

Beware of Covetousness

Luke 12:13-34

He just told them in verse 1 to beware of the leaven of Pharisees which is Hypocrisy --- now he is telling them to ***beware of covetousness***.

Luk 12:13-15 Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." 14 But he said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?" 15 And he said to them, "**Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.**"

He warns us to beware of covetousness

- **Take Care** = Stare At --- Discern Clearly --- Attend To
- **Be on your guard** = Avoid
- **Against ALL Covetousness** = desiring more - eager for gain

Why the strong warning against Covetousness?

Covetousness puts our faith at risk

- 1 Timothy 6:9-10 ESV But those ***who desire to be rich*** fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. (10) For ***the love of money*** is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that ***some have wandered away from the faith*** and pierced themselves with many pangs.

Covetousness can choke the influence of God's word and make us unfruitful

- Mat 13:22 KJV ...seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, ***choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.***
- Riches deceived this man: To think LIFE would be better with this inheritance
- Riches deceived this man: And he was blind to his true condition

Covetousness is idolatry - it captures our time, attention, worship and pursuit

- Col 3:4-5 ESV When Christ ***who is your life*** appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. 5 Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and ***covetousness, which is idolatry.***

A Parable to remind us to be RICH TOWARD GOD

Luke 12:16-21 And he told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man produced plentifully, 17 and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' 18 And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, "**Soul, you have ample goods** laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.'" 20 But God said to him, 'Fool! **This night your soul is required of you**, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is the one who lays up treasure for ***himself*** and is not rich toward God."

The lesson:

- So is the one who lays up treasure for ***himself*** and is ***not rich toward God.***

The land of the rich man produced plentifully

- He was dependant upon the LORD for his riches - but forgot, or didn't recognize it

What shall I do? - His decisions revealed the focus of what he thought was LIFE

- For Him LIFE was about HIM - the word "I" is used 6 times
- His pursuit of riches deceived him
 - **Accumulation** - He had BARNES (plural) - & wanted to build bigger ONES (plural)
 - **Security** - "you have ample goods laid up for MANY YEARS"
 - **Comfort of his soul on earth** - Relax, Eat, Drink and be Merry

Eat drink and be merry is a great philosophy if there is no resurrection

- 1 Corinthians 15:32 KJV ... what advantage is it me, **if the dead rise not?** let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die
- If there is a resurrection - should we not prepare for that day?

God said to him FOOL!

THIS NIGHT

- Our time on earth ends sooner than we expect OR sooner than we plan
- What will we do with our life? What will we do with the things God has given us?
- What will God say to me about my pursuits in life when MY NIGHT comes
- Will I invest my life for my soul in this life only - or will I learn to be rich toward God?

How To Be Rich Toward God

1) Replace Worry with FAITH

Luke 12:22-28 And he said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not be **anxious** about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. 23 For **life is more than food**, and the body more than clothing. 24 Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! 25 And which of you by being **anxious** can add a single hour to his span of life? 26 If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, why are you **anxious** about the rest? 27 Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 28 But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith!

- Worry drives us to pursue FOOD rather than LIFE - Life is MORE THAN FOOD
- We can have faith because it is based upon the character of God
 - You can give up worry BECAUSE **You are of value in the eyes of the Lord**
 - God takes care of (feeds birds/clothes grass)...**how much more His children**

2) Seek His Kingdom

Luke 12:29-32 And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. 30 For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and **your Father knows** that you need them. 31 Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you. 32 "Fear not, little flock, for it **is your Father's good pleasure** to give you the kingdom.

- Seek not the same things as the nations
- Seek his kingdom - ***the rule of God in my life***
- Our ability to SEEK his Kingdom rather than to lay up treasure for myself is found in understand the Father-heart of God
 - Your FATHER knows you need these things
 - It is your FATHER's good pleasure to give you the kingdom
 - All these things will be added - we don't have to pursue them

3) Be Generous

Luke 12:33-34 Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. 34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

- Generosity is placing treasure in heaven
- Where treasure is our heart will be
- 1Ti 6:17-19 ESV As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. 18 They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, 19 thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, ***so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.***
 - Riches are for us to ENJOY
 - But with our riches He also calls us to
 - DO GOOD
 - TO BE RICH IN GOOD WORKS
 - TO BE GENEROUS AND READY TO SHARE
 - You can take it with you - storing up treasure as a good foundation for the future --- **You take it with you by giving it away**

4) Learn the Secret of Contentment

Heb 13:5-6 KJV Let your conversation be ***without covetousness; and be content*** with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. 6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

Contentment is based on

- His promise that He will NEVER leave me
- He will NEVER forsake me
- The LORD is My HELPER

Paul learned the secret of contentment - “the LORD is his helper also”

- Php 4:11-13 NIV ... I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 12 I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. 13 ***I can do all this through him who gives me strength.***