

Overcome Fear about Money

(Luke 12:13-34)

Introduction

1. [Series] Resonate: Tune into Jesus' frequency to experience the power of the gospel & impact the culture.
2. Mini-series on dealing with fear
 - a. Last 2 weeks: Fear of demons, fear of people; this week: fear about money.
3. One of the mega-themes of the Bible: Wealth & possessions.
 - a. False teachings: If you love God you'll be rich (prosperity gospel) or poor (poverty gospel)
 - b. Real issue: How you handle money.
 - c. The Old & New Testaments have about 800 passages dealing with wealth, which includes saving, spending, investing, tithing/giving, running a business or family budget.
 - d. Approximately 25% of Jesus' teachings is on money, wealth & possessions.

A right heart against our greeds [Luke 12:13-15]

1. [13] A man wants to talk about what's foremost on his mind: Money; receiving his share of an inheritance.
 - a. [14] It's not Jesus' concern, who cares much more about the person & his eternal destiny.
 - b. Jesus' concern: You have a disease of the heart; you're consumed with coveting.
2. [15] Jesus teaches to guard against *all covetousness* (not just money, but abundance)
 - a. Covet: Greed that includes envy; in Greek: "have more."
 - b. Definition: A consuming lust to possess more.
 - i. Wanting, having, loving, hoarding possessions.
 - c. The rich have, hoard & want more; the poor want, still get & go into debt.
 - d. Because there's always something new & improved, we remain without contentment & filled with coveting.
3. Coveting is a sin
 - a. Americans don't see it as a sin.
 - b. #10 of the 10 Commandments: [Exo 20:17] You shall not covet your neighbor's... anything.
 - c. Coveting goes hand in hand with discontentment.
 - d. It is an attitude that consumes everything: You're either content in all areas or covet in all areas.
 - e. If you covet, it determines your spending habits & you'll quickly lose control over your money.
 - f. Application: Are you coveting or content?

Worship wealth or God [Luke 12:16-21]

1. [16] A man obtained great wealth through a flourishing business, which is not sinful.
 - a. Sin: He didn't worship God with his wealth; he worshiped wealth.
 - b. [17] Dilemma: He has more grain (equivalent to money in an agrarian society), a barn, and not enough room.
 - c. [18] Solution: He decides to build more barns to hold more of his grain & goods (i.e., money & possessions).
 - d. [19] Motive/Goal: He wants to retire to relax, eat, drink & be merry for the rest of his life.
2. [20] Result: He is judged: You fool.
 - a. The American dream is foolish: To retire wealthy & live as if we are already in heaven.
 - b. It's not a sin to make money, or have a nice house, stuff or fun.
 - c. Real issue: He worships the trinity of "me, myself & I."

3. [21] Antidote to money worries/troubles: Instead of being rich toward yourself, be rich toward God.
 - a. Worship issue: Everything I am & have are for God (cf. Rom 12:1).
 - b. We're fearful because coveting is the worship of an idol, a created thing that we long for too much.
 - c. It's not just about money: Do we covet/hoard? Do we worship pleasure, status, comfort or security?
4. Application: We guard against covetousness by worshipping God.
 - a. The first 2 of the 10 Commandments: [Exo 20:3-4] There's only one God; worship Him alone.
 - b. [Martin Luther] If you worship God alone, you won't break the rest (including coveting).
 - c. If you worship God, you'll be content with your spouse, house, & all that God has given (cf. Phil 4:11-13).
 - d. Worshipping God changes what we pursue, how we spend, what we fear.

A right mindset about our needs [Luke 12:22-32]

1. [22-23] Don't worry about your needs.
 - a. [24] Ravens are on the list of unclean, nasty animals (cf. Lev 11:13-15; Deut 14:12-14); they don't farm or store but God feeds them & values you far more.
 - b. [25-26] If we can't control a small thing by worrying, then we need to trust a sovereign God who reigns, cares & provides.
 - i. Application: What are you worried about that's really in the hands of God?
 - c. [27-28] Ravens & lilies just do what God designed them to, & He provides their needs.
 - i. When we're faithful to do what we're supposed to (work, worship, rest & love others), God provides.
2. Application: Seek the Blessor, not the blessing.
 - a. [29-31] People without God seek & worry, but seek after the Kingdom instead, & your needs will be met.
 - b. [32] Fear not because your Father is a rich & generous king, who gives His Kingdom.

A right response with our deeds [Luke 12:33-34]

1. [33] Our Father asks us to be generous as an act of faith.
 - a. This is one way the Father feeds/clothes others through His sons & daughters.
 - b. Application: If we believe our Father is a generous King, give generously to the needs of others.
2. Give firstfruits, not leftovers.
 - a. Take things that are significant or costly and give them away
 - b. Even if you don't have much money, you have lots of stuff. Give some away; sell some.
 - c. As God gave His best (cf John 3:16), we need to give our best.
3. [34] Where is your treasure?
 - a. As we give, God isn't taking out stuff; He's taking our stress.
 - b. The joy of giving: It starts to reorient our hearts, minds, lives & eyes away from ourselves, and allows us to get to know the Father & get to love others.
 - c. We have a heart problem that's dealt with by our wealth problem because our heart follows our treasure.

Conclusion

1. Application: Where are you not content? What are you coveting today?
2. Application: Where are you stressed about finances & circumstances?
 - a. Remember Your Father is a rich & generous King.
3. Application: How will you be generous toward others today?
 - a. Give firstfruits, not leftovers.
4. Application: Write "Luke 12:21?" on your debit/credit card.
 - a. Every time you pull it out to use, ask: Am I laying up treasure for myself or being rich toward God?