

“FIVE STICKY FINGERS”

It Came From Within, Part 3

September 5th, 2010

Greed is not a financial issue; it is a heart issue

Luke 12:15 (NIV) “Then Jesus said to them, ‘Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.’”

Greed occurs when we are driven by the assumption that “Life = the acquisition of more stuff”

Not having “cash” normally doesn't stop us from upgrading our lifestyle but prevents us from supporting other causes – that's greed

Greed impacts our relationships as the people around you feel your stuff is more important to you than they are

It's amazing how different our attitude is toward spending compared to giving

We live in a culture that makes us aware everyday of what we don't have & “need”

Matthew 6:19 (NIV) “[Jesus said] ‘Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.’”

Jesus is not saying we should live irresponsibly by not saving or going into poverty

Matthew 6:20 (NIV) “But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.”

Jesus is saying we need to learn to give stuff away

Luke 12:33 (NIV) “Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.”

Matthew 6:21 (NIV) “[Jesus said] ‘For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.’”

If you want to know where your heart is, follow the money trail – it's not what you feel

If you send money somewhere else besides “your kingdom”, in time your heart will follow

God isn't after your money (it's His anyway & you won't take it with you), He wants your heart

Your money & your possessions have the potential to re-direct your heart

Strategic generosity is how you break the power of greed in your heart

Matthew 6:22-23 (NIV) "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!"

Have you ever met a generous person who was not happy? Have you ever met an envious, greedy person who was happy?

One reason we don't apply these principles is because we often take it to extremes

Practical way to apply Jesus' teaching is through percentage & prioritized giving

You choose a percentage and before you fund your kingdom and lifestyle, you put it into what God is doing in the world

This means my lifestyle automatically drops, but my priorities are in place

A third part - progressive - as time goes by and my income rises you up the percentage of what you give

When you apply this – percentage, prioritize, progression - stuff isn't as important as before because your heart has changed

If you think this is about getting money for New Hope, don't give here

I've never met anyone who has made this decision – percentage, prioritize, progression – who Regretted it

This is not a prayer you pray, it's a decision you make

You and I have the potential, the tools, and the insight to give our way out of greed and allow God to do something extraordinary in our heart

Reallocating assets, relocates your heart

My Next Step Today Is:

- I am deciding to give based on "percentage, prioritize, progression"
- I will memorize Matthew 6:21
- I want to be in a small group beginning in mid-September, please contact me
- I want to be baptized on September 12th