

Date: 6 July 2025

Sermon Series: The Seven Deadly Sins

Sermon Title: Greed - The Rich Young Ruler's Dilemma

Scripture Reference: Matthew 19:16-25

Preacher: Ps Laurence Lee

Introduction:

One of Aesop's fables is the dog and his bone. It tells of a dog who had a bone, but lost it due to greed.

1. The subtleness of greed (v16-20)

The young ruler had kept many of the commandments. Although he could be considered righteous, he knew that something was lacking. Therefore, he asked Jesus what he needed to do to get eternal life.

Greed is not as obvious as some other sins. Murder, adultery, stealing, lying and dishonouring parents are sins that are easier to identify. Nonetheless, greed can be observed when one spends excessively on one's self, is stingy towards others, or when one hoards materials.

2. The stronghold of greed (v21-24)

Jesus answered him by telling him to sell his possessions, give them to the poor, and follow him. This is not a command for everyone. Jesus didn't tell everyone he met to sell everything and give to the poor. The command was specific to this young ruler.

Jesus looked at him and loved him (Mark 10:21). Jesus gave him a personal invitation to follow him, which did not happen very often in the gospels. The young ruler could have been the 13th disciple!

What was his response? The young ruler went away sad, because he had great wealth.

Why was he sad? It was because his desire for his great wealth was stronger than his desire for eternal life. His love of money was so strong that it held him back from following God.

Money is neutral. However, the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil (1 Timothy 6:10). Greed can pierce us with many griefs.

3. The solution to greed (v25-26)

Greed can be defined as a very strong wish to continuously get more of something, especially food or money. We need to realise that Jesus treasures souls (Luke 15:7, John 3:16, Matthew 13:44-46).

Therefore, the most valuable things are not physical things. When we have a relationship with Jesus, we have what is invaluable.

Conclusion:

Let us store up treasures in heaven that cannot be stolen or destroyed (Matthew 6:19-21).

Suggested Discussion Questions:

(Discussion leaders may feel free to adapt the questions to suit their small groups)

1. Have you kept the Ten Commandments?
2. Is the love of money holding you back from following Jesus?
3. What is most precious to you?

DBS/BOBILA Questions

1. What does this passage say about God?
2. What does this passage say about man?
3. Based on this passage, what are you doing well?
4. Based on this passage, how can you improve?
5. With whom/when/where/how can you share this message?

Note: Every LG is free to decide on which set of questions (LGD questions or DBS questions) is to be used for LG discussion.