

Beware of Covetousness

Introduction:

- A. A young man once asked me, “How much is your dad worth?” The very question was offensive to me. It implied my father's value could be measured in dollars.
 - B. Is financial success not the criteria most people use to judge one's worth?
 - C. Jesus taught that to so measure one's worth is to be guilty of covetousness. - Luke 12:13-21
 - D. Why should we beware of covetousness?
- I. What is “covetousness”?
- A. definition: “greedy desire to have more” (Thayer)
 - B. It is to be ever discontent with the amount of "things" we possess. - 1 Timothy 6:6-10; e.g., What houses do you look at when you go for a drive? Why do we look for hours at a catalog?
 - C. It is a form of idolatry. - Colossians 3:5-6; e.g., meetings of sales groups
- II. The Master gave us a good reason to beware of covetousness. - Luke 12:13-15
- A. Jesus was asked to be a civil judge of material affairs. - v. 13
 - B. He refused. - v. 14; cf. John 18:36
 - C. He grasped the opportunity to teach a great lesson. v. 15; cf. Matthew 16:26-27; cf. “Whoever finishes with the most toys wins.”
- III. He vividly illustrated this lesson by means of a parable. - vv. 16-20
- A. Jesus concluded the parable by calling the rich farmer of the story a “fool.” - v. 20
 - B. Why was the wealthy farmer a fool?
 - 1. NOT because of:
 - a. lack of business ability - vv. 16-19
 - b. thievery or dishonesty - v. 16
 - 2. Because:
 - a. He was SELFISH. - vv. 17-19; “I” used six times; “my” five times; e.g., student who asked, “What’s in it for me?”
 - b. He TRUSTED WEALTH. - vv. 17-19; Do you think money will bring security?
 - c. He FORGOT REAL JOY. - v. 19; “soul” = stomach; Do you think money will bring happiness?
 - d. He FORGOT GOD. - vv. 18-19; Has money become the god of your life?
 - e. He FORGOT DEATH. - vv. 19-20; Were you to die tonight, how much would your money benefit you?
 - 3. The wealthy farmer was a fool because he could not see past the material things of life.
 - a. He made elaborate preparation for physical comfort and financial security.
 - b. But he neglected to provide for the most valuable thing he possessed, his immortal soul.
- Conclusion:
- A. One who “layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God” is a fool.
 - B. Wherefore, “Take heed, and beware of covetousness.”