

Traps for the High Achiever's Soul.

1. Jesus warns us about a motivational desire and a powerful belief, both of which can hide deep within.

"Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

- Why do we need to be on guard regarding "covetousness"?

- What is wrong with the belief that life's essence and goal consists in the abundance of one's possessions?

2. "Belief Traps" that **all** Achievers can easily fall into:

- *Net-worth = Self-worth and Self-Sufficiency.*
- *Self-Sufficiency provides me with control, safety and comfort.*
- *I'm Superior over those who don't achieve well.*
- *The Approval of others is secured by achievement status.*
- *Successful achievement leads to dissipation*

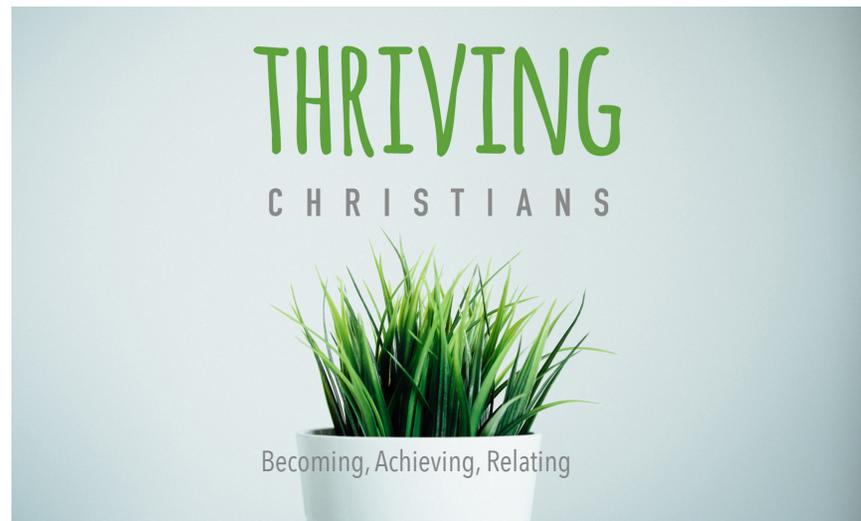
3. If life does not consist of abundant earth-bound possessions, how can one instead be rich toward God? How can I lay up treasure in heaven?

²¹ So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.

1 Timothy 6:17-19 - 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.

Next Sunday, May 24, 2020: Part 6 "Thriving Christians"

Travis Marsh will focus again on the "Relational" segment of our lives entitled:
Thriving by embracing Relationships.



Luke 12:13-21

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

tell my brother to divide the inheritance:

Two brothers were embroiled in a squabble over the timing and division of an inheritance. In that time, rabbis were frequently called in to act as judges in such disputes. This brother, preoccupied with gaining his share, demands the attention of Jesus. Jesus quickly tells the man and the crowd that he will not arbitrate and more importantly, that the man needs to check his heart desires for the sin of covetousness.

Take care, and be on your guard: We should ask ourselves why Jesus would be intensely warning this man (and us) about an inner motivation or sinful desire called covetousness. Jesus says we need to "take care and be on guard" about this inner predisposition of our hearts. Why?

covetousness: Often translated 'greediness' or avarice; it's a deep craving to possess what belongs to others. It is an attitude/desire of the heart which causes a person to be preoccupied with money - having an exaggerated love of earthly possession. Jesus is not saying wealth is inherently evil, neither is he denying the validity of earning income, or possessing worldly goods. As Paul would say, "the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil." (see 1Tim. 6:10).

one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

¹⁶*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."*

one's life does not consist in: Jesus tells us that a man's life does not consist in the abundance of one's personal possessions. "This is a lesson not against material things, but against materialism. Materialism is that worldview which sees the essence of life to be found in the possession of wealth." [Sproul, R. C. (1999). A Walk with God: An Exposition of Luke (p. 263).] If we have this belief about abundant possessions being the object of life, the indispensable goal of living, we will become covetous and not be rich toward God.

land of a rich man produced plentifully: To illustrate how pernicious is the inner desire of greediness, Jesus tells a parable of a rich and successful farmer. This year his land produced above and beyond his expectations. He achieved a bumper crop and Jesus then tells us this man's developing inner thoughts.

What shall I do, ...no where to store my crops?: The first problem to be solved in regard to the bumper crop is the lack of storage. That his increased prosperity offers him opportunity to do something for the poor or less successful, does not even come into his mind; instead selfishness strikes because the desire to possess wealth is deep in his soul. The farmer quickly decides that the path to happiness and contentment is to tear down his inadequately sized barns and build larger ones that will hold his treasure of grain.

I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have ample...": Jesus continues to tell us the thinking of the prosperous achiever farmer. He tells himself at a deep level, "*you have ample*", meaning, "I am set for many years. I'm secure, wealthy, and can relax any worries about my future." In Jesus' mind this man's delight is a deceitful hope. This man believes he has now found long sought-for rest in this bumper crop but for Jesus this belief is a trap.

relax, eat, drink and be merry: The farmer intends to live a life of ease and indulgence. Not only idleness and food, but "merry" reveling is the ideal that this high achiever believes he now can look

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?' ²¹ So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."*

forward to. The good life is in his grasp. **But God said to him, Fool!:** But the verdict of God is that he is a fool. Because he really believed that life consists in the abundance of the things which a person possesses, this man is not ready for the next life, the eternal life. This man had spent a lot of time considering how he was going to enjoy his material possessions, but he never considered the state of his soul. He was thinking of the earthly future, but he had little concern about his eternal future. He neglected his own soul. Jesus deals with this question many times in his teaching. Perhaps his most famous statement on this subject is found in the Sermon on the Mount: 'What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?' (Luke 9:25). Only a fool neglects to consider the state of his soul. Jesus said, 'This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God' (12:21). Warnings about covetousness: See Matt 6:19-24; James 2:1-5; Hebrews 13:5; 1 Tim. 6:10, 17-19. **This night your soul is required of you:** The man in Jesus story was looking forward to years of rest, relaxation, reveling and instead he only has hours of life on this earth.