

The Parables of Christ no. 35

Covetousness

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Prayer...

LUKE 12:13 ¶ *And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. 14 And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? 15 And he said unto them, **Take heed**, Now, this word take heed means to be careful and pay close attention to or listen attentively with the view in mind of become aware of something that you must not forget... And so he says **Take heed and beware** (which means to be very cautious and aware) **of covetousness:***

Notice that Jesus is actually giving them a warning about something and He tells them that they should pay close attention to this warning and that they should never allow this thing to over take them. And that thing which He is telling them that they must be aware of not allow it to over come them is **covetousness**.

Now, what is so bad about covetousness that Jesus would warn us about it? well, first we must know what it is in order to understand how it is such a danger to us. And we must understand what covetousness is so we can know how to deal with it. For not only did Jesus warn us about it, but we are also forbidden By God to be of a covetous nature.

EXODUS 20:17 *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.*

Now to put this in 21st century terms, **Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house**, that's hasn't changed any and is self explanatory, and **thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife**, that speaks of adultery or even fornication, because fornication is adultery potentially, because it is the same act but done before marriage, and if you do not marry that person, you are violating someone else's future spouse. The God adds, **nor his manservant**, That means to take advantage of someone else's hired help, **nor his maidservant**, that means also to take advantage of the hired help, **nor his ox**, The ox was used to plow the fields, and to haul great loads to market, and it was a beast of burden. In today's terms, it would be his equipment, his means of providing work, his lawn mower, or tractor, or other such equipment that is needed to do his work. **nor his ass**, Now, the ass was his means of transportation. Therefore today it would be his car, or van, or motorcycle, bicycle, or boat, or airplane. And finally God summarizes all that is your neighbor's, by saying, **nor any thing that is thy neighbour's**.

So you see, God hates covetousness, and set a law to control any desire we would have to be covetous. Because covetousness leads to other crime such as extortion, jealousy, and even murder. We have in our major cities today, young men even killing others for a pair of tennis shoes. How low civilization has become. It's just a sign of the end-time.

II TIMOTHY 3:1 ¶ *This know also, that in the last days **perilous times shall come**. 2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, **covetous**, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, 4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; 5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. 6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, 7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

The word cov-et-ous is an *adj.* and it means: **1.** Excessively and culpably desirous of the possessions of another. **2.** Marked by extreme desire to acquire or possess: A desire to acquire more than one needs or deserves:

Now, it is not just a matter of conscience, nor is it a matter of simply saying, you will be happier if you are not covetous. But the word covetous speaks of more than just a mere desire to have something that you don't have, For covetousness leads to attitudes that become crippling, and destructive in nature. Other words that describe covetousness are: greed, avarice, insatiability and rapacity. And covetous behavior is manifested in a resentful desire for another's advantages: Therefore other words that are associated with covetousness are: envy, jealousy, begrudging, resentment, grudging, and spite. All of which

are evil attributes and characteristics, and God not only hates covetousness, but He abhors it.

PSALMS 10:3 *For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth.* God totally rejects covetousness. It is an abomination to Him.

LUKE 16:13 *No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. 14 And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him. 15 And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.*

No wonder Jesus clashed so much with the Pharisees. They not only had their noses in the air as a self righteous people, but they were also covetous which God abhorreth. That means they were a greedy bunch, looking out for number one all the time. And number one to them of course was self. God not only abhors the covetous, but He actually places them in the same category as the adulterer, the fornicator, the extortioner, and the idolator, because after all, that is what extortion is, using deceit to gain what is someone else's, and that is what adultery is, taking what belongs to someone else, and that is what fornication is, using in a sexual way, someone who belongs to someone else.

I CORINTHIANS 5:9 ¶ *I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: 10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. 11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator (that means that he has sex outside of marriage, and as you know we had to ask a young man to leave this congregation that would not repent of his fornication a few years ago), or covetous (and we know those are those people that just have to have the latest in everything, and if the neighbor get's something, they have to have it also. Those are weak people in the flesh, and in fact they are fleshly minded people, and wrongly motivated people), or an idolater (and these are people who worship others like movie stars, and athletes, and just about any person or even things, such as they worship a certain style of clothing, or certain cars, or a certain image. The world is full of these people because they have made gods out of many things, and in so doing they have turned away from the One and only True God.), or a railer (a railer is someone who expresses objections or is critical in a bitter and often harsh way and that uses abusive language in doing so. They don't have to use curse words, but they can use words that are just very demeaning, and words that just put down others.), or a drunkard (we all know what the drunkard is, that is a person who has no control over their own life, but they persist in abusing their flesh with alcohol.), or an extortioner (An extortioner is someone who uses an illegal use of one's official position or powers to obtain property, funds, or patronage.*

And I would like to add that the ministry has proven to be full of these kind of men. Just look at the televangelists, and the great schemes they have used to build the weak minded people out of their fortunes, promising them that God will bless them if they give it all to them. And then Paul tells us); *with such an one no not to eat.*

The Apostle Paul tells us here that we are not even to associate with those that are wicked and he includes in that wickedness those that are covetous. And they are not considered any less a sin than the worst of sins that he mentioned here such as extortion, fornication, and idolators.

I CORINTHIANS 6:9 ¶ *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate (that is the man that has a sissyfied spirit), nor abusers of themselves with mankind (those are the homosexuals), 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers (those are people who use abusive language to attack others), nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.*

EPHESIANS 5:1 ¶ *Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; 2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour. 3 ¶ But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;*(he mentions covetousness, and says may it not even once be named among you. That is how bad it is considered by God,

and yet there are many who have used the pulpit to acquire great wealth as I mentioned earlier.) *4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. 6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.*

I TIMOTHY 3:2 *A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; 3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;*

The sad thing is, is that it used to be if a minister got a divorce it would take them out of the pulpit, but not so any more. Now, they commit adultery and call it polygamy, and try to explain it away using the old testament. It used to be that the ministry worked with their own hands to make a living so they would not be pulled to play favorites to the wealthier tithe paying members of the church, but not today. Men of corrupt minds, think if I can get me a big church I can sit back and reap the labor of the people, and if I can get me a big missionary program, then I can skim off the top. I can buy me a \$150,000 camera or a fleet of cadillac's and instead of being servant of all, they become pontificators in a kingdom of their own, with men to serve them, and watch out for them, and set their appointments, and do all the things, that a true minister of God has to do for themselves. And what they do is create a kingdom around themselves, and all it becomes is a big business, pulling in millions of dollars, and it is a stench in God's nose.

If you look at the Life of William Branham, he avoided all such as that. His office was as small as my office, and his furniture was not stylish by any means. He had one type writer, and did not place an emphasis of material things, but rather he firmly affirmed **Matthew 7:7** *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you."*

Look, I work for a living, to pay my bills and make a home for my family. I do not say these things out of jealousy. I could have been a millionaire. I signed three one year contracts to play football. If that is what was in my heart, I could have found some Scripture or quote to justify my continuing in that. But My heart is too honest and open before God to do so. I could have used my reputation as having once played professional football to enhance and build upon that to build a ministry, and I could have said the things people wanted to hear to keep the people that have left this church. If I would have done like the others out there with their big churches, and compromised my position on this word, this church would be in the hundreds today instead of a couple dozen. But then I would have been walking down the wrong path, and not walking with God.

I know marketing. My job for the hospital and the pediatric offices that I serve is as the Director of Marketing. I have taught marketing at the University level, and I know how to attract people to an organization. I've doubled the membership to the River Valley Pediatricians since I took over the marketing, but when it comes to the Word of God, I have lost almost 90 percent of the people that have come to this place. My family and I are the only family left over from the original group. And we have only two other families from the first few years of the church.

Why? Because I disdain sin. I abhor sin. I abhor using the Gospel for filthy lucre sake. And I will not compromise the truth for a pay check, nor for a larger congregation. But God has honored my stand, and he has given me a congregation that encompasses the entire world. He has taken this ministry into 127 countries, and we haven't sold one tape to do that. People write and request to me that they would like to buy my sermons. I write back, that we do not sell them. If they would like a certain series, just let me know and I will send it to them free of charge. That is not a way to get rich my brother and sister. But the Scripture says that we should **buy the truth and sell it not.**

II PETER 2:12 *But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; 13 And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; 14 Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: 15 Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam [the son] of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;*

Now, in getting back to our parable... **for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.** 16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: 17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? 18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, [and] be merry. 20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? 21 So is he **that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.** 22 ¶ And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. 23 The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. 24 Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? 25 And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? 26 If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? 27 Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 28 If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more [will he clothe] you, O ye of little faith? 29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. 30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. 31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. 32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. 34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.