

SERMON NOTES

Dr. David A. Renwick -- March 7, 2010

7 Deadly Sins: Greed

1 Kings 21:1-16, Luke 19:1-1-10, Exodus 20:17, Colossians 3:5

Writings, Articles connected to the Sermon

1. James Doti, "Capitalism and Greed"

<http://www.thefreemanonline.org/columns/capitalism-and-greed/>

2. Stephen Green (Chairman, HSBC Bank; =Church of England priest)

Good Value: Reflections on Money, Morality and an Uncertain World, 2009

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=123897141&ft=1&f=1004>

3. Bryan Sirchio, "If You Eat Every Day" www.sirchio.com

4. Walter Williams (Faculty, George Mason, Univ) The Virtue of Greed

<http://econfaculty.gmu.edu/wew/articles/99/nature-of-greed.htm>

Deadly:

1. **Destructive:** especially in relationships with God and others
2. **Deceitful:** promising much but delivering little
3. **Complex:** not always wrong . . . but how do you know when?

Definition "GREED": (Merriam-Webster)

1. a selfish and excessive desire for more of something than is needed
2. (a) *in which possession is the ultimate source of satisfaction/meaning and (b) in which the desire to get is more powerful than the desire to give.*

Where is Greed to be Found?

1. **Obvious** in Others: *economic collapse; the bonus issue, etc*

2. **Less Obvious** in Others and Ourselves:

- a. All of Us!! How do we in the U.S. look to those outside our borders? Think of U.S. Household debt . .

1974 = 60% of disposable income; **2008** = 134% of disposable income

- b. Greed/Self Interest as the Foundation of Capitalism

"It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interests"

Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations, 1776

Biblical Stories

Ahab (1 Kings 21) a. *Happiness/Satisfaction lies in possessing*

b. *Unable to let go*

Zacchaeus (Luke 19) a. *Happiness/Satisfaction lies in possessing*
b. *Unable to let go until Jesus sets him free, transforming him . . . from a getter to a giver; from greed to amazing generosity*

Key Questions

- Can we both enjoy God's good gifts AND let them go?
Like Zacchaeus: 50% of all we have?
Or As Scripture commands: 10% = a tithe?
- Does God own what we have, or do we own it?
- Is possessing 'more than we need' tempered with consistent, deliberate stewardship that overflows in generosity?

Scriptures

Exodus 20:17 You shall not covet

Proverbs 1:19 Such is the end of all who are **greedy** for gain; it takes away the life of its possessors.

Proverbs 15:27 Those who are **greedy** for unjust gain make trouble for their households, but those who hate bribes will live.

Jeremiah 6:13 For from the least to the greatest of them, everyone is **greedy** for unjust gain; and from prophet to priest, everyone deals falsely.

Matthew 23:25 (Jesus said), 'Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!

For you clean the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of **greed** and self-indulgence.'

Luke 12:15 And (Jesus) said to them, 'Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of **greed**; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.'

Matthew 16:26 (Jesus said), 'For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life?'

Luke 6:24 (Jesus said) 'But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your reward.'

Matthew 25:14-30 Jesus (29) 'to all those who have, more will be given.'

Colossians 3:5 Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and **greed** (which is idolatry).

1 Corinthians 5:11 But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother or sister who is sexually immoral or **greedy**, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or robber. Do not even eat with such a one.

Ephesians 5:5 no fornicator or impure person, or one who is **greedy** (that is, an idolater), has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

1 Timothy 3:8 [Church Officers] likewise must be serious, not double-tongued, not indulging in much wine, not **greedy** for money