

Topic	Money and the Foolishness of the Heart
Reference	Luke 12:13-34
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- Life is Not just about security and material wealth (v 13-21).
- Worry should not be your focus (v 22-31).
- You should focus on His Kingdom (v 32-34). Money has the potential to show what you value more than God.

Life is Not just about security and material wealth

- There is danger in greed if we base our lives on materialism.

15 Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”

This is directly a warning from Jesus. He said these two things very clearly. Money is useful and there is nothing wrong with having more money we can see that clearly from the text that Jesus was not talking about money. But why did Jesus say to be on guard. If life consists of abundance of possession it actually means greed, so that is the warning.

Gordon Gecko (Michael Douglas from the movie Wall Street) said, *“Greed, for the lack of a better word, is good. Greed is right, greed works. Greed clarifies, cuts through, and captures the essence of the evolutionary spirit. Greed, in all of its forms; greed for life, for money, for love, knowledge has marked the upward surge of mankind.”*

Greed may be good for economy; it may not be good for individuals. Neel Burton, a psychologist says, *“Deception is a common outcome of greed, as is envy and spite. Greed is also associated with negative emotional states such as stress, exhaustion, anxiety, depression and despair, and with maladaptive behaviors such as gambling, scavenging, hoarding, trickery and theft.”*

Tycoon Yu Panglin is a Chinese billionaire in Hong Kong. He actually gave all his inheritance away. His two sons are not going to get anything from him. His words were, *“If my sons are better than me they should do very well. If they are worse than me they will be better without this.”* So either way he wins. So he understands that there is something dangerous about having so much wealth, so he gave it all way to save his sons.

1 Timothy 6 : 9-10

9 Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

So again danger is stated very clearly in the text.

- The purpose of life is not about accumulating things, things work for us not we for things.

14 life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”

To know the problem we have to go back and start with Adam.

Genesis 2:15 **The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.**

The purpose was already given to us a long time back in Genesis. We are there to work and take care of the garden, not work for money, but somehow we distort things as time goes along.

- Material life gives a false sense of security.

19 And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."

20 "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'"

In the parable of the rich fool Jesus have clearly stated that life is not about eating, make marry, drinking, in fact it is the opposite.

Tom Shadyac is a Hollywood director who made movies like Ace Ventura, The Nutty Professor and Bruce Almighty. He had a jet set lifestyle, he owns big mansion, he has managers to take care of his house, his guest house, his swimming pool, his tennis court, in fact he says that he has manager to take care of his managers that is the kind of lifestyle that he was having and he travels in his own plane. But he gave it all way literally; he downsized his lifestyle to a mobile home big enough to do his business and his work with his family. He got a bicycle now. He still has a lot of money but he has changed his lifestyle. He actually says that while he gave away all that he didn't need and only had what he need he actually felt a lot happier, truly happy and wealthier.

➤ Accumulation of wealth has no long term spiritual value.

Romans 1:21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

What happens when you have a desire for the wealth, your wealth start turn into an idol and that is the danger that Paul is warning us about.

There is a story of a little ant. This ant was carrying a huge feather and was taking it along and along the journey he has so many obstacles that he has to overcome. He has to go through crevices. He has to walk over a lot of obstacles and it is so small yet he is very clever. He is like an engineer, he will build bridges with the feather and crawl over the feather. He went through all the obstacles until he has reached his little tiny ant hole. And it was here that the ant finally met its match. How could that large feather possibly fit down that small hole? Of course it couldn't. So the ant, after all this trouble and exercising great ingenuity, overcoming problems all along the way, just abandoned the feather and went home.

The story is like a lot of us here, we have our burden that we carry along in life. We have all the family problems, the children education, the holiday packages, we want to go, but in the end if we don't take care of the journey that is coming up, at the end of the journey everything we have will become a burden because we can't take it in.

There was a story where the reverend was talking to a greyhound.

Reverend: Are you still running?

Greyhound: No, no more

Reverend: Why have you stopped running? You can't run anymore!

Greyhound: No, no, in fact I am still good at running.

Reverend: Then why did you stopped?

Greyhound: I didn't stopped, I was having fun running. After all the running and puffing I realized that I was chasing after something that was not real.

The rabbit was a mechanical rabbit in the greyhound race. So sometimes life is like that, we run after what we want in life and then realize at the end that actually is not worthy.

What do we do instead?

1 Timothy 6 : 6-8

6 But godliness with contentment is great gain. **7** For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. **8** But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.

The main keyword is content. If you are content with life, something changes in you and you become wealthy in a sense.

What is of value to me?

The Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl

Matthew 13:44-46 (NIV) **44** “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. **45** “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. **46** When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it

So those things have value to him.

What is value?

I would like to share a story about a little golden box. Some time ago, a man punished his 3-year-old daughter for wasting a roll of gold wrapping paper. Money was tight and he became infuriated when the child tried to decorate a box to put under the Christmas tree. Nevertheless, the little girl brought the gift to her father the next morning and said, “This is for you, Daddy.”

The man became embarrassed by his overreaction earlier, but his rage continued when he saw that the box was empty. He yelled at her; “Don’t you know, when you give someone a present, there is supposed to be something inside?”

The little girl looked up at him with tears in her eyes and cried;

“Oh, daddy, it’s not empty at all. I blew kisses into the box. They’re all for you, daddy.”

The father was crushed. He put his arms around his little girl, and he begged for her forgiveness.

Only a short time later, an accident took the life of the child. Her father kept the gold box by his bed for many years and, whenever he was discouraged, he would take out an imaginary kiss and remember the love of the child who had put it there.

The little girl actually nothing to the father, but whatever it was in the box was wealth and value to the father. So we see that wealth and value can come in different forms.

Worry should not be your focus.(v 22-31).

22 Then Jesus said to his disciples: **“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. 23 For life is more than food, and the body more than clothes.**

Life is not about just eating and fashion. Worry has no function, it does not change anything. You are not in control.

Worry causes anxiety. Anxiety affects 1 in 5 people in the United States. Anxiety has different forms, people get worried with little or no cause and then they take medicines.

DON'T FOCUS ON YOUR WORRIES

John Wesley is one of the founders of the Methodist church. One day John Wesley was walking with a troubled man who expressed his doubt as to the goodness of God. He said, “I do not know what I shall do with all this worry and trouble.”

At the same moment Wesley saw a cow looking over a stone wall. “Do you know,” asked Wesley, “why that cow is looking over the wall?”

“No,” said the man who was worried.

Wesley said, “The cow is looking over the wall because she cannot see through it. That is what you must do with your wall of trouble—look over it and avoid it.”

Faith enables us to look past our circumstances and focus on Christ.

24 Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds!

27 “Consider how the wild flowers grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 28 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith!

We are more valuable than animals or plants hence if God looks after them, more so he will look after us!

Charlie Chaplin said that, *“If we cannot laugh at a joke again and again why then can we cry over our worries over and over again.”*

You should focus on His Kingdom (v 32-34).

Money has the potential to show what you value. If you really search your heart you will find that if you value the most in life that can potentially become your idol.

32 “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.

34 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

- Prioritization of the kingdom will allow everything else to fall in to place.
- Because He has promised to supply all that you need.
- Your heart reveals your treasure.

Is it that really simple. St. Augustine of Hippo, an early Christian theologian says that,

The quest for happiness consists in attaching ourselves in love to objects of desire that we think will make us happy. But for this to occur, a knowledge of the metaphysical order and value of objects of love is necessary such that love might be properly ordered.

We have friends, we have food, we have all this love in your life but according to Augustine we have to put it into an order, it has to have an order and how the order is prioritize it will determine what you become.

- If you prioritize food and drinking, laying around, having a good time you will become a homeless fat man.
- If you prioritize your wealth, your job, your house, you will end up probably as a rich divorced man.

So again all problems in life suffering because of disordered love. A very simple way of putting it this is what Augustine is trying to tell us. so all we should do is

- Reordering your loves.
- Only love of the immutable can bring tranquility.
- Only if your greatest love is based on something that cannot change or be taken away will we have perfect peace and tranquility and satisfaction.

If we put God first as in Deuteronomy 5:8-9 (NLT) says, **“You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind, or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods.”**

There are so many of the things that occupy our time, money, thoughts and attention have taken the place where God is supposed to be?

It is very easy to forget God just like we focus on what we value most whether it is wealth or your family or your job and we forget about God very easily, in fact it almost take no effort to forget about God.

While we are doing a family planning for holidays, planning for your children as they are growing up, going to school or university, you are planning all those things. Me and my wife I realized personally that I forgot to ask God about the plan, it was all our plan. We didn't even bother to bring God into it. So it is that easy to forget about God. It is like your son or daughter didn't include you in their wedding plans and forget about you. You will definitely feel angry. This is how God feels.

SUMMARY:

- When you think you have the greed for Money.
 - ✓ Remember the Ant who carried his burden but when he was at his destination he cannot take his burden with him.
 - ✓ Remember the Grey hound who was chasing his whole life after something that was NOT real.
 - ✓ Remember the kisses the little girl kept for her father in a box. Her kisses was the most valuable thing to her father.
- When you start to worry.
 - ✓ Remember the Raven and the meadows.
- When you find it difficult to focus on God.
 - ✓ Remember your priorities in life.