

Speaker : Associate Pastor Timothy Ong

Title : True Value

Text : Luke 16:15

“And He said to them, You are those who justify yourselves before men. But God knows your hearts. For that which is esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.”

Introduction

Our way of thinking and attitude towards life have not changed much. Modern Man is as much interested in money and financial gain as they were in Jesus' days.

In the parable of “The Rich Fool” (Luke 12:13 – 21) we are being confronted with some honest questions of life. And we are brought to another level of understanding: where the true value is the core, deep inside, beneath the surface.

A. Jesus gave a warning (Luke 12:15)

“And He said to them, Watch and keep yourselves from covetousness. For a man's life is not in the abundance of the things which he possesses.”

The Message translation says it this way, “Speaking to the people, He went on, “Take care! Protect yourself against the least bit of greed. Life is not defined by what you have, even when you have a lot.”

‘Watch out! Be on your guard!’

‘Greed’ is the opposite of ‘contentment’ that accompanies true ‘godliness’

1 Timothy 6:6, “But godliness with contentment is great gain.”

‘Covetousness’ is labeled as ‘idolatry’ in Colossians 3:5.

“Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry” (NIV)

B. God alone is the source of life

1. The world's principle

Wealth begets wealth.

You have money you tend to be able to gain more money.

2. *How does God own everything?*

“Fool! This night your soul shall be required of you, ...” Luke 12:20.

At one point of time or another, each one of us will have to learn that ‘God owns our lives’. He merely ‘loans’ us our earthly existence.

God asked this Fool, “... then whose shall be those things which you have prepared?”

Ecclesiastes 2:18 – 19, “Yes, I hated all my labour which I had done under the sun; that I must leave it to the man who shall be after me. And who knows whether he shall be wise of a fool?”

C. A Pauper not a Prince

1. *Feeling of being in control*

The power of possessions is that they give us a feeling of being in control.

“And I’ll say to **myself**, “You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink, and be merry” (Luke 12:19)

But the other extreme is that we are ‘worried’ over our needs in life. The attitude is “God doesn’t care, or God is not helping for whatever reason.”

We are tempted to believe that if we follow the Lord, renouncing all our possessions, we may not have enough.

2. *True value*

He had worked so hard but actually gained so little. But you say that it is not true. He has plenty in his ‘barn’!

But he is poor with regards to God.

If there is no God then the rich farmer is ‘right’. But if there is God who owns all things, then the farmer is ‘wrong’. Yes. Absolutely ‘wrong’!

Luke 12:21, “So is he who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”

He has invested in the ‘vapour’ of life and not in that which last eternally. James 4:14, “... For what is your life? For it is a vapor, which appears for a little time, and then disappears.”

3. *Death striped us of all false pretences.*

We may look good in front of others. Many may praise us for our clever abilities.

But what does God say about us is more important.

What will God write as an epitaph on our tombstone?
“He stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God” (Luke 12:21)

Conclusion

Jesus turned to the disciples and said this, “Therefore I say to you, Be not anxious as to your life, what you shall eat ...” (Luke 12:22) .

The crucial issue in life is not the amount of our treasure but the location of our treasure (Luke 12:34).