

# The Rich Fool

"Grandpa," David said sadly as he was getting ready for bed, "no one ever wants to play with me!"

"And why is that, David?" Grandpa asked.

"Well, whenever I invite someone to play with me, they always choose the toys I want to play with. I want to play with other kids, but I also want to play with all of my toys. Why should I have to share them?"



Grandpa thought for a moment. "I think I might have a good story that can help you solve your problem," he said.

"Bring me your Bible story book, and I'll read you a story before bed."

David quickly found his book and settled next to his grandpa as he began to read.

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Once upon a time, there was a certain wealthy farmer, whom we will call Mr. Richie. He had a very big farm. One year, there was a great harvest and his workers gathered lots and lots of grain.



Mr. Richie stood and watched to make sure the workers were carefully putting all the sacks of grain safely in his barns.

As he admired the piles of grain sacks, one of Mr. Richie's neighbors passed by and said, "That is a lot of grain you harvested this year!"

"Yes!" Mr. Richie replied, "I have so much land to grow grain. How blessed I am! I am so rich!"

As he was bragging about his great wealth, a poor worker approached him and asked, "Sir, you've had such a good harvest, can you spare a few bags of grain for our families?"

"What?" exclaimed Mr. Richie. "No! I can't. I have to keep it all for myself!"

The poor worker looked at the barns and then at Mr. Richie, "B-but, sir, your barns aren't even big enough to store all this grain!"

"Nonsense!" replied Mr. Richie. "It will all fit."

"Well," said the worker, "I'm sure you wouldn't even notice it if you just gave us a few bags. We've worked so hard, and we're very poor."

"No! No! I can't give away any of the grain. I need it all for myself."

And with that, Mr. Richie walked away.

Later that day, after the workers had finished putting all the sacks of grain they could possibly fit into the barns, Mr. Richie saw that there were still many more bags of grain that would not fit in the barns.

"Oh my!" Mr. Richie exclaimed, "The worker was right—all the grain doesn't fit. The harvest was so great that I have no room in my barns to store it all! What shall I do?"

Mr. Richie started to worry. "Oh no, I may have to give some of it away!" he gasped. But then he had an idea.

"Aha! I know what I'll do. I will build bigger barns to store all my goods, and that way I won't have to share them with anyone."





"What a selfish man!" David said. "His workers were very poor and he had so much grain, but still he didn't want to share."

"I know." Grandpa agreed. "He was a very selfish man. But that night God told Mr. Richie: 'You fool! Tonight you will die, and then what are you going to do with all those things you have stored up?'"

"And just as God had said, that night the selfish farmer died in his sleep and he had to leave all his riches behind."

"God took everything away from him because he was selfish and greedy," said David.

"Exactly!" Grandpa said. "Instead of sharing what he had with others, he decided to build bigger barns to hold more for himself. It wasn't bad that he was rich and had all those barns. Do you know what he was doing wrong?"

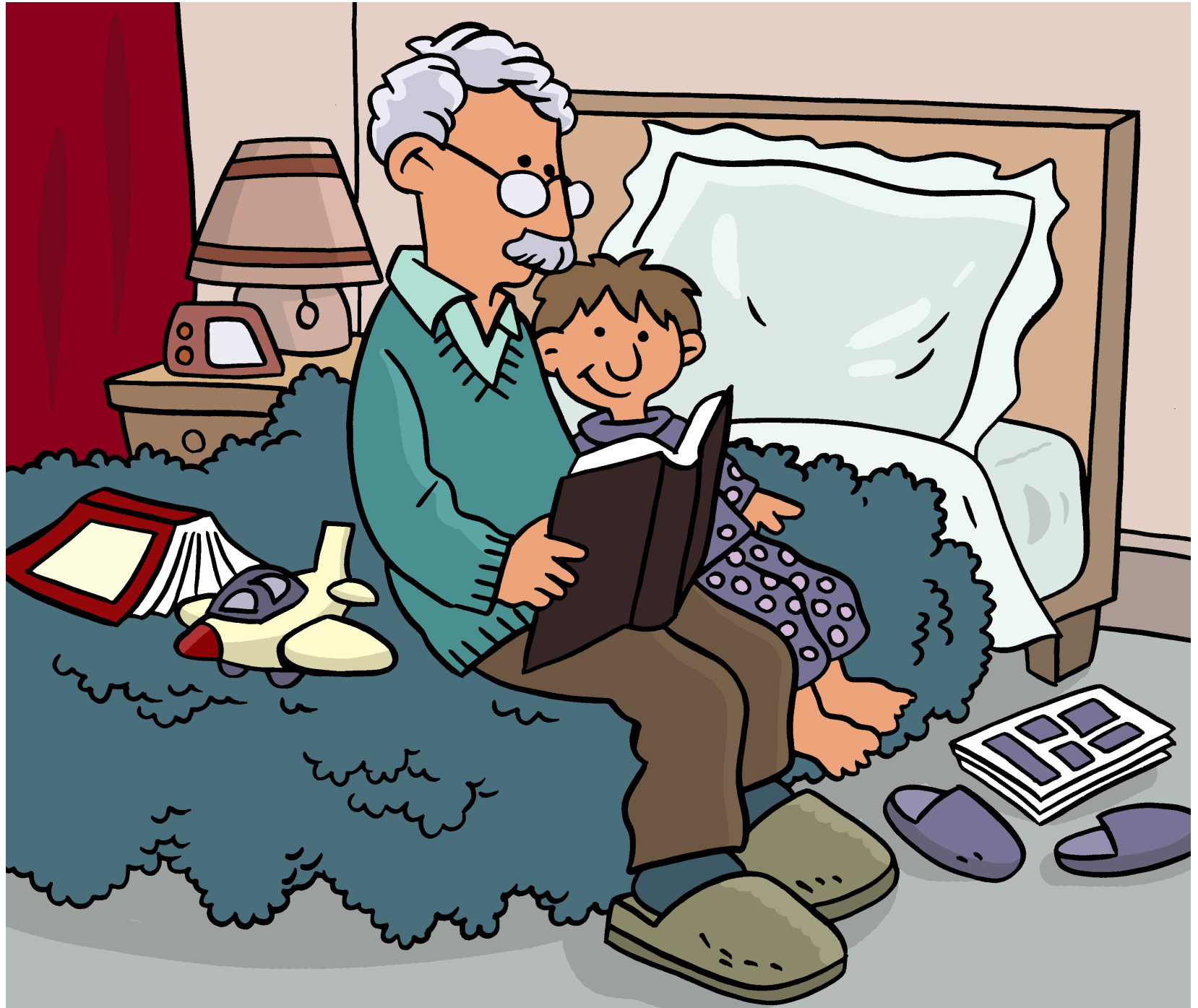
"He didn't want to share," said David. "Not even a little bit to help those in need."

"That's right!" said Grandpa.

"Grandpa, I have a lot of toys." said David. "But no one wants to play with me."

"You are rich in toys, David. Maybe God gave you so many so that you can share them! Remember, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' And you can never lose by giving!"

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The following day, David saw his friend Tommy passing by his house on his bicycle.

"Hey, Tommy!" David called out. "Do you want to come and play with me?"

Tommy looked surprised. "Sure!" he answered happily. "I'll just check with my mom."

When Tommy came by later, David showed Tommy to his toy box. "Why don't you pick which cars you would like to play with and then we can build roads and play with the cars together?"

"Really? I can choose the cars I want to play with first?" Tommy asked.

"Yes, go ahead!" David said, with a big smile.

"Well," said Tommy, "I would like to play with the police car and the fire truck."

"Okay!" answered David, even though those were some of his favorites. "I'll play with the ambulance and the tow truck. Now let's start building some roads!"

David had a big smile on his face as he and Tommy began to play. He was glad to be playing with a friend.

Later, David's mother came to announce that Tommy's mother had called for Tommy to go home for dinner.

"I'll help you put the toys away before I go," Tommy said.

"Thank you!" David answered, and then added, "Tomorrow afternoon you can come and we can play again."

"That'd be awesome! Thank you, David. You're a good friend. I had fun today. Tomorrow I'll bring my LEGO and cars, too. That way we'll have more cars to play with, and we can even start to build a city for the cars to drive around in."

"That's a great idea," said David. "You're a great friend too, Tommy. See you tomorrow!"

Tommy got on his bicycle and pedaled away to his house.



At dinner, David told his parents, "Today I understood what Grandpa meant last night when he said that you never lose by giving. I never wanted to share my toys with anyone, because I thought that to have fun I needed them all to be able to play. But today I realized that when I shared them, I made my friend happy, and I had lots of fun as well, even if I didn't play with all of the cars!"

"I am very proud of you, son, for learning that valuable lesson and deciding to share with others," his father said. "Your grandpa is right—you never lose by giving!"

