

03122023 **Greed is a serious Faith problem** Luke 12.....Greed is a one syllable word for the sin of covetousness. It comes from a Greek word meaning "to have more." Greed is a demon within us that whispers to our heart, "You need to have more than you have already." Greed is a state of mind which constantly wants more. Greed is sin, one of the seven deadly sins. And the tenth commandment....thou shall not covet be greedy

Question....Who is the most satisfied: someone with six million dollars, or someone with six children? The answer is someone with six children, because the one with six million dollars wants more.

like all the other deadly sins, it is an attitude that leads to many other sins. People who want more become hard-hearted, especially when they think they are only demanding their rights.

we Americans which includes many of us American Jesus followers have set the world's standard for greed and consumerism... ..consuming almost 46% of the worlds goods...while having only 6% of the world's population...with a continual hunger to consume more...

The problem of greed is of great concern to Jesus and just as he spoke about hypocrisy... as we studied two weeks ago...today he takes on greed...lets pick up the narrative... many thousands following Jesus....just rebuked the Pharisees for their hypocrisy...warned his disciples that they too were prone to hypocrisy...and they too would be prone to greed..

LK 12: 13 Then someone called from the crowd, "Teacher, please tell my brother to divide our father's estate with me." 14 Jesus

replied, “Friend, who made me a judge over you to decide such things as that?”

The man who asked Jesus to mediate his dispute with his brother who was probably with him.. He asked Jesus to tell his brother to give him what is rightfully his...because one of the roles of the Messiah would be to execute justice for the people..

ESV PS 72:2 ² *May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice!*

- Jesus doesn't question the man's right to inheritance. Neither does Jesus deny his authority to arbitrate the property dispute. He simply asks who gave him that right.
- **The nation must receive him as their messiah in order for him to be their judge....** Jesus responds to the man have you made me your messiah??? has your brother received me as Messiah...
- *The man wanted* Judgment about the inheritance, Jesus shifted to something more immediately important to judge... **I will judge your motivation... and he addressed the underlying problem in this family squabble....greed which was already dividing brothers and has the power to destroy families.**

¹⁵ *Then he said, “Beware! Guard against every kind of greed. Life is not measured by how much you own.”*

- **Jesus warned, greed is a much greater heart issue than the fear of being cheated**
- **In fact. The Bible identifies greed as a form of idolatry, one of the worldly desires we must "put to death"**

NLT COL 3:5BDon't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world..

- **And he tells the man a story a parable to expose his heart... my friend this is about you... and I believe about us too....**

NLT LK 12:16 Then he told them a story: "A rich man had a fertile farm that produced fine crops. ¹⁷ He said to himself, 'What should I do? I don't have room for all my crops.' ¹⁸ Then he said, 'I know! I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I'll have room enough to store all my wheat and other goods. ¹⁹ And I'll sit back and say to myself, "My friend, you have enough stored away for years to come. Now take it easy! Eat, drink, and be merry!"'

- **This farmer is already rich, he wants to build new barns which means his existing ones were already full...His solution was to store up more for himself even though he already had plenty.**
- **In only three verses, he says "himself", "I" "my" or "myself" and you referring to himself... 13 times.**
- **He violated the second commandment to love others as he loved himself...he had full barns...so the extension would be to fill others barns... especially those who were in need...**
- **This thought apparently never entered his mind**

NLT LK 12: 20 "But God said to him, 'You fool! You will die this very night. Then who will get everything you worked for?' ²¹ "Yes, a person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God."

- **He was greedy because he believed he was sovereign over himself and his possessions...**

- **He forgot that God is sovereign....man is not....God owns it all...man is a steward....this man is not sovereign over himself or his possessions... in fact As the proof of God's sovereignty...the man would leave this world tonight unbeknownst to him...and he would have no say how they were divided...**
- **So from Jesus's perspective the man is a fool...a fool according to scripture is anyone who fails to: 1) recognize his blessings as coming from God.. 2) He failed to recognize his obligation to God in the use of his possessions as they ultimately belong to God...you are simply a manager of them**
- 3) He was rich in things but desperately poor in his relationship with God...he had reverse order priorities...

LK 12: 21 "Yes, a person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God."

- **From God's perspective relationship with him and investing in the care of people are far more valuable than things...they are eternal...things are temporal ...but can be used for eternal purposes ...but do not leave this place...**
- **Even though material possessions are temporal they can be used for eternal purposes and acquire eternal riches... but they themselves do not leave this place**
- **However the way this man used his riches ...he would lose them through death and did not acquire any eternal rewards with them a total waste for him in the big picture.....**

Now Jesus turns to his disciples...greed comes from insecurity about the future...which cause worry...and worry does not do anything for you...

LK 12:22 Then, turning to his disciples, Jesus said, “That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food to eat or enough clothes to wear. ²³ For life is more than food, and your body more than clothing.

I am your creator...I made you...I certainly know how to feed and clothe you...if I create the greater...you...I know how to take care of the lessor...food and clothing...

➤ **So don't worry life consist of more than just taking care of the body...**

➤ **Worry of the future is a poison that creates the disease of greed**

²⁴ Look at the ravens. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for God feeds them. And you are far more valuable to him than any birds! ²⁵ Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? ²⁶ And if worry can't accomplish a little thing like that, what's the use of worrying over bigger things?

- **Ravens are scavenger birds.....cannot create supply, cannot harvest, cannot store away, they live day to day on what they find...and God provides for them day by day...and they do not worry about their life...**
- **Though they live by what we could describe as day to day survival...or hand to mouth survival...but they live like they are free...and appear to not have a concern in the world....**
- **And The rich man has every advantage; the raven has none. Yet the raven has an even greater advantage -- God. God himself provides food for the unclean raven. God himself makes a way for this black discredited bird.**
- **When we worry about food we leave out the God Factor. "God feeds them." And then Jesus reminds his disciples that they are**

of much greater value than birds. This is the argument of lesser to greater.

- If God even feeds unclean birds, he will much more provide for humans?
- This doesn't mean that God fills a bird feeder every morning for the ravens. They spend their day finding food and devouring it. It's not a "cake walk." Nor are we to expect God to put us on "Easy Street."
- But we are to expect him to provide for our needs. Jesus tells us to expect that!
- **Medical intervention, eating properly, exercise...can add to our lives...but one thing will not add even an hour to our lives...WORRY**

➤ Another example

LK 12: 27 "Look at the lilies and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing, yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. ²⁸ And if God cares so wonderfully for flowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?"

Plants depend on water and sunshine, soil. Insects, wind, and the varying elements and conditions.....and they have no control over any of them.....

- and plants have no control over the animals or humans who could pick, trample, or kill them for they can't even run away...
- at least birds can fly away when trouble approaches..... and in fact in the wild they have to wait for storms...and just like us storms often bring what we need to grow with...
- Yet God provides for them...and blossom in such a manner that they display beauty that no man can match...

- Consider that, Jesus says. Consider the beauty of the wildflowers, and then realize that even Solomon, Israel's richest king, could not compare. The grasses of the field are clothed with beauty, even though in a few weeks the grasses will be dry and be collected for use in cooking fires.
- So why are we so concerned about clothing when God so elegantly clothes the wildflowers?

➤ If God does that for his plant creation...how much more will he cloth us...in all we need...and he has equipped us to use our brains and we have great influence over the outcome of much of what we do and possess.

➤ We have God and where with all...why do we worry????

➤ Because we have little faith....

➤ **The antidote then to worry is to have more faith....**How?? by not setting our hearts desire on the less significant things...food and clothes...but on God's Kingdom the vastly more important thing...

➤ **But wait food and clothing and everyday life things are important ...but not near as important as God things...**

➤ For those who do not know God ...those things are the most important things..

³⁰ These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers all over the world, but your Father already knows your needs. ³¹ Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and he will give you everything you need.

But to us...seeking his Kingdom...that which is most important in the Kingdom...ought be that which is most important to us...

- Dad know what we need... food and clothes etc. so don't let the fear of not having those things ...mess with you..

- as if God is a negligent Father...he wants us to have the best! After all were His kids...but the best is not here...it is in our future and he does not want us to miss out!

LK 12:32 “So don’t be afraid, little flock. For it gives your Father great happiness to give you the Kingdom.

- **The followers of Jesus replace thing-seeking with kingdom-seeking.** Best investment is to our future !!

NLT Luke 12:33 “*Sell your possessions and give to those in need. This will store up treasure for you in heaven! And the purses of heaven never get old or develop holes. Your treasure will be safe; no thief can steal it and no moth can destroy it.* ³⁴ *Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.*

- **The man had barns here to store riches...we have purses...which we can open to give as necessary ...Hold your possessions as if they are a purse!!!**
- **That you may open to bless others from... bless others.. in the purse of God will open to bless you in heaven**
 - **What you hold tight possession wise reveals your heart!**
 - Your belief system as**
- **The basis of this fearlessness about our possessions, and in all that we do is God's promise to provide and be there for us.**
- **Generosity is the by product of faith...**

So the question he asks his disciples is the same one we have to answer Verse ²⁸ ,,,, *Why do you have so little faith?* *end*

Being Little Sheep Verse 32: *LK 12:32* “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.

➤ In other words don't worry little flock I am your Shepherd....

The Lord is my shepherd psalm 23...A psalm of David.

PS 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.

Here it is plain again that the basis of fearlessness is not our human resources, but God's being there for us. Don't fear even though you are only sheep (in the midst of wolves, 10:3) and even though you are little and not great.

➤ You are part of his kingdom...so do not be afraid...Father will give to us in the way that is most beneficial to us...

Bottom line for us today is thisDon't be afraid to stop seeking thing for your security...because that is often our biggest fear...we are afraid to stop seeking things for our security...

³³ *Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.* ³⁴ *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

➤ **We need not be afraid and thereby react by being greedy for riches for our security... Fear is the mother of Greed...Faith is the antidote to fear...**

➤ Generosity is the by product of faith...

- **So trust the Father for we possess treasure in heaven where the fear of loss will never happen...**
 - **So be rich in what blesses the heart of God...the spiritual and eternal...and the material will also be provided...**
 - **So be generous with your earthly goods...so that even though they are temporal...they will fill an eternal purse...for your joy in the Kingdom of God...**

Provide purses (like the rich man provided barns for himself) that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys

- **So children of God...remember what kingdom you belong to...this will pass ...so live as Children focused on the king...and bestow gifts to those in need...**
- **Your lifestyle reveals your priorities... and your priorities reveal your heart...what you really care about...**
- **So dear children of God ...does our heart line up with the heart of God...**

MT 22: 36 "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

*MT 22:37 Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor **as yourself**.' ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."*

End

- This farmer is already rich..... he wants to build new barns which means his existing ones were already full...His solution was to store up more for himself even though he already had plenty.....

So regarding the man who asked the question...it is not as important how much inheritance you receive but...why do you want wealth? And what are you going to do with it if you get it ???

so Jesus draws the principle...

MT 25:21 "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

- Faithfulness in a few things promotes us to managing many things...many things includes a promotion to blessing others
- Faithfulness with handling things puts you in the place to be faithful in handling even more precious things...lives....

There is a principle here...

PS 24:1 The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;

- Which is actually the verse from which our church is named...his place....
- So from the perspective of Goda person's wealth is not in what they possess but in how they view their possessions...so God says this about him...
- by declaring this...
*Then he said, `This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.
¹⁹ And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." '*

PS 72:3 The mountains will bring prosperity to the people, the hills the fruit of righteousness.

*PS 72:4 He will defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy;
 he will crush the oppressor.*

PS 72:5 He will endure as long as the sun, as long as the moon, through all generations.

one of the idols we cherish most in this country...even we Jesus followers... the mantra of America... consumerism...greedthe obsession of more and better

Greed is insatiable. When someone asked Lyndon Johnson how much Texas farmland would satisfy him, he said, "All I want is all I've got — plus all that borders it." The god of greed is never satisfied.

In truth, we've come to think of greed as an ambiguous quality--sometimes good, sometimes bad.... but not *that* bad. Its badness lies not just in itself, but,

An old joke claims that a miser makes a terrible neighbor and a wonderful ancestor.

Although death claimed Kenneth Lay before he served a day in prison, the convicted former CEO of the Enron Corporation will forever be an icon of unbridled greed. The son of a Baptist minister, Lay--who in May was found guilty of fraud and conspiracy charges in one of America's biggest corporate scandals--maintained his innocence until he died. " Despite Lay's protestations of purity, evidence presented during his trial painted a picture of wretched material excess that included \$100 million in personal debt, all of which Lay defended by saying "[I]t was difficult to turn off that lifestyle like a spigot."

Lay's extravagance may fuel our collective outrage, but our righteous indignation runs smack up against a steady barrage of countervailing cultural messages: that greed--well harnessed and regulated--is good not only for corporations, but society as a whole, even the poor.

As God looks down on the earth, he sees a few of his children enjoying an incredible abundance of worldly goods. They worry about crop surpluses, weight-control, closet space and parking places. At the same time God also sees many others of his children, equally loved, who have no such worries. They go to bed hungry every night. Some of his children will starve to death this year. That's not fair! But few feel responsible to make a difference. Neither the farmers, nor the shippers, nor the retailers, nor the voters, nor the consumers, nor the government.

Reminds me of the story of Howard Hughes...All he ever wanted in life was more. He wanted more *money*, so he parlayed inherited wealth into a billion-dollar pile of assets. He wanted more *fame*, so he went to Hollywood and became a major filmmaker. He wanted more sensual *pleasures*, so he paid royal sums to indulge his every sexual urge. He wanted more *thrills*, so he designed, built and piloted the world's fastest and biggest airplanes. He wanted more *power*, so he secretly bought the favor of two United States presidents. All he ever wanted was more. He was convinced that more would bring him satisfaction. History shows otherwise. Howard Hughes ended his life as a miserable recluse, his arms punctured by needles from drugs. He died a billionaire junkie betrayed by the **myth of more. Trying to fill the hole inside**

Greed is the selfish desire for or pursuit of money, wealth, power, food, or other possessions, especially when this denies the same goods to others. ...

Greed is sin, one of the seven deadly sins. And the tenth commandment...thou shall not covet be greedy...Greed is a state of mind which constantly wants more.

^{PS 23:2} He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, ^{PS 23:3} he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness or his name's sake.

^{PS 23:4} Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

^{PS 23:5} You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

^{PS 23:6} Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.