

THE POOR SADHU

Intent of the Story

- ✓ *Don't get attached to what you have.*
- ✓ *Greed imperceptivity keeps growing in our hearts.*
- ✓ *Don't have more than what you require.*

The Story

Once upon a time there was a very God- fearing Sadhu. He lived very poorly. He had absolutely nothing. Starving, naked and without a shelter he lived alone in the jungle. He spent all his time in prayer and contemplation. He was a "perfect" Bhramachari.

By chance, one day, some farmers discovered him. They were much touched by his simplicity, poverty and holiness. Henceforth, the farmers made it a habit to go that forest to get his "darshan" and his blessings

One -day, the men-folk of the village offered him a loin cloth- so that their women-folk could come also and have his "darshan" and blessings. Reluctantly, the poor Sadhu accepted the loin cloth.

Since there were many rats in the forest, the women-folk brought a cat for him to drive the rats away. So that the cat may not starve, the women used to bring some milk for the cat.

Later on, so that the cat may have its milk and they could spare themselves the trouble of coming time and again, they brought him a cow. Then, they built a small stable for the cow.

Later on, they said to the good Sadhu: "It is not proper that your cow should have a stable, when you do not have even a hut to stay." And so, they built a little hut for him.

After that, so that the good Sadhu may be able to spend all his time in prayer and contemplation and not waste time looking after the cat, the cow; the stable and the hut, they brought him a milkmaid.

Finally, the Sadhu and the milkmaid lived happily together thereafter.

An Indian Story

Points for Reflection and Discussion

1. How did the good and simple villagers - unawares- spoil the good and saintly Sadhu?
2. What do possessions, wealth and riches do to us?
3. Are the goods of this world good or bad? Why?
4. Are they dangerous? Why? How to use them?

5. Why so many good and well-meaning people - religious leaders, politicians, businessmen, teachers, etc - had holy beginnings and a fatal ends?
6. Is it possible to be rich and still be holy and unspoiled? How?
7. Do wealth and possessions liberate us or enslave us? Give Instances.
8. Mention some Gospel texts in which Jesus warns us of the dangers of possessions. Explain them

Do you Agree or Disagree with the Following Statements? Give Reasons

- Simplicity of life is a prerequisite to prayer and contemplation.
- Poverty leads us to God; riches drive us away from Him.
- To reach heaven, travel light.
- The first step to get spoiled is to hanker after wealth.
- Money in itself is good, but dangerous! It is like keeping a pet tiger in one's room.
- It is hard to possess things and not be possessed by them.
- Nearly all the great saints and contemplatives we know of, were poor
- Our greed grows in proportion to our wealth.
- Material possessions are chains preventing us to reach God.
- Attachments to earthly things blind us to heavenly treasures.
- Money sticks into our hands.
- Where there is money, there is muck

Bible Texts about Riches and Money

Prov 28/6-11	"Better the poor contented than the rich..."
P'rov 30/8-9	"Give me neither poverty nor riches..."
Ecc 2/8-11; 4/7-8; 5/12-15	"Vanity of vanities and all is vanity..."
MI 5/1-11	The Beatitudes. Blessed are the poor in spirit...
MI 6/11	Give us "our daily bread", this is enough.
MI 6/19-21	Riches in Heaven. True riches that get neither robbed nor rusted.
MI 6/24-34	God and possessions. Trust in God's providence.
Mk 10/17-27	The rich young man.
Mk 10/28-31	Get 100 per cent out of "your riches".
Tim 6/6-10 "	We brought nothing into the world. Greed for money is the root of all evil."
.Jm 1/9-11	Poverty and riches.
.m 5/1-3	Warning to the rich.

