seconds* to name a *dollar amount* that He'll *guarantee* as *income every year, adjusted for inflation, for life*. But there's *one condition*: you have to *give away* anything and everything *above that amount* – *inheritance, bonus or lottery win*. **What's your number?** Go. Got your *number*? Well, *now* He tells you that He has a *maximum*. And if you go *over the limit*, the *deal is off*. So He gives you *five seconds* to *lower your number*, if you want. **What would you do?** What's your *final number*? **How much is enough?**



Joseph *had it all*. Literally. He *had* all of Egypt's *money, livestock, property, and people*. But ***having it all isn't the end goal***. It's merely the *means* to ***becoming a God-sent blessing to all!*** Which is a much greater goal than merely *having it all*.



[You see] [Joseph] collected all the food produced in those seven years of *abundance* in Egypt and stored it in the cities. [But *not to hoard it*] ... Joseph stored up huge quantities of grain, like the *sand of the sea*; [but *not to hoard it*] it was *so much* that he *stopped* keeping records because it was *beyond measure*. [Cuz it was stored for the Lord, not to hoard] ... [Because] The seven years of *famine* began, just as Joseph *had said*. There was *famine* in *all the other lands*, but in the *whole land of Egypt* there was *food*. [Cuz Joseph *didn't hoard it like a fool*; he *stored it like a hero*; so] When all Egypt began to *feel the famine*, the people *cried to Pharaoh for food*. ... [And] Joseph opened the storehouses – Genesis 41:46-56 NIV



The opening *question* was *going to be*: ***Are you greedy?*** But we're *Americans!* Of course we are. Our culture *encourages* us to *love our stuff*. I mean, *how'd we improve the Oreo? Doubled the stuff*. And *how'd we improve that? Mega Stuf*. And *how'd we improve that? The Most Stuf possible!* And *how'd we improve that? Defibrillators*. Which is why our *closets and garages and sheds* are *stuffed with stuff* we don't even *need*, *bought with money* we don't even *have*, to *impress people* we don't even *like*. So the *underlying question* is: ***How are you guarding your heart against greed?*** Noah reminded us of his *go-to Scripture*, to:



Guard your heart above *all else*, for it is the *source of life*. – Proverbs 4:23 CSB

And then Jesus *informs* us of a very specific *enemy* to set our *guard against*.

He said to them, "*Watch out!* [the *heart is deceitful* and the *enemy is sly*, so] Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; [because] *life* does not *consist* in [amassing] an *abundance of* [worldly] *possessions* [without a *godly purpose*]." – Luke 12:15 NIV

[So] Be *wise*, [not *foolish*] and set your heart on the right path: [And *detach!*] Do not *join* those who *drink too much wine* or *gorge themselves* – Proverbs 23:19-20 NIV

Though your *riches increase*, do not set your heart on them. One thing God has spoken, [yet] two things I have heard: [First] *Power belongs to You*, God, and [that means] with You, Lord, is [the power of] *unfailing love*; and, You [have the power to] *reward everyone* [who has received it] according to what they have done [to extend it]. – Psalm 62:10-12 NIV

And 2,000 years after Joseph opened his storehouses, Jesus likely has him in mind when He tells the parable of Joseph's polar opposite: the rich fool who closes his heart and hoards his grain.

"The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. [Like Joseph, the rich hero] He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? [My barns are burstin!] I have no place to store my [additional abundance of] crops.' [What should he do? Give thanks to God, open his barns, and share his blessing, but] "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. [Now before we get all judgy: Have you ever thought the answer was more storage space?] I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, [like Joseph, the rich hero] and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And [unlike Joseph, the rich hero] I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.'" But [how's that saying end? For tomorrow we shall die! So] God said to him, 'You [rich] fool! [You were blessed to be a blessing!] This very night your life will be demanded from you. [Jesus uses a banking term for when a loan in His day was called in for repayment] Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' [You've forfeited the joy of giving and the reward of loving; and] "This is how it will be with anyone who [foolishly] stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God. [This parable isn't about prosperity but priority. It's not about the haves and the have-nots, but the hoarders and the hoard-nots who know when enough is enough] ... Therefore I tell you, do not worry about ... [things like] what you will eat; or ... what you will wear. [Because] Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes.'" – Luke 12:16-23 NIV



He doesn't say life *isn't* about food and clothes, but about *more* than food and clothes. Cuz you gotta eat. And you can't run around naked without getting arrested. But **contentment doesn't come from lacking or fulfilling a desire**. It comes from trusting God's unfailing love and power and purpose in either situation. Which is why **worry is greed's best friend**. We call it a piggy bank for a reason! But, **there's a big difference between saving like a rich hero, and pigging like a rich fool**. Pigging is gathering more of what we already have enough. But then, *how much is enough?* This church secretary lost her temper with a wealthy tightwad and said, "The records show you've never given a dime to your church." He said, "Do the records show that my elderly mother was left penniless when dad died? Or that I have a disabled brother? And a widowed sister with children?" "No," she said. "Well, if I don't give to them, why would I give to you?"

So, **are you a hoarder like the rich fool, or a storeder like Joseph?** The difference between 'em has little to do with what, or how much, you've stored up, and much to do with having an open-door policy. Because, **a storeder has an open heart and a loose grip** on the temporary, material aspects of this world. Whereas, **a hoarder has a closed heart and a tight fist** with worldly possessions. Jesus says *this is how it will be* with "anyone who stores up things for himself", which is okay, "but is not rich toward God". Which is not okay.

Notice that He *doesn't* say, "but is not rich toward *others*," which *tells* you what it *means* to be *rich* toward *God*. Because it's *exactly* the *point* Jesus *made* when He *said*:

"Whatever you *did* for one of the *least* of *these* brothers and sisters of Mine, you *did* for Me. ... [And] Whatever you did *not* do ... you did *not* do for Me. – Matthew 25:40-45 NIV

Today, the *rich fool* is like a *guy* who's got it *all*, and then *wins* a 10-minute *shopping spree*. It's *exciting* to *run* around *grabbing* more of what we *already* have, but **for what purpose?**



Afterwards, he *looks* at his *carts*. One is *filled* with *blenders*. One with *hams*. "Hmm. *What to do?*" Then, as he *drives* through a *low-income* neighborhood, it *comes* to him: "I'll *build* a *big ol'* *shed* with a *freezer* just for my *hams*, and my very own *blender shelf*! And it'll *increase* my *property value*!" But just as he *carefully*, *lovingly* places the *last blender* on a *high shelf* – a *KitchenAid Pro-Line*, 500 watt, 2-speed with a *heavy-duty*, 48-ounce, *stainless-steel* container, *polished* to a *sleek* and *sexy* *mirror-like* finish, on a *Ferrari-red*, *die-cast* base – it *falls* on his *head* and *kills* him.

There's a deep *satisfaction* and *spiritual joy* from *gathering* and *storing*, not to *selfishly* possess like a *fool*, but to *selflessly* bless like a *hero*. In fact, the *fun* of accumulating is *supercharged* by the thought of *sharing*. Which might explain the fact that **givers with less money often give a greater percentage of what they have than givers with considerably more**. Which directly *contradicts* the *self-deceiving* notion that *if* and *when* I *have* more, I'll *give* more – and *begs* the question: **Who is really the possessor: you or your stuff?**



Paul Piff, a Berkeley psychologist, conducted *social experiments* that he *explains* on a TED talk called, "Does money make you mean?" He *found*, for instance, that **the more pricey the car, the less likely to stop for a pedestrian**. And, the *higher* the tax bracket, the *less likely* we are to *share* \$10 worth of *trinkets* with a *stranger*. But *watching* only 46 seconds of a *child-poverty* video *resets* our *moral compass* and *evens out* the *stats*! Thus *scientifically* proving two things: 1) *Money* makes us *jerks*; and 2) We *just* need to *get* our *eyes* off *ourselves* for *one minute*. So "watch out ... against *all* kinds of *greed*" and *detach*! Because, **greed robs us by rewarding us**.

Noah *ended* his *message*, saying: "Why does God want your *money*? He *doesn't*! He wants your *heart*. But so does *money*!" And Jesus *makes* it *clear* that *only one* comes out on *top*. Because:

"No one can serve two masters. Either he will *hate* the one and *love* the other, or he will be *devoted* to the one and *despise* the other. You *cannot* serve both *God* and *Money*. Therefore I tell you, do *not* worry about your *life*" [Because worry serves money] – Matthew 6:24-25 NIV

The NIV *capitalizes* "Money" because Jesus *personifies* it as His *rival*, that wants *rule* us. But, He *doesn't* say we can't serve *God* and *make* money; **we just can't serve God and make money ... our master**. How? By *keeping* money in the *lower* case and not *hoarding* *blenders* for our *shelf*.

[Because] If anyone has *material possessions* and sees a brother or sister in *need* but has no pity on them, how can the *love of God* be in that *person*? – 1 John 3:17 NIV

Four chapters *after* the *death* of the *Rich Fool*, Jesus *tells* about another *rich man* who has *no pity* on poor *Lazarus*. This time both die. And *Lazarus* gets to *sit* at the *banquet table* with *Abraham*, while the *rich man* *lands* right where his *lifestyle aims* ... in the *flames*!



And he *cried* out, “Father *Abraham*, have pity on me.” – Luke 16:24 NAB



And in my *personal paraphrase*, Abraham says, “I *don’t pity* the *fool*!” It’s interesting that **you can’t buy your way into heaven, but you can buy your way into hell!** All you gotta *do* is *spend* every *dime* on your *shelf*.



Remember the TV show “*Hoarders*”? I went to *Arktoberfest 2011*, as a *hoarder* who took *all* the *important* things along – and *Shar* was my *TLC counselor*. And when I *made* the *costume*, I brainstormed the most *ludicrous* things I could *take* along with *me*. And my *favorite absurdity* was a *full set* of *encyclopedias* that I *made* for it. But **what’s more absurd than trading eternal treasure for temporary trashy gain?**



Life, by default, *accumulates* and *complicates*. And we *naturally* develop *attachments* to our *stuff*. And *collections* quickly become *obsessions*. And we *double* our *stuff* again and *again*. Because **it’s a spiritual battle**. Which is *why* **it takes intentional effort to simplify and share**. And yet, we *all* know the *freedom* that comes from *ridding* ourselves of the *dead weight* of *stuff*.



Let’s take the *packrat Test*: Hold up your *fists*, and lift a *finger* on *both hands* for every “yes”.

- 1) I *own* things I’ll likely *never use*. 2) I sometimes *find* things I *forgot* I *had*.
- 3) I *don’t* have *one empty drawer* or *cupboard*. 4) I have a *hard time* *throwing* things *away*.
- 5) I *lose* things in my *own house*. Now, *hold* your “yes” *fingers* to your *nose* and *wiggle* ‘em!



In the parable of Joseph’s *polar opposite*, the *rich fool* *hoards* his *crops*. And it got me *thinking* about how many times someone’s *garden* has produced *more* than they could *give away*. And they *try* to *get* you to *take* a *bag* of *zucchini* or *cucumbers* or *tomatoes* or *whatever*, because they’re *fully aware* that they’re *under a deadline*.

You gotta give it away before it spoils. Because, as we *all* know, *vegetables* are *not* a *long-term investment*. And what a *great analogy* for this *short life*. How much *happier* and *freer* we’d *all* be if *only* we could see our *money* and *possessions* in the *same way*.

Who wants to die with nothing eternal to take home? I’d sure rather hear, “*Good job, faithful servant*,” than “*You fool*.” But then, I *suppose* it’ll be *one* or the *other*. After *all*, we’re *all* basically on a *10-minute shopping spree* down here. And the *only* God-given *goal* is to be as *openhanded* as we can be with *whatever* we’ve been *given* ... before the *deadline*.