



VANCOUVER

Mid-Week Bulletin

Pastor's Email Note 6

February 07, 2018

On Staying Invested Eternally: Beware of Greed

Luke 12:13-21

In the Parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:13-21) Jesus said to the man (the rich fool), *"Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed!"* (v. 15a).

Greed is the result of being covetous.

A greedy person is one who is self-seeking and selfish at the highest level, not considering others. "Greed" or *pleonexia* in a person is an insatiable desire for things; it is to covet. To "covet" means to yearn for something with envy. The last of God's Ten Commandments warns against coveting your neighbor's wife, house, or anything that belongs to your neighbor. When we look towards material things in the hopes that they would somehow fill a need, we are sorely mistaken because *"for not even when one has an abundance does life consist of his possessions"*.

Greed is not to be confused with wealth or prosperity.

The Bible is filled with examples of rich men blessed by an abundance of riches - Abraham, Job, and David, to name just a few. The Lord wants to bless His people (Deuteronomy 28:10-14). But remember that God owns everything and money or wealth, by themselves, are not evil. The danger is that when a person chooses to love money and possessions he or she becomes a slave to it, never being satisfied and tirelessly wanting more. (Ecclesiastes 5:10).

Savings/investments are meant to provide for, but not secure our future. Our heart continues to trust God and not our savings. We hold our savings with loose hands knowing that it is God's and He may call upon us to use it for His purposes. So when you save or make investments, do so knowing that you are simply a steward of God's resources to be used only here on earth. Ask yourself if you are spending your God given blessings in a way that lays up treasures in Heaven.

Greed is sinful because it seeks to satisfy the self first. Greed is sinful because it is idolatrous.

In planning what to do with his unexpected surplus, the man in Luke 12: 18, 19a focuses on "I, I, I" and "my, my, my" (*I will tear down **my** barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store **my** surplus grain*) without any sense of gratefulness nor any acknowledgement of God in his mind. Yet in Luke 16:13 Jesus said, *"No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."* Greed is a problem of the heart. It is not an issue of how much or how little we have, it is our attitude towards them. Who do we acknowledge for all the things that we have? Who do we dedicate our resources to? If God isn't in the picture you are in danger of falling into sin.

Despite the false sense of security, comfort, or joy possession brings, it does not come close to satisfying our actual need.

In Luke 12:20,21 God said to the man, *'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'* The man has so far neglected God and he has neglected others. In this passage he neglects his own humanity/ mortality. We will all die and we can absolutely take nothing with us. Your greatest need is a life giving relationship with Jesus Christ.

It's not about how much we have – it's how we choose to use what is given us. *"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."* Matthew 6:33. Remember that whatever it is you decide to keep, you will undoubtedly

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lose. But what you decide to give to God, it will last for all eternity.

III. Application

Why was the man called a “fool”? He was considered a fool because nothing about his life included God.

- ◆ He did not understand, or acknowledge, where his wealth came from.
- ◆ He did not understand the purpose of his riches.
- ◆ He chose to put the security of his future on his riches.
- ◆ He assumed he would live long and did not understand the frailty of his mortality

When we are abundantly blessed we have the opportunity to love God through our generous giving, to love our neighbours by helping them in their need, and by this we lay up treasures in heaven. Acts 20:35, *In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.* When we save wisely, we hold on to it loosely knowing that God may call on us to give it away for His purposes.

Greed, like almost everything we have been studying about financial stewardship, is a heart issue, and the opposite of greed is contentment. In 1 Timothy 6:6-10, *“But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.”*

Review (Knowledge):

Please take a few minutes to read the summary above. What is the highlight of last Sunday’s sermon for you and why?

Sharing/Discussion (Practical Wisdom):

1. Have you ever considered the ability to give as a blessing?
2. Do you work to receive or do you work to give?
3. Is your giving characteristic of your faith?

Prayer (Take time to pray for one another.)