RAINSVILLE
FIRST FAMILY

Pastor David Cofield
03.08.2020
"The Safeguards Against the Idolatry of Covetousness"
Luke 12:13-21

Rainsville First Baptist Church
223 Church Avenue
Rainsville, AL 35986

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Three weeks ago as we came back to the Gospel of Luke to continue preaching through this unique, downcast focused gospel, we picked up in **Luke 12:13,** where we left off a few months ago. Jesus had been talking about the problem of hypocrisy in the earlier verses of chapter 12, and there is nothing more distasteful to the spiritual palate than hypocrisy.

Bruce calls "hypocrisy the leading Pharisaic vice."

Luke 12:1 **"Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."**

But, in verse 15, against the backdrop of Jesus not willing to get involved in a seemingly honest dispute about justice, he adds a more stern warning…
"Take heed and beware…."

This is a different word than in verse 1. It is a stronger word of warning here. Thus, Jesus is raising the bar of warning. What he is about to say should cause us greater alertness.

Blessed is the person who tells you the truth about impending danger than one who makes you wealthy.

The word is greed – covetousness. It is a very descriptive word. It literally means to thirst for having more...always wanting more and more and still more. It is as if a man, in order to quench his thirst, takes a drink of salt water, which happens to be the only water that is available. This makes him still more thirsty. So he drinks again and again, until his thirst eventually kills him.

It is a lust that controls…a stronghold of having more.

It grows until it does not matter how one gets more….even at the expense of others or dishonesty.

Jesus takes the sin of covetousness to a level that he does take not the sin of hypocrisy.

Luke 16:13 **"No servant can serve two masters….You cannot serve God and mammon"** (money – ESV and NIV).

You cannot serve two masters and he does not say you can't serve God and the devil. Instead, he says you must decide between serving God and money. They are incompatible. They are oil and water. They are holy and evil.

A heart that is greedy - always looking to how you can make another buck, focused on just making more and more and more above all else – is not evidence of a heart that has been converted and changed by the grace and mercy of God.

The Greek word means to "ward off a foe." Money is not the foe – greed is.
"The love of money is the root of all evil." – I Timothy 6:10

Exodus 20:3 "You shall have no other gods before Me."

All sins are alike….while all sin is sin, there are some sins that are far more destructive than others. Sexual sins and sins dealing with money and possessions.

Paul also, under the same inspiration of the Holy Spirit, raises the sin of covetousness

Listen to **Ephesians 5:3** in the NIV – **"But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people."**

Then he says in verse 5 – **"For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a person is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."**

Paul agrees with Jesus that the god of money, possessions, greed and covetousness is equal to idolatry because you cannot serve God and be a greedy person.

God is your life, not riches. Not money. Not possessions.

Our pleasure is in God – not money.

Building a golden altar to Baal with no glory to God. It is all for yourself.

The only reason you accepted the new job is money. Or the personal benefits –or– the way it moves you up the ladder of getting to the top in that job.
Many marriages, families, children have suffered greatly because of these moves.

The only reason you attend a church is how it makes you feel…feel better about myself.

You date or marry for yourself instead of how can I give myself away.

You have children but you are not willing to have your life greatly altered and to give of yourself, time,

Rich young ruler…"Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

He went away sad because he had great riches.

If self is on the throne, ever decision is about your life – your happiness – what will promote you. But if you don't repent, it will lead you to destruction.

In the text of Luke 12 - Everything he did ended in himself/terminated in himself.

While he thought he was preparing for the future, God was planning for his death.

Romans 1 – God gives them up for the idolatry and the essence of it results in homosexuality – when "one loves himself."

Idolatry all goes back to self.

I'm as good as so-and-so...Self righteousness...In your opinion

You don't have a right to question my religious experience.
In **Philippians 3:5-6** full, authentic bloodline of a Jew – but you forsake all previous personal religious experiences for the knowledge – intimate, heart changing knowledge of Jesus

Even false religions is about self. Mohammad is not an idol, but it's what you make it in your mind …. Thus self is the idol.

Even your repentance could be about self.

II Corinthians 7 "For godly sorrow produces repentance to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death."

Worldly sorrow…what did it cost me? My family? My lifestyle? My job? My reputation?

Godly sorrow … no price is too high to pay for the clean conscience and right standing before God. Verse 9 – **"So that you might suffer loss from us in nothing."**

So we hear the admonition of the Lord: **"Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind." – Matthew 22:37**

Covetousness makes the heart to where there is no room for God. But God does not just want "room" – he wants it all. It is an ever growing process of giving all to God – laying all on the altar….and its never that you come to that place where you have done it once and for all. But the attitude of the heart is…God I have nothing. Everything is yours.

Take up your cross and follow me.

Christian baptism …. We die to self and bury the old man in the waters of baptism.