

Great possessions do not make a great life.

Lesson for Sunday, January 19, 2025

TEXT: Luke 12

INTRODUCTION:

- ⇒ This is our second week built around the topic of Jesus being first in our lives – especially in the area of biblical stewardship. Who can remember the three points that form the foundation of biblical thinking in this area?
 - God owns it all; we are His stewards; the tithe is the Lord's.
- ⇒ Most people hear “stewardship” and they immediately think: MONEY! But stewardship is a much broader topic. Stewardship is life!
- ⇒ Stewardship involves every area of the Christian's life. One cannot be a good Christian if they are not a good steward. Our lives and our stewardship are woven together; they are inseparable.
- ⇒ Today we will deal with one of the biggest lies of our culture. This lie permeates every advertisement we see and it permeates our social media timelines. It is woven into the fabric of almost everything we do.
- ⇒ What is the great lie? *Who we are is defined by what we have.*

BIBLE STUDY:

1. The Issue (Luke 12:13-15)
 - a. Advertisers, marketers, and salesmen work relentlessly to convince us that we need more. It's not really a difficult job because it appeals directly to our sinful nature.
 - i. ILLUSTRATION: Burger King had right from the very beginning. Their chief slogan throughout the years has been, “Have it your way!”
 - ii. When we boil it all down to our sinful flesh it's really all about having it our way.
 - b. Vs. 15 – Jesus warns, “beware of covetousness.”
 - i. What is covetousness? A greedy longing for more; or a strong desire to have that which belongs to someone else. This is the real issue!
 - ii. This is such an important issue that it made the Top Ten (10 Commandments). In fact, many will argue that covetousness is #10 because it is the most important of all the Ten Commandments. In many ways, when we transgress #10 we are also transgressing #1-9.
 - iii. Colossians 3:5 calls it idolatry! Pretty serious stuff!
 - c. Vs. 15 – Jesus gives us a principle: life is not measured by how many goods a person has acquired.
 - i. Discuss how this confronts modern thinking (& living).
 - ii. ILLUSTRATION: “He who dies with the most toys wins!”
2. The Illustration (Luke 12:16-21)

- a. Jesus continues the passage with a story. Read verses 16-21 and make the following points:
 - i. Vs. 16 – The man was blessed.
 - ii. Vs. 17-19 – The man was selfish (point out the use of “I” and “my” – used 11 times).
 - iii. Vs. 19 – The man had values (eat, drink, be merry; or pleasure & entertainment).
 - iv. Vs. 20 – The man died.
 - v. Vs. 21 – The man was judged.
 - b. This man was like most people today: he was a materialist.
 - i. He was rich in possessions but poor in his soul.
 - ii. He completely ignored the true meaning of life.
 - iii. Discuss how we can easily get trapped in the same line of thinking.
3. The Comparison (Luke 12:22-31)
- a. Vs. 22-23 – Life is much more than our material possessions.
 - b. Vs. 29-30 – As Christians our focus should not be on the material. This is how lost people think and act.
 - c. Vs. 31 – Our focus should be on the spiritual.
 - d. Other Scriptures for consideration: James 1:17; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; 1 John 4:19.
 - e. The motivation for stewardship in the life of a believer is love for, and gratitude to, the Lord.
 - f. Discuss thoughts on this quote: “Whatever a man believes in fully and loves devotedly, he will give to sacrificially.”
4. The Cost (1 Corinthians 4:2)
- a. The actual cost/requirement for the believer is **faithfulness**.
 - b. What does it mean to be faithful? Dependable, reliable, trustworthy, loyal, having integrity, etc.
 - c. Discuss: How do we live a life of faithfulness when it comes to stewardship? Discuss the different areas: time, talents, treasures, etc.

APPLICATION:

Discuss some of these questions

1. How do we battle the natural tendency for us to be covetous? Gratitude...
2. What steps can we take to battle covetousness in our lives?
3. How does our current churchwide emphasis (“Jesus First, Always”) apply to this lesson?
4. What are the obstacles we must overcome to be considered faithful?
 - a. In our giving?
 - b. In our time?
 - c. In our talents/abilities?
5. In your opinion, what is the most crucial area of stewardship for us to remember?
6. What is the most difficult part of stewardship to continually practice?