

# Covetousness

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, take your Bibles this morning and open them to our text, which is Luke chapter 12, and starting with verse 13.

! I'm going to read verses 13 all the way to verse 34, through verse 34. Rather lengthy text. I think we have time to look at it all this morning, okay?

Unless you're in a hurry. You're in a hurry? Okay, well, okay. Starting with verse 13. Then one from the crowd said to him, Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.

But he said to him, Man, who made me a judge or an arbitrator over you? And he said to them, Take heed, beware of covetousness.

For one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses. Then he spoke a parable to them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully.

[ 1 : 28 ] He thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops? So he said, I will do this. I will pull down my barns and build greater.

There I will store all my crops and my goods. I will say to my soul, Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years. Take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

But God said to him, Fool, this night your soul will be required of you. Then whose will those things be which you have provided?

So is he who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God. Then he said to his disciples, Therefore I say to you, Do not worry about your life, what you will eat, nor about the body, what you will put on.

Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing. Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn, and God feeds them.

[ 2 : 36 ] Of how much more value are you than the birds? And which of you, by worrying, can add one cubit to his stature? If you then are not able to do the least, why are you anxious?

For the rest. Consider the lilies, how they grow, they neither toil nor spin, and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

If then God so clothed the grass, which today is in the field, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith?

Do not seek what you should eat, or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. For all these things the nations of the world seek after.

Your father knows that you need these things, but seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. Do not fear, little flock, for it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

[ 3 : 42 ] Sell what you have, and give alms. Provide yourselves money bags, which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. You might remember, hopefully you do, when we started this chapter, chapter 12, you might remember that verse 1 began by telling us that an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together.

That is, tens of thousands, literally. Tens of thousands had gathered together, and they were apparently pressing in very close to Jesus, because the Bible says that they trampled on one another.

And then it says, He began to say to His disciples, first of all, remember that, we covered that a few weeks ago. All right, so, literally, again, many thousands, that's how the New American Standard translates it, and that's close.

We're talking about tens of thousands. Many thousands of people were crowded around Jesus, and they were pushing and shoving and tripping over one another. That's the picture that we need to get

here.

[ 5 : 03 ] And they're all trying to do what? They're trying to get close to Jesus so that they could hear what He has to say. They're very interested in hearing what He had to say. And yet, instead of speaking to the crowd, Jesus kind of takes this sort of chaotic moment here to spend some time teaching His disciples.

So, we can kind of picture this. Tens of thousands of people gathered around, pressing close, and Jesus groups together His close disciples and begins to teach them. So, that's the picture we have here.

All right, now, we do need to understand, though, and I think I mentioned this when we covered this early on in this chapter. We need to understand that though He was speaking and teaching His disciples, the crowd that had gathered, they were listening in.

They could hear what He had to say to His disciples. And yet, I have to wonder if they were truly listening. I mean, really listening to what Jesus was saying.

And I say that because of what Luke records here in verse 13. Now, think about this. If you remember, just last week, Jesus is talking about the eternal significance of confessing Christ.

[ 6 : 14 ] That's His subject. Confessing Him as opposed to denying Him. And so, He's talking about final judgment. That's the subject here. And not only that, but Jesus is talking about the eternal significance or seriousness of blaspheming the Holy Spirit.

That's His subject. And then, so this guy in the crowd, he's not one of Jesus' disciples, he chooses this very moment to make a request that could not be more off-subject and irrelevant.

He makes this request. Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me. What? What did that have to do with anything? I mean, why did He make that kind of request here?

Just off-subject. Just blurts it out. Was this guy even listening to Jesus? I think we would have to assume He was not. And I think we can also assume that this guy was not interested at all what Jesus was teaching.

He was not there for that. This guy showed up there on that day, at that moment, for one reason alone. He wanted his inheritance. And apparently, there was some kind of family squabble over it.

[ 7 : 31 ] He wanted his wealth. His money. And since Jesus was a sort of rabbi, and since in that day, rabbis, you know, they were able to do something about these kinds of disputes.

They had some kind of authority over these kind of matters. And so, he had simply been waiting. I think we can assume this man was waiting for the opening to make his request.

He wanted his money. He wanted his inheritance. He wanted the wealth that he thought was due him. That's what he was interested in. And I don't know, maybe this guy thought that Jesus could perform some kind of a miracle.

I mean, Jesus healed the sick. He cast out demons. He raised the dead. And so, maybe Jesus could do something to make this guy's brother give him his inheritance.

So, maybe he was expecting some kind of a miracle. And so, he just kind of wiggles in there close to Jesus. And then, when he thinks he's got an opening, a time, he can interrupt with his request.

[ 8 : 35 ] And so, he interrupts Jesus' teachings. So, how does Jesus respond? Well, I think you could agree with me. It's a rather curt response. Because Jesus wasn't interested in what this man was requesting.

Jesus was not even here for this kind of thing. And so, what did Jesus say? Verse 14, Man, who made me a judge over you? He kind of put him in his place, didn't he?

Who made me an arbitrator over you? That is, between you and your brother to work out these kinds of things. Jesus had been talking about eternal things.

Of eternal significance. Why in the world would he be interested in dealing with mundane issues concerning squabbles over inheritance, and squabbles over money and so forth.

Jesus came to bring men to riches of heaven. Not to bring men to the riches of earth. So, I think that explains his response.

[ 9 : 36 ] And yet, having said all of that, Jesus would not pass up the opportunity. The opportunity that this man gave him to then teach his disciples on a very important subject.

And so, verse 15 says, and he said to them. Who? His disciples. So, he just kind of turned back to his disciples to continue his teaching.

And he said to them, not to the crowd, though they were listening, but to his disciples. And this is what he said. Take heed and beware of the kind of thinking of this guy.

Beware. Be on your guard against covetousness. Some versions have the word greed and it's the same idea. Covetousness.

Beware of it. And so then, Jesus takes the next 20 verses to teach his disciples on the subject of covetousness. The sin of covetousness.

[ 10 : 39 ] And it all started with this kind of off-the-wall request. This self-serving, materialistic request of this man. And that's how it all started. And Jesus used that in order to lead him to teach his disciples a very important subject.

Alright, so Jesus is going to do two things in this text. Basically, just in a broad sense, he's going to, first of all, describe covetousness because we need it to be described.

We need to know what it is so that we can recognize it. He's going to describe it and then he's going to prescribe, describe and then prescribe a cure, a cure for covetousness.

And that's how the text will conclude. But now, though there are two things Jesus is doing, being the preacher that I am, I'm going to divide it all up into four points.

Four points. Okay? Yeah, I know. Four points. And the first three will pertain to the description of covetousness. And then the fourth and final point will pertain to the prescription.

[ 11 : 45 ] The prescription for covetousness. The cure for it. Alright, so let's get to it. We've got a lot of ground to cover. Here's number one. A strong caution.

Jesus first gives a very strong caution against covetousness. It could not be stated more strongly the way Jesus stated it here.

Verse 15. Take heed and beware of covetousness. That's his warning. Take heed is from a Greek word that means literally to see with your eyes.

Horao. To see with your eyes. That's rather interesting. And the idea is, of course, to stay on the alert regarding this area of sin.

You need to keep your eyes open for this in your life. We might say it that way. Keep your eyes open. Keep your eyes peeled. I'm not sure where that expression came from.

[ 12 : 50 ] Sounds very painful, but that's kind of the idea. Be on the alert. Keep your eyes open for this. And then beware, that's how the New King James translates it, beware is the second verb and it carries a similar kind of meaning.

It means to be on the watch. To be on your guard. Now, both verbs here are commands.

They're commands. They're in the form of a command. In the Greek, that would be an imperative. They're imperatives. This is a command. And also, I would add to that, that both verbs are what is called active, active in voice.

Grammatically, and that means continuous action. A continuous action. So it's pretty simple, isn't it?

It's given by way of command, and so Jesus is commanding His disciples to keep on the lookout and be always, always on your guard against covetousness in your life.

Now, why is this important? Well, Jesus tells us because, he says, one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.

[ 14 : 02 ] That's why you need to be on the alert here. Your life doesn't consist of these things. Life is not having more and more things. Life is not getting more and more wealth and things that represent wealth.

Life is not the accumulating of more and more of what this world has to offer. That's not what your life consists of. By the way, the word life is zoe in the Greek as opposed to bios.

Bios is life in the physical sense. All right, so he's not talking about bios, that these things don't have anything to do with your kind of biological life or your existence because they certainly do have something to do with that.

He's not talking about bios. He said zoe and zoe is something much more. It's life in the, from the biblical perspective, it's life in the spiritual sense and therefore life in the eternal sense, a life that is purposeful, a life that is meaningful, not defined by the accumulating of things.

an abundance of stuff is not what life is all about. All right, so we could define covetousness as a strong and controlling desire to acquire increasing amounts of worldly possessions.

[ 15 : 40 ] That would be a good definition. a strong, a controlling desire because it controls you, it moves you, it ultimately even possesses you.

A controlling desire to always, continually being, acquiring increasing amounts of worldly possessions to possess what others have and you don't have.

To possess, ultimately to possess more than what others have. It's a good definition. Adrian Rogers used to define it this way.

Get all you can. Can all you get. Sit on the lid and poison the rest. Put it in a way that only Adrian Rogers could put it.

Get all you can. That's covetousness. That's greed. Get all you can. Can all you get. Sit on the lid. Poison the rest. It's greed. It's covetousness.

[16:43] And Jesus issued a strong caution to his disciples then and now against covetousness.

Take heed. Beware. And so, then after the caution, that's number one, Jesus offers an illustration.

So, a strong caution about covetousness and second, a simple illustration.

Simple illustration of covetousness. And so, Jesus' illustration of covetousness comes in the form of a parable. Jesus taught a lot of, told a lot of parables, used parables quite often to anchor spiritual truths in the minds and hearts of people.

Parables were very important and very integral in Jesus' preaching. And so, he tells a parable here.

And so, what we have in verses 16 through 20 is the parable of the rich fool.

That's how we could name it. The parable of the rich fool. And the truth illustrated by this parable, I want you to know, it's self-evident. I mean, it's very clear.

[17:57] Very simple. It's not complicated. It's plain to see. A simple illustration. A truth that's self-evident. So, let's just look at it. Just kind of walk our way through it. Then he spoke a parable to them saying, the ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully.

We can picture that. Pretty simple concept. He's a farmer. Has his fields. His crops have given a tremendous yield.

Very fruitful. And so, that's an easy thing to picture. And so, then next, and he thought within himself. Now, that's key to the parable.

Key to our understanding of covetousness. Where did he do his thinking? In himself. He thought within himself.

That's the nature of the covetous. It's all internal. It's all inside. It's all self-centered. All self-serving. All self-motivated.

[19:00] And so forth. Nothing horizontal in relation to mankind. And certainly nothing vertical in relation to God.

He thought within himself. What did he think? He thought, what shall I do? What shall I do? Since I have no room to store my crops.

I've got a dilemma. He has so much that he can't put a lid on it. He's got so much that he can't keep it secure. Get all you can.

Can all you get. Hoard it. Keep it. And so, he said, I will do this. Came up with a solution all by himself.

I will do this. I, and notice the personal pronouns. I will do this. I will pull down my barns and build greater. Just, just get a bigger can.

[19:58] Put out all my stuff in. Build greater barns and there I will store all whose crops? My crops and my goods.

perfect picture. Sit on the lid. Get all you can. Can all you get. Sit on the lid. I don't want anybody else to have this.

I'm certainly not going to give it away. It's all mine. My crops. My goods. And I will say to my soul, soul, self, self, I, you have many goods laid up for many years.

You are set. Set for life. Take your ease. Eat, drink, be merry. And then God said to him, fool, fool, this night your soul will be required of you.

See, he hadn't figured on that. He hadn't figured death into his covetous life, his covetous plans.

[21:14] He also hadn't figured on God in any of this. In his covetous life. That's the nature of a covetous life. A life that is motivated and driven by greed.

The accumulating of more and more and more. And here is the burning question that Jesus asked. Then, whose will those things be which you have provided for yourself?

We would put it this way, can't take it with you. It all stays here. So, Jesus' teaching is really very clear, isn't it?

Very clear. But pointed. Very pointed, right? And so, let's just be honest with one another. Most of us don't really think we have a problem with covetousness.

If there's any sin that the Bible deals with and the preacher might use as a subject, this is one of those sins that we think somebody else has. Right?

[ 22 : 18 ] Am I right or am I wrong? Okay. And so, let me just add a third point here in our description of covetousness. You think, well, we're moving along pretty quickly here, but this third will take a little bit longer, okay?

A spiritual application. Strong caution. Take heed. Be careful. You're on the lookout always for this. Simple illustration. And then an application. Spiritual application of covetousness. Jesus concluded the parable of the rich fool with this statement, verse 21.

So is he or anyone who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God. That's the application. He's saying this is, for anyone, anyone who is about this in life, laying up treasure for himself or herself, is a fool.

A fool. Because you're not rich toward God. A fool. See, you are a fool. I want to be very careful. Jesus can call people fools, but I can't.

[ 23 : 38 ] But I'm just speaking for Jesus here. You're a fool if your life is governed to any degree by a controlling desire to lay up treasure for yourself.

life. But I add to this, to the point, to the extent that you begin to diminish your desire to lay up treasure for God or to be rich toward God.

And that will always happen. Always happen. Because the two cannot be exclusive. The more you desire the things this world has to offer, the more that controls you, governs your life, drives you, the more time you think about that, the less time you'll be thinking about your being rich toward God, increasing riches toward God, growing in your spiritual life with God.

You can't separate the two. The more you are governed by the desire for things, the less you will be governed by the desire to be rich toward God.

That's the application. Now with that, let me just point out a few things about covetousness that we all ought to know. And we've defined it, let's just go a little deeper with this so that we can recognize it.

[ 25 : 13 ] In the first place, covetousness is insidious. sin. It's an insidious sin. It's devious. It's a very deceptive sin.

It is a very subtle sin. It is a sin that everybody understands, but few admit that they have. Few even know they have it.

That's why this is a sin we can be committed, we can be committing and be wrapped up in and not really even know it. until the Holy Spirit reveals it to us through His Word.

I hope that's what He's going to do with all of us here. It's insidious, it's deceptive, it's subtle, because we all, all of us, from the pulpit to the pew, all of us struggle with covetousness in one form or another.

Every one of us. Be it the very rich among us, or the poorest among us, and everyone in between. We all struggle with this.

[ 26 : 26 ] Now think about it this way. The barefooted man, that's pretty poor, doesn't he have any shoes? The barefooted man can covet another man's tennis shoes.

The man with the tennis shoes can covet another man's bicycle. The man with a bicycle can covet another man's motorcycle. The man with a motorcycle can covet another man's Toyota. The man with a Toyota can covet another man's Lexus.

The man with a Lexus can covet another man's Learjet. I don't know how far to go beyond that. You see, the point, no one is immune to the sin of covetousness.

I don't care where you are in the economic kind of strata of our society and culture. The very poor, the very rich. In fact, Jesus is speaking and teaching this to his disciples.

They didn't have anything. And yet, they were in danger of covetousness. But even the most wealthy among them, people you would think have everything and more, they're never satisfied either.

[ 27 : 37 ] Covetousness. And listen, it takes many, many forms, doesn't it? I mean, you can covet anything. Anything. Money, certainly so. I mean, bank accounts, stocks, bonds, CDs, monetary funds, investments, on and on we could go.

Certainly money, we know it applies to that. And how about other things like other physical assets, material things, certainly so. Absolutely. Clothes, cars, boats, you know, electronics, you know, the latest iPhone, the computers, and all that physical assets and so forth, real estate, property, we

could go on and on with the list that we wouldn't consider to be money.

But it's not just money. It's all other material things, but there is much more that a person can be, can covet. You can covet your neighbor's husband. Well, not all of you, but your wives could.

You could covet another man's wife. And I don't mean just in a sexually immoral way, certainly that could be a part, but that goes into a whole other area.

But I mean, you can just look at another wife's husband and say, I wish he was my husband. Look how he treats her, cares for her, loves her.

[ 29 : 02 ] Just look at my husband. You can covet another man's husband, another man's wife, another woman's husband, all right, another man's wife.

You can covet your neighbor's position, prestige in life. You can covet your neighbor's power.

You can covet your neighbor's popularity. You can covet your neighbor's looks. your neighbor's life, their education, on and on, you can go.

There's no limit to it. We can covet anything, anything that we don't have and want, even if it's a good thing.

it's so pervasive. Listen, covetousness is an insidious sin. When you are a liar, people know that about you.

[ 30 : 09 ] When you are a thief, people know that. When you are a gossip, people hear that and they know what it is when they hear it. And when you are a murderer, certainly people know that.

But when you covet, it is possible, even probable, that no one knows it. Even you. It's a serious sin. Insidious. And I would add another thing. Covetousness is dangerous. It's dangerous because covetousness leads to hypocrisy.

hypocrisy. It is by its very nature for the believer hypocrisy. And you say, how so? Well, because you say with your lips that your heart is set on things above.

Your faith is in God. You're trusting God for everything. That your heart is set upon Him and the things that pertain to God and spiritual things. And yet at the same time, in reality, your heart is fixated on things below.

[ 31 : 15 ] Here. On this earth. Material things. Earthly things. Temporal things. And we have already heard what Jesus had to say about hypocrisy, didn't we?

The beginning of this chapter. Covetousness is insidious. Covetousness is dangerous. And then thirdly, naturally, covetousness is idolatrous.

It's a form of idolatry. The Apostle Paul wrote in Colossians 3, 5, Therefore, put to death your members which are on the earth.

I'm not talking about church members. He's talking about your earthly flesh, your flesh. That unredeemed part of you, your earthly nature, your flesh with all of its desires.

Put those things to death. And then he lists several. Immorality, impurity, sinful passion, evil desire, kind of like the King James, evil concupiscence.

[ 32 : 25 ] Evil desires. And then he adds this one. Covetousness. It's part of the list. And then Paul says, covetousness, which is idolatry.

How? How? Why is covetousness idolatry? Well, it's pretty simple, isn't it? When you worship anything above God or other than God, the one true God, then you're committing adultery, are you not?

Absolutely. And so, when you, when the gaining of material possessions becomes the controlling factor, focus of your life, then you're worshipping things other than God.

You're putting the accumulation and the desire for things, material things, above your desire for God, and that's idolatry. You're worshipping the creation rather than the creator.

You could not be more guilty of idolatry than if you set up a Buddha in your living room and worshipped it every day. It's the same thing. that's why this is such an insidious sin because we just don't equate this kind of idolatry with the kind of idolatry that the Bible talks about and the kind of idolatry that people are doing in China and other countries like that.

[ 33 : 51 ] But it's the same. You shall have no gods before me. Anything can be your God.

covetousness is a God. It's the worship of things rather than the worship of God. I would say one other thing about application and that is covetousness is ruinous.

It will ruin you. It will. Because you see covetousness leads to many so many other sins. It's not content to just be by itself.

in fact covetousness you could argue is a root sin. The ground in that other sins emerge.

Covetousness is the root sin. Remember what Paul said to Timothy? In 1 Timothy 6.10 he said, For the love of money, not money itself, but the love of it, is a root of all kinds of evil for which some have strayed from the faith in their covetousness, their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

[ 35 : 07 ] It's ruinous. Covetousness is a root sin that leads to other kinds of sin. Let me tell you what covetousness will ultimately lead to. At some point in the covetous kind of life, at some point when you reach the place where you so badly want something you don't have, it will no longer matter to you what you'll do to get it.

No matter what it takes. I think that's the subject of James 4.2. You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain.

You fight and war. covetousness is a root sin. That's what covetousness is. That is the description of covetousness.

Now, what about the prescription for covetousness, the cure for it? Well, fourth and finally then this morning, a sovereign prescription.

prescription, a sovereign prescription for covetousness. Jesus gives three parts, there are three parts to the Lord's prescription for the cure for covetousness.

[ 36 : 31 ] Three parts to it. Remember, remember your God. That's number one. Refocus your life. that's number two. And release your treasures. That's number three.

Let's take each of these very quickly. First of all, remember your God. Here's the cure for covetousness. Remember who God is in relation to you.

Remember your God. Look at what Jesus said starting with verse 22. He gives several arguments for this. Then he said to his disciples, therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life.

That's what covetousness always involves. Anxious, worried about things you don't have and you want to have them and so forth. Jesus says don't worry about your life.

[ 37 : 29 ] What you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. Life is more than food. Body is more than clothing. Consider the ravens.

For they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn, and God feeds them. He feeds them, takes care of them.

Of how much more value are you than the birds? That's pretty clear. If God provides for the birds, then he will provide for you with everything that you need.

do you really believe that? Then why covet anything? You see, it doesn't make any sense.

If God loves you and cares more for you than birds, and the birds he takes care of, then he'll take care of you. He will meet all of your needs.

[ 38 : 35 ] You don't have to covet anything. You don't have to order your life toward the accumulation of things you just got to have.

Remember, you're God. You say he's your God. Is there any room for covetousness? No. Look at verse 25.

And which of you, by worrying, can add one cubit to his stature? Other versions, by the way, have it. Which of you, by worrying, can add a single hour to his lifespan?

Some differences in the manuscripts. Same idea, though. Worry about little things like that. I mean, how insignificant it is that you be an inch taller?

How insignificant could it possibly be that you live one hour longer? I mean, what's that in terms of your life? Those are just little things, simple things, not simple things. You can't do them, but the idea is these are so insignificant.

[ 39 : 40 ] And by worrying, can you accomplish that? If you then are not able to do the least these insignificant things, then why are you anxious for the rest of it?

Consider the lilies. Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They neither toiled nor spent, and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all of his glory was not arrayed like one of these, and Solomon was the most wealthiest man who ever lived.

The extravagance of his palace and temple, I mean, it's incredible, you ought to read about that sometime. And Solomon in all of his glory, he doesn't even compare to how God clothed the lilies. if then God so clothes the grass, the plants, which today is in the field, you're admiring their beauty and so forth, today they're in the field in full bloom, and tomorrow thrown into the oven.

They only live for a short time. then they just become fodder for the oven. God clothes the grass, and that's their end, then how much more will he clothe you, you who are eternal?

[ 41 : 04 ] He's going to take care of you, oh, ye of little faith. Same idea, see, as before. If God cares for the birds, if God cares for the lilies, how much more does he care for you?

Covetousness just forgets all about that. And we need to remember that. I mean, why worry about what you don't have and want to have?

God knows what you need. Verse 29, and do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind.

There's a worrying mind, a doubtful mind. For all these things the nations of the world seek after. That's what the unsaved world is all about. You should be different.

And your father knows that you need these things. Your father, now he's making this even more personal. Your father, your heavenly father, he knows that you need all of these things.

[ 42 : 04 ] Why covet? Why worry about these? I mean, think about it. Do you know a real father, a good father who doesn't care about his children eating?

No, every good father is going to care about his children, about what they're going to eat. Do you know a good father who doesn't care about his children's clothes, that they have clothes?

Of course not. Do you know about a good father who doesn't care if his children, you know, whether they have a roof over their head or a pillow to sleep? No, every good father cares about these things for his children.

Well, what about our father, our heavenly father? He knows everything and he knows exactly what you need. This is a prescription for covetousness.

It's the cure for it. Remember your God. Second, real quick, refocus your life because covetousness is a life out of focus.

[ 43 : 10 ] out of focus. Verse 31, but seek the kingdom of God rather than seeking the things of the world. Seek the kingdom of God and all these things shall be added to you.

The things you need, want, don't have, worried about, all those things will be added to you. Do not fear, little flock, for it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

kingdom. Now that's an incredible thing. So instead of always seeking what you don't have and want, then seek the kingdom of God.

What does that mean? It means the joy of your salvation. Seek that. Seek the joy of serving him in this life.

Seek the joy of worshiping him. I'm just here, but with your life and every day of your life. Seek that. That's seeking the kingdom of God. Seek in a future sense the joy of reigning with him, as we will one day, and the joy of living forever with him in glory.

[ 44 : 22 ] Live forever with our Lord and our King. The joy of experiencing his glory and his greatness and his majesty. mercy. You could describe it in so many ways.

And your Father, your Heavenly Father has graciously given this to you. His kingdom. Now, here's something strange then when you think about it.

Covetousness then is not wanting too much. Covetousness is not wanting enough. I mean, you're selling yourself short.

if all you want are the things of this kingdom, this world. Covetousness is settling for something worthless in comparison to God and his kingdom.

Worthless. C.S. Lewis put it this way, our problem is not that we want too much. It is that we're satisfied with too little. I'd rather like Vance Havner.

[ 45 : 28 ] who said, who wouldn't trade dirt for diamonds? Comparatively speaking. The things of this earth are going to return to the dirt and then one day be completely destroyed.

The things of this earth, anything this earth has to offer, they're just passing away. the things of God, the things of heaven, the kingdom of God, eternal.

It's a matter of refocusing your life. Remember your God, refocus your life, seek the kingdom of God, and then finally, here's the hard one. You ready? Release your treasures.

release your treasures. This is the sure cure. If you are struggling with greed, with an overpowering desire for more things, that's what drives you.

you're wanting more, you want to keep what you've got, you want to lose any of that, and you want more, it's covetousness, then here's the cure.

[ 46 : 53 ] Give away what you have. Start giving away what you have. That's what Jesus said. Sell what you have. Verse 33.

Sell what you have and give alms. Give to charity. This is really hard, isn't it? I mean, first of all, we're struggling with wanting more things.

And now Jesus is saying the things you already have, start giving those things away. That's the cure for covetousness. The cure for covetousness is generosity. Generosity.

That, by the way, is how God responds to our needs. generously. And when you do that, you provide, this is what Jesus said, you provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old.

A treasure in the heavens that does not fail, never fails. Doesn't run out. earthen. Where no thief approaches.

[ 48 : 03 ] Can't be stolen by any thieves. Nor moth destroys. That is, it can't corrupt. Can't be eaten up. Can't go away. away. This is a tremendous promise.

And so when you generously give away the things you've accumulated in this life, those things that are perishing, you give them away, then you store up in heaven treasures that are eternal.

That can never go well. for, verse 34, for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

You know where, do you want to know where your heart is? It's where your treasures are. Where is your treasure? What are your treasures?

Are they here in this life? If I were to ask you, name some of your treasures. Would you naturally begin with things here in this life?

[ 49 : 17 ] Temperately. And there's your heart. That's the cure. Come, Jesus.

Thank you.