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## Luke 12:13-21

13. “Someone in the crowd said to Him, ‘Teacher, tell my brother to divide the *family* inheritance with me.’

14. But He said to him, ‘Man, who appointed Me a judge or arbitrator over you?’

15. Then He said to them, ‘Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not *even* when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions.’

16. And He told them a parable, saying, ‘The land of a rich man was very productive.

17. ‘And he began reasoning to himself, saying, “What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?”’

18. ‘Then he said, “This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.

19. “And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years *to come*; take your ease, eat, drink *and* be merry.’”

20. ‘And I will say to him, “You fool! This *very* night your soul is required of you; and *now* who will own what you have prepared?”’

21. ‘So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.’”

In today’s passage Jesus is asked by someone in the

crowd, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.” Jesus first answers the man directly, “Man, who appointed Me as a judge or arbitrator over you?” Then Jesus addresses the crowd, saying, “Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed.” Obviously Jesus detected greed in this man’s heart with regard to the family inheritance.

The apostle Paul wrote in Colossians 3:5 that greed amounts to idolatry. In our materialistic society here in America, the temptation towards greed surrounds us every day. So we must be on our guard against this form of idolatry.

And like all sin, greed tears up people and relationships. It is so very sad to see and experience.

This past winter my mom died, and currently my dad’s health is failing. This has caused emotional pain for me and my family, which is to be expected. But what I had not prepared myself for was family difficulties and fighting due to greed with regards to the folks’ things and bank accounts. I had seen this before in other families, but had really hoped and expected it would not happen in mine. But as the Bible is always true about human nature, so even in my own family I’m seeing greed infect my siblings and cousins who I grew up with and care for very much.

In our Scripture passage today in Luke 12, after pointing out this man’s greed with regard to the family inheritance, Jesus gives us the parable of the rich farmer. Because of the farmer’s attitude of selfishness, which is the

root cause of greed and idolatry, God called him a “fool.” Then God says, “This very night your soul is required of you; now who will own what you have prepared?”

Truly we must ask ourselves that question also. How are we planning to pass on our material possessions to our sons and daughters, and even our grandchildren? Have we trained our children to love God first and use things to His glory, or have they learned to love things and use people? Will the material possessions and money we leave behind be a blessing or a curse to our families?

Those of us who have been so greatly blessed with so much by God, must become rich toward God if we are to escape the idolatry of greed. Surely God wants the best for us; Proverbs gives us His word that “the blessing of the Lord makes rich, and He adds no sorrow to it.”

We who have been so greatly blessed to live in this good land, with so many opportunities and comforts, must be very careful to have a heart of thankfulness toward God and generosity to our fellow man. Otherwise greed will come, bringing strife and sorrow into our lives and the lives of those around us. All of God’s blessings we can turn into a curse if we are not very careful!

As Jesus said to the multitudes long ago, so also we need to hear today: “Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed.”