

The Parable of the Rich Fool

The phrase **"eat, drink, and be merry"** plays a **central role** in Jesus' **Parable of the Rich Fool** in **Luke 12:13–21**. It reflects a **self-indulgent mindset** that Jesus critiques—not because enjoying life is wrong, but because it **ignores God, mortality, and eternal priorities**.

Where the Saying Appears

In the parable, after accumulating great wealth, the rich man says to himself:

"You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." (Luke 12:19)

But God says:

"You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?" (v.20)

What Does "Eat, Drink, and Be Merry" Mean?

This phrase is an ancient expression of **pleasure-seeking and self-satisfaction**. It reflects an attitude that says:

- "I've earned comfort — now I can just relax."
- "I don't need to worry about the future."
- "My wealth secures my life."

In the parable, it reveals the **false security** of trusting in riches instead of God — the man plans for many years, but he doesn't realize **his soul could be required tonight**.

Old Testament Echo

Jesus is alluding to **Ecclesiastes 8:15** and **Isaiah 22:13**:

- **Ecclesiastes 8:15** – "So I commend the enjoyment of life, because there is nothing better for a person under the sun than to eat and drink and be glad..."
- **Isaiah 22:13** – "Let us eat and drink," you say, "for tomorrow we die!"

These are not condemnations of joy or celebration in themselves — but **in Isaiah**, the people said this **in the face of judgment**, using pleasure to numb spiritual reality — much like the rich fool.

What's the Problem?

Jesus isn't against enjoying life, but He is warning about:

Misuse of the Phrase	Why It's a Problem
Living for comfort	It ignores our calling to love God and neighbor.
Assuming a long life	It falsely assumes control over time and life.
No mention of God	The rich man talks only to <i>himself</i> , about <i>his</i> goods, for <i>his</i> benefit.
Hoarding	He stores up treasure for <i>self</i> , not for God or others.

Final Lesson

Jesus closes with:

"This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God." (Luke 12:21)

So the saying **"eat, drink, and be merry"**, when lived out **without regard for God**, becomes a warning — not a goal.