

Episode 56

*Then someone called from the crowd, "Teacher, please tell my brother to divide our father's estate with me."
- Luke 12:13*

By turning this request into a parable, Jesus exposes the root of the problem: The family is being torn apart by greed. Jesus uses a description of greed here that can be expressed as a money sickness overflowing from a materialistic heart, and then adds a weighty warning to guard ourselves against it. It is clear from this parable, that coming into a relationship with Jesus changes our relationship to money and possessions, but what we often gloss over is Jesus' warning about greed.

The claim Jesus makes here is that greed is something that's hidden from you, that it will deceive you, it will fool you into thinking it's not something you have to be worried about. Jesus is addressing the fact that greed, by its very nature, hides itself from you. So that's why he has to say, watch out. Be on guard. Look out for it.

I don't know of any place where Jesus says, watch out or be on guard against adultery. Why? Not because adultery isn't as destructive as greed, but because adultery isn't as deceptive as greed. Almost always, you know when you're committing adultery. But that must mean that almost never do you know when you have gotten into the equally soul-destroying sin of greed, materialism, and money centrality. So he has to say watch out for greed because blindness to the condition is an intrinsic part of greed. Nobody who's greedy feels like they're greedy. Nobody who's materialistic feels overwhelmed by materialism. It just silently holds us in slavery, while we are blind to its destruction in our lives.

So since we are blind to it, how can we guard against it? Firstly, take an honest account of your generosity. Allow the Holy Spirit to put his finger on areas you may be blind to. And secondly, but far more importantly, meditate on Luke 12.21 which says "a person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God."

ONE33