

Am I Unknowingly Coveting Something

by Tim Conway

This sermon delves into the concept of covetousness, exploring how it can manifest in our lives, both knowingly and unknowingly. By examining Jesus' teaching in Luke 12, the speaker emphasizes the danger of setting our hearts on earthly possessions and the importance of being rich toward God by prioritizing heavenly treasures. The message highlights the need to guard against covetousness and be willing to let go of material wealth to invest in eternal riches.

Scripture: Luke 12:15, Luke 12:33, Luke 12:20, 1 Timothy 6:17, Genesis 19:26

Topics: "Covetousness", "Eternal Riches"

Description

This sermon delves into the concept of covetousness, exploring how it can manifest in our lives, both knowingly and unknowingly. By examining Jesus' teaching in Luke 12, the speaker emphasizes the danger of setting our hearts on earthly possessions and the importance of being rich toward God by prioritizing heavenly treasures. The message highlights the need to guard against covetousness and be willing to let go of material wealth to invest in eternal riches.

Transcript

What exactly is covetousness and what are some ways we could unknowingly be practicing it? So, what exactly is covetousness and what are some ways we could unknowingly be practicing it? I want to deal with this, but I don't want to. I really don't want to do an entire sermon on covetousness, which if we were going to define it exactly and spend so much time on it that we just drove the point home over and over and over to give you a crystal clear idea about what covetousness looks like from scripture, it would take at least an hour probably to deal with that. What are some of the ways we could unknowingly be practicing it? That did jump out at me, unknowingly.

Why would he want to know ways that we might unknowingly be practicing it rather than ways just that we would be practicing it? I would say this, one of the reasons that we might be unknowingly practicing something is because we don't exactly know what it is. Does anybody know where in the New Testament we probably get the most lengthy treatment of covetousness? Does anybody have any idea? Romans 7 deals with it, but it's no lengthy treatment. It doesn't really get into it other than it says that it's the commandment that convicted Paul, but it's actually Jesus teaching.

Luke 12. So let's go there. Luke 12 is the most extensive treatment I believe in our Bibles and undoubtedly in Jesus teaching.

And so I just figured this, rather than me thinking, okay, what exactly is covetousness and doing some very detailed involved study and looking all over the Bible at it, I figure, let's go here and let's just hear the Lord. And one of the great things about listening to him is he emphasizes what he believes is most essential for us to grasp. And so let's let him lead us and teach us.

So Luke 12, specifically, it would be down about verse 13 is where we're going to pick up. Luke 12, verse 13 and following. And so here's Jesus teaching.

You remember the account. Someone in the crowd said to him, teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me. And so we know that this has to do with covetousness because in verse 15, Jesus said to them, take care and be on your guard against all covetousness.

So verse 13, someone in the crowd said to him, teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me. But he said to a man who made me a judge or an arbitrator over you. And he said, take care be on your guard against all covetousness for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.

So if we were just seeking to define things now, look, look, we're detached. The fact is that we're looking at this through third person eyes. Let me tell you something.

If all of a sudden you had a grandparent or you had a parent who died and you had a sibling who and I know I've told this story before, but, but I, I like it. There was a brother. He preached at times, never did become an elder, but he preached at times in the first church I was in, in Texas.

And this guy told me when his dad died, he said that his sister, so you get the idea, you got a brother and a sister, their father dies. The sister's married. So there's a brother-in-law now imagine this, your dad dies.

Of course it's your sister's dad too, but you happen to drop by dad's house and there's your brother-in-law wheeling the welder out of the barn, loading it up in his truck, grabbing a bunch of the tools, loading up. The fact is that when you're disconnected, you don't hardly, you don't hardly feel this, but if all of a sudden you've got a brother or sister or a family member somewhere who is grabbing up the stuff that belonged to your relative who died, inheritances will test what a person is made of. Be sure of it.

It will test what you really have a heart after. And here it is. Jesus sees covetousness is driving.

Now, I don't, we don't know all the details of the situation. You know what? One of the realities was that the eldest son typically got a double portion of the inheritance, but that doesn't mean that all the other children didn't get anything. And it almost sounds like this guy didn't get anything.

And you know what? Can you imagine it? Can you imagine if the elder brother who is supposed to have a double portion, but then he, he's the elder brother, the elder brothers kind of ran the family, especially as their parents got more and more sick. It was just expected that would happen. But imagine this, imagine you're younger brother and older brother takes everything.

He's only supposed to get double portion, but he takes everything. He didn't give you anything and you go to Jesus. What would you be thinking? Well, certainly Jesus is all about justice.

He's all about righteousness. Certainly he's going to see that my case is valid. It's not like Lord, I'm not asking for all of it.

I'm just asking for my due portion. My brother stiffed me, tell my brother to do what's right. And notice he doesn't condemn the older brother.

He can basically, you got to see he goes after the younger brother. So what's, what's the deal here? Well, he sees that the younger brother has a heart after the stuff. So he said, take care, be on your guard against all covetousness for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.

So the very nature of covetousness then would be the opposite. The nature of covetousness is to start thinking that your life does consist of what you possess, how much you get, how much you make, what you have that it's, it's setting your heart on things. And he told them a parable saying the land of a rich man.

Now, this is an interesting parable because it almost seems like it isn't exactly the perfect parable to tell right now. And the reason is this, the land of a rich man produced plentifully. And he thought to himself, what shall I do? For I have nowhere to store my crops.

Well, see, it seems like he just made this up, but if you've got a younger brother, who's wanting, who's wanting part of the inheritance or wanting a division of the inheritance, this, this is almost, it almost feels like it doesn't exactly line up, but you get the, you do get the sense from it. Rich man produces plentifully thought to himself, what shall I do? For I have nowhere to store my crops. He said, I will do this.

I will tear down my barns, build larger ones. There I will store all my grain and my goods. You see, it doesn't really look like it's a perfect parallel.

It almost looks like Jesus just, he came up with another story that wasn't even meant to be a parallel because he's wanting to drive home the reality of covetousness. I will say to my soul, soul, you have ample goods, laid for many years, relax, eat, drink, and be merry. You see, the other guy was longing after the inheritance.

This guy actually already has everything. He just wants to build big barns to hold it in. But God said to him, fool, this night, your soul is required of you and the things you've prepared, whose will they be? Okay.

So notice this. The thing about covetousness is it is calculated to cause you to live a life trying to accrue and accumulate stuff that doesn't make you ready for when your time is up, when your soul is required of you. And he says, so is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.

Again, it's an interesting parable that he tells because that wasn't what the younger brother was doing. He didn't have it to lay up. Here's a guy that has it to lay up.

But again, it's not so difficult for us to recognize what's going on here. So I would just say this. Look at verse 33.

You see the flavor. Fool, this night, your soul is required of you. So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.

Well, how do you get rich toward God? Well, notice 33. Sell your possessions, give to the needy, provide yourselves with money bags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. Let me tell you something.

You know, what is extremely obvious about all of this is that covetousness is clearly that which we set our hearts on that's here. Notice this verse 34, where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. So what is the nature of covetousness? Well, whether I'm building bigger barns and storing up all my stuff here, or I'm trying to get the stuff that I don't have.

See both of it. One, the guy has it and he wants to keep it. The other one, the guy doesn't have it and he wants it so that he can keep it.

But what's the issue in all of it? The issue in all of it is I want it here. I want it now. And that's where my heart is.

And so the question is ways we could unknowingly be practicing it. Well, all we have to do is ask ourself, where's our heart? Is there anything in our life that we can't just give up? Is there anything in our life that we just feel like we have a hole that has way too much of a hold on us? And you know what's interesting? It's like you can't covet heavenly treasure enough. You notice that? It's sell your possessions, give to the needy, provide yourselves with money bags that do not grow old.

It's like it's a good thing for you to covet heavenly riches. So covetousness, the very nature of it is it directs your heart towards things that are temporary, right? You fool this night, your soul's required of you. And then who's are all these things going to be? So the basic nature of covetousness is it keeps me glued to stuff here.

I mean, I would just say this, remember Lot's wife. I mean, think with me. It's suddenly the heavens broke open and Christ was coming.

Is there anything here that you would look back for? We're talking stuff because the thing was Lot's wife, Lot's wife didn't leave her children back there. She had them with her. She looked back and unquestionably there's a place out of love to not want our loved ones to perish.

But when I say remember Lot's wife, I would say this, that if Christ came right now, if all of a sudden you realize you had 24 hours to live, I mean, is there anything here that your heart is so invested in that it would be, you know, you'd have to take a look back over your shoulder like, oh, I need that. I want to take that with me. I've been pouring myself into that.

You see, what we don't want to be is in a place where we're a fool because our heart was so invested in something here that we can't just let go of it. That's the nature of it. I mean, you see it here.

So this is Jesus teaching. And so one of the ways that we would unknowingly be practicing it is, are we willing to sell our possessions? Are we willing to take all the stuff that we might otherwise store up in our bigger, larger barns? Are we actually willing to keep it liquid? Are we willing to live strategically? Like we're not just accumulating things to accumulate things. Because all of us have to apply this.

We don't have crowns worth billions, but guess what? We do have certain things. And I mean, we all have to, you know, we know that God has given us what he's given us. And to the rich, it's said in first Timothy six, that, you know, God does give us things to enjoy, but what you don't want to do is you don't want to hold on things too tightly.

And we definitely need to be ready to come to one another's need. I mean, when you find Christians in need, anyway, be wise, be wise. And one of the ways that we unknowingly practice covetousness, well,

we unknowingly, unwittingly do it when we just don't really think about this.

That's one of the ways we just remain in our ignorance and we don't really think about what Jesus taught about it. And so, you know, anybody remember what Wesley died with? He had some silverware to eat with, and he had enough to pay the pallbearers. And, but do you know how much went through that man's hands in his life? I mean, I'll tell you when the day comes and your soul is required of you, that's what you want to have true.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/Y4WYxx-S-1U.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/tim-conway/am-i-unknowingly-coveting-something/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net