

The Problem with Things Luke 12:13-21

Illustration of a pastor on his deathbed, calling his banker and lawyer...both on opposite side of his bed, held their hands...Lawyer said, "Why have you invited us here?" "I know Jesus died between two thieves and I wanted to do the same."

We may give bankers and lawyers a hard time but the real truth is when it comes to things we all have a hard time.

I. **A Personal Instruction v15** "Watch out, be on your guard"

Command...keep your eyes open to your inner motivation and your outward actions; put up defensives like:

1. **Real personal accountability**, having others who you respect speak truth into your life, even when you don't like it.
2. **Real vibrant devotional life**, so you guard your heart from justifying your behavior and thought life.
3. **Real investment of your time** into the lives of others who can't help you get where you want to go.
4. **Real sacrifice of your finances** into the work of the Kingdom of God, so you don't spend all you make for things that will not last.

2. **A Powerful Illusion v15** "All kinds of Greed"

What is greed? 'an intense and selfish desire for something, especially wealth, power or food....' **Wikipedia**, "also known as avarice, cupidity, or covetousness, is the inordinate desire to possess wealth, goods, or objects of abstract value with the intention to keep it for one's self, far beyond the dictates of basic survival and comfort. It is applied to a markedly high desire for and pursuit of wealth, status and power.

Eric Fromm, "a bottomless pit which exhausts the person in an endless effort to satisfy the need without ever reaching satisfaction."

Thomas Aquinas, "Greed is a sin against God, just as all mortal sins, in as much as man condemns things eternal for the sake of temporal things."

Regardless of what you hear...Greed is not good!

My definition of Greed: 'The desire to acquire something to make yourself fulfilled and content without God.'

There is Greed for Prosperity, Presence (impression and applause), Power, and Position, so you can get the other previous three.

3. **A Pointed Intention v15** "life does not consist in an abundance of possessions."

Your life is important but you can miss it.

Having Possessions is not wrong.

Abundance is not condemned here.

What is upside down is the thinking, the drive, the desire that life is about having more than you need, and that your one goal in life is to **'get all you can. Can all you can get. Sit on the lid and poison the rest.'**

Bumper sticker, “He who dies with the most toys, wins!” (picture)

Jesus is saying, “Don’t think or live like this...not God’s plan for you or your family.”

4. A Perfect Illustration v16-21

The Parable of the Rich Fool...**7 things Greed will lead you to do:**

- 1. Seek God to get you what you believe is rightfully yours. V13**
- 2. Stay in conversation with the wrong person. V17**
- 3. Assume that what can be personally observed is truth. V17** “no place to store my crops.”
- 4. Make plans without God’s direction V18** (tear down, build bigger, why not build additional barns? No consideration that maybe God wanted him to use his increase to bless others and the work of God...maybe even other family members.)
- 5. Find security in the wrong foundation v19** (I’ve got it made...party on)
- 6. Become self-absorbed.** (11 times in these verses: I, my, myself, and you, referring to myself are used)
- 7. Forget your own mortality. V20-21**
 1. Your life has an expiration date.
 2. You can’t take it with you, whatever it is that you held for a brief moment in time. (picture of hearse and trailer)

3. It is possible to live wealthy life, by all appearances and still live a misguided and misspent life!

There are all sorts of illustrations from history and the present where wealth, honor and influence is not enough to hold security for individuals....this is not just about money and it does not only infect the affluent....you can be in poverty and be consumed with greed...you can be stuck in the middle class and be a raving, greedaholic...it’s a heart issue that can only be cured by the Great Physician!