

3.26.23

Luke 12:13-21

The Lie of Covetousness

Bonus Feature!

Jesus taught using the teaching style of the day, which included word pictures, metaphors, similes, and stories. Simplicity and story-telling marked Jesus' teachings...but they held a deep meaning and profound truth. Almost a third of Jesus' teaching come in the form of parables. They created a polarizing response in their listeners. They elicited either a desire to draw near to seek answers or a frustration that made people depart perplexed.

John 8:12 says, **Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."**

- Light illuminates. In the same way Jesus opens our mind and illuminates His truth to our hearts and minds.
- Mystery surrounds light like mystery surrounds God . Scientists describe light as both electromagnetic waves and as a constant stream of photons. These are two different phenomenon. Which one is accurate and correct? They both are...depending on the application. In fact, electrons behave both like particles and waves. That's the stuff we are made out of. So...you and I are a living breathing logical contradiction.
- UV light at a wavelength of 254 nm is effective against pathogens, microorganisms, and harmful volatile organic compounds. Light disinfects...it cleans...it destroys harmful things. Jesus cleans...Jesus destroys that which is harmful in our lives. Amazing how Jesus and light share so many similarities!
- Light is not constrained by time. Light travels at what is called the speed of light. At the speed of light, time stops. Light, therefore, is not constrained by time. It is a timeless phenomenon. God created time, so He exists outside of it. God, therefore, is not constrained by time. He is a timeless God.
- Light is absorbed onto dark surfaces and reflects off of light surfaces. Think about that from a spiritual standpoint. When our heart is dark with sin and unforgiveness, Jesus penetrates and brings forgiveness and healing and spiritual warmth. When we are forgiven and Jesus removes all that darkness and we are light we reflect His light and His glory. Amazing analogy. The spiritual journey of life.

Main Event

Luke chapter 12 starting at verse 13.

13 Then one from 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 an arbitrator over you?” 15 And He said to them, “Take heed and beware of [c]ovetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.”

His teachings were primarily focused on the coming of the Kingdom of God. 55X in Matthew, 20X in Mark, 46X in Luke, and 5X in John. That Jesus was restoring God’s kingdom over the world. God’s spirit residing in a new temple...but not a building...but in the lives of Jesus’ followers.

Jesus also taught about the ethics of the kingdom.

- The first ethical demand of the kingdom is to love God wholly
- The second is to love your neighbor as yourself.

This passage falls under the category of the ethics of the kingdom.

According to the law of the day, the elder brother received two-thirds of the inheritance and the younger brother received one-third. This man did not ask Jesus to listen to both sides and make a righteous judgment; he asked Jesus to take sides with him against his brother (“Tell my brother to divide the inheritance”).

To covet = to yearn to possess or have something. To desire that which belongs to someone else. It’s a strong envious desire.

Take heed and beware of covetousness. It means, “guard yourselves”.

One’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses: This is the overall principle that Jesus develops here. This is the “aha moment”...the key truth...the crucial element...the punch line if you will.

The lie... “Your life consists of the abundance of things you possess”

The truth... “Your life consists of a soul that is longing to know it’s creator”

The parable of the rich fool.

16 Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. 17 And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ 18 So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.” ’ 20 But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’

21 “So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

What does the parable say about Covetous Man...then we’ll unpack a few of these.

- He was wealthy...viewed as blessed...part of the hook...the hammer.
- He was shrewd
- He was confident. He said, "I will do this". Comes with being smart.
- He was anxious ("What shall I do?"). We are naïve if we think that wealth alleviates stress. Often the opposite is true.
- He was self-centered
- He was a fool

He left this world the poorest of beggars...with absolutely nothing. He believed the lie!

Jesus says in verse 21, **"So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."**

- Where is your treasure?
- Are you rich toward God?

The rich fool believed a lie.

Here are some truths about lies...

- They come from our flesh, the world, and the devil
- Lies tend to come at us as half-truths. When the serpent tempted Eve to disobey God and eat from the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, he said, **"You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil"**.
- The first lie was a covetous lie...Eve wanted what God had.
- Living a lie always leads to death. There is no version of living and believing lies that doesn't include a very bad ending.

We combat lies by what the bible calls renewing the mind.

- 1 Corinthians 2:16. **For "who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.**
- 2 Corinthians 10:5, **casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.**
- Romans 12:2, **2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.**