



Thankful, or Ungrateful?

Our society is one that is materially wealthy, but poor spiritually. Personal income is at an all-time high, but fewer and fewer people regularly take time out to worship, and the number of people who identify with any religious beliefs at all is at an all-time low.



The increase of material wealth seems to be inversely proportional to the decrease in interest in spiritual matters, and we really should not be surprised at the trend; this is the way man usually behaves. Long ago, a man who was wise asked the Lord not to give him riches, *"Lest I be full and deny You, and say, 'Who is the Lord?'"* (Prov. 30:8, 9). Studies within our lifetime have shown that those who are wealthier [materially] tend to believe in God and worship Him less than those who have less material wealth. It seems material gain causes us to start trusting in self, rather than in God, and we start thinking we really don't need God.

I probably don't have to remind you of the story Jesus once told about a foolish rich man, whose *"ground...yielded plentifully."* This man *"thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry'"* (Luke 12:17-19). As you may remember, too, the man died that very night and his riches would be enjoyed by someone else (Luke 12:20). He was called a fool by God because he trusted in himself and had no thought for God or even his fellow man. Many people will die materially wealthy, but having laid up for themselves no treasures in heaven — just like this foolish rich man. Like this foolish rich man, many trust in themselves or in those riches, and they are always disappointed because they can be stolen, fall apart, or become worthless, and though men try so hard to build up those riches, *"we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out"* (1 Tim. 6:7). *Continued on next page...*

