

COUNTERFEIT GODS WEEK 4

Money Changes Everything

Parable of the Rich Fool

“And [Jesus] told them a parable, saying, “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?’ And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.”’ But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”

Luke 12:16-21

We Can’t See Our Own Greed

While many can clearly see other pervasive sin problems in their lives, it is not so with greed. This is why Jesus taught to “watch out” for or “take care” against greed. If we don’t actively look for it in our lives, we will not see it.

Self-Justification Blinds Us

“You don’t compare yourself to the rest of the world, you compare yourself to those in your bracket. The human heart always wants to justify itself and this is one of the easiest ways. You say, ‘I don’t live as well as him or her or them. My means are modest compared to theirs.’ You can reason and think like that no matter how lavishly you are living.”

Tim Keller

Love, Trust & Obey

“According to the Bible, idolaters do three things with their idols. They love them, trust them, and obey them. ‘Lovers of money’ are those who find themselves daydreaming and fantasizing about new ways to make money, new possessions to buy, and looking with jealousy on those who have more than they do. ‘Trusters of money’ feel they have control of their lives and are safe and secure because of their wealth. Idolatry also makes us ‘servants of money.’ Just as we serve earthly kings and magistrates, so we ‘sell our souls’ to our idols. Because we look to them for our significance (love) and security (trust) we have to have them, and therefore we are driven to serve and, essentially, obey them.”

Tim Keller

The Price of Discontentment

Loving money ultimately robs us of contentment in God, which leads to loss of contentment overall regarding life and insecurity. Ironic, isn’t it, that the very thing we hope will make us secure (money) leads to our insecurity?

Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we can confidently say,
"The Lord is my helper;
I will not fear;
what can man do to me?"

Hebrews 13:5-6

Our Deeper Idols

"'Surface idols' are things such as money, our spouse, or children, through which our deep idols seek fulfillment. We are often superficial in the analysis of our idol structures."

Tim Keller

- Deep Idols: Power, Approval, Comfort, Control.
- Our deep idols drive how we interact with our surface idols; we cannot remove surface idols with crushing our deep idols.

A Study in Grace Vs. Works

The Rich Ruler (Luke 18:18-27)

- Sought to justify himself based on his works
- Christ exposed his idol of possessions
- Apart from a work of God, we cannot be free of our idols

Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)

- Idol-maker of money
- Received radical grace from Jesus and then responded with radical grace to others

Discussion Questions

1. In what ways do the lifestyles of your neighbors and friends influence your view of whether or not you make money into an idol?
2. In what ways do you use money and possessions to seek power, approval, comfort or control?
3. Have someone read 1 Peter 2:9 aloud. If we truly believe we are a people of Christ's own possession, then who owns "our" money and possessions?