Scarcity

What do we need and want that we don 't have enough of?

How do we tend to feel & behave when we don 't have enough?

A Christian approach to scarcity should be dramatically different from all other approaches to life!

We seek the transforming work of the Spirit today

- not merely more information
- not merely a new insight
- not merely a new or reinforced behavior
- rather: becoming more like Jesus



Luke 12

Stop fearing people or authorities

- Fear = whatever has a huge influence in our lives
 - In our emotions, our thought life, our words & actions
- Fear of people leads to hypocrisy
 - We tend hide our true selves from others, including...
 - our faith in Jesus
 - our doubts and our struggles
 - even our joys

Instead: Fear God!

- Let God have the greatest influence in our lives
- Because God alone has power over the whole of our being

3

Luke 12:13-15

Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

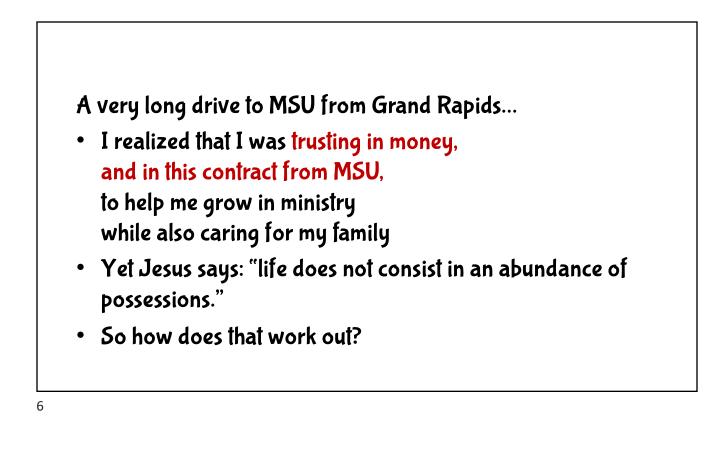
Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?"

Then he said to them, "Watch out!

Be on your guard against all kinds of greed;

life does not consist in an abundance of possessions."

I I 19 19 24		
	Luke 12:13-34	
<mark>13-15:</mark> P	Pursuing more money and possessions ruins life	
•	It was normal to have inheritance disputes	
•	It was also normal to expect a religious teacher to help	
•	But Jesus refused to step into the debate	
•	Why?	
	• Greed = wanting more money and more stuff	
	 Greed is contrary to abundant living 	
•	The lie (more money & stuff is better) still lives today!	
•	We can expect Jesus to respond the same way today	
16-21:	to prayers motivated by wanting more money and stuff	
	• He doesn't answer greedy prayers (wanting more for me)	
22-28:	• Even if the law or 'justice' is on my side	
29-34:	5	
45-51.		



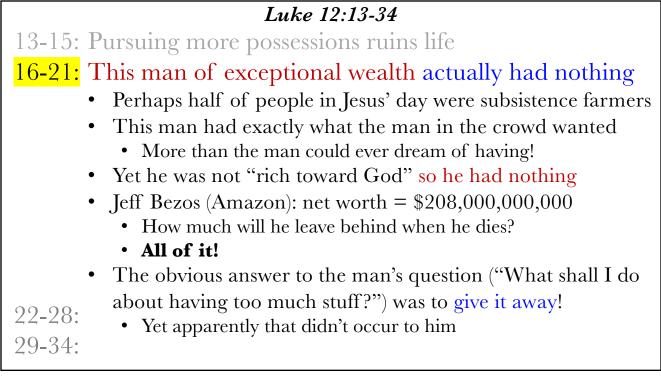
Luke 12:16-21

And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'

"Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."

"But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'

"This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God."



Luke 12:22-28

Then Jesus said to his disciples: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothes.

Consider the **ravens**: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds!

Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?

9

Luke 12:22-28

"Consider how the wild flowers grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith!

Luke 12:13-34
13-15: Pursuing more possessions ruins life
16-21: The man of exceptional wealth actually had nothing
22-28: "Fearing" money or possessions is senseless & bad!
• Fear = controlled by, guided by, worry about, be proud of,
• or planning, hard work, skilled investment, careful spending,
• Because
1. Focusing on food and clothing makes life an empty shell
2. God takes care of unclean ravens, so why do we worry?
3. Can worry make your life "taller"? Of course not!
 Actually, worry "shortens" life, and makes it worse
4. God makes flowers beautiful and He makes grass grow
• Better than the greatest humans!
God loves all His children so much more
29-34: than unclean birds and wild flowers and grasses!!!
11

Luke 12:29-34

"And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But **seek his kingdom**, and these things will be given to you as well. "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. **Sell your possessions and give to the poor**. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Luke 12:13-34

13-15: Pursuing more possessions ruins life

16-21: The man of exceptional wealth actually had nothing

22-28: "Fearing" money or possessions is senseless & ungodly!

29-34: Put your treasure in God, and He will incredibly bless!



Luke 12:13-34

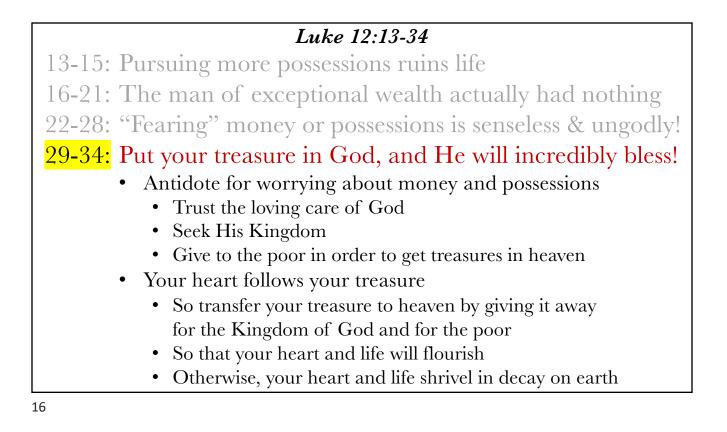
13-15: Pursuing more possessions ruins life

16-21: The man of exceptional wealth actually had nothing

22-28: "Fearing" money or possessions is senseless & ungodly!

29-34: Put your treasure in God, and He will incredibly bless!

- There was a window of time when you could exchange the retired currency for Euros
- What will a pile of money and possessions be worth once we die? **Nothing!!**
 - Jesus: Exchange it now for the currency of heaven!
- God has been pleased to give you the Kingdom
 - We are owners of the new Kingdom!
 - Why do we cling to the retiring currency of a dying kingdom??



Luke 12

Stop fearing people or authorities Instead: Fear God! Stop fearing money and possessions Instead: Trust God by seeking His Kingdom and by giving to the poor

17

Jesus taught...

When we give generously for God's purposes >> seeking His Kingdom and giving to the poor << He generously cares for us in this life and gives us priceless treasures in the new heaven & earth

Application

Trust in the goodness of God

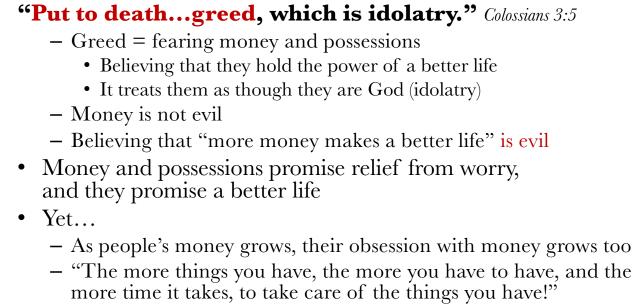
- After I got back to campus
- Looking back on the long drive home from Grand Rapids



Application

"Seek God 's Kingdom" "Sell your possessions"

21



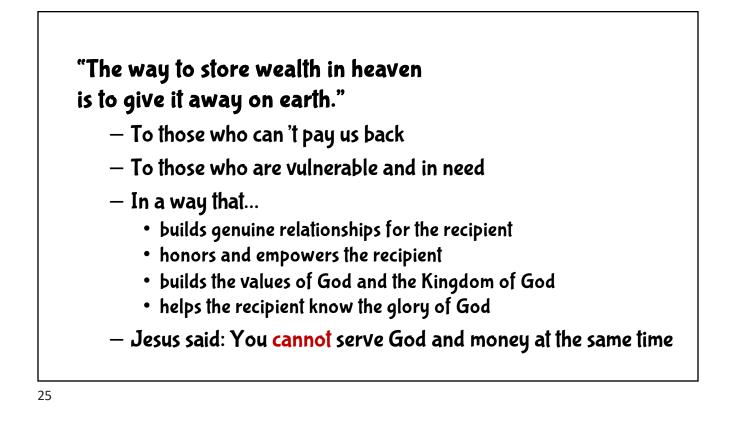
- In general, money takes what it promises to give

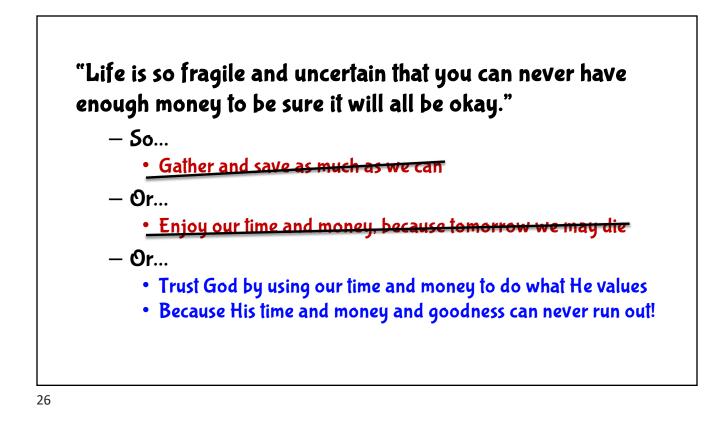
Application

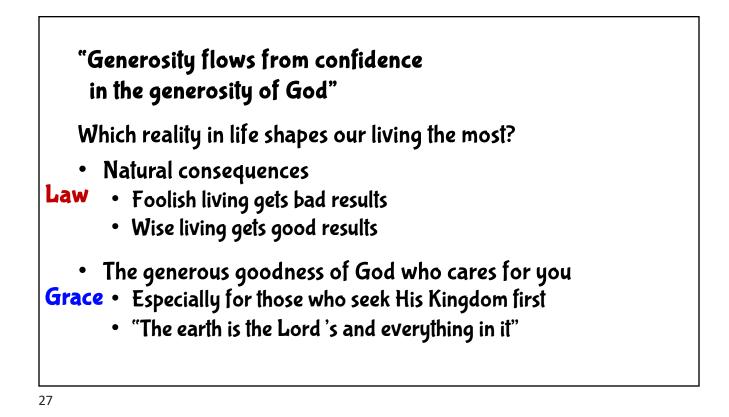
"Seek God 's Kingdom" "Sell your possessions"

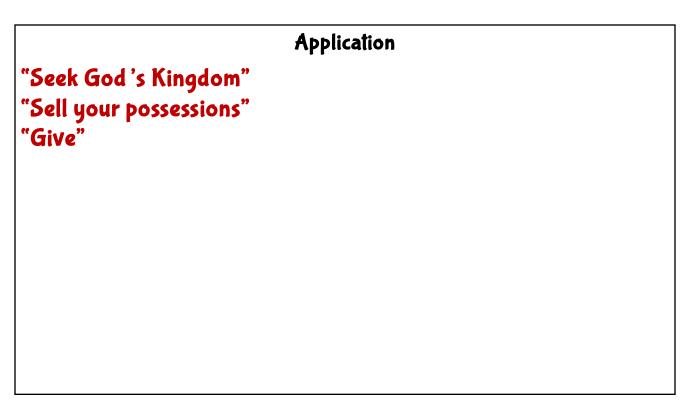
- Creates the opportunity to give
 - "Stuff" can become Kingdom resources
 - Possessions have opportunity cost: they demand our attention and other resources
- Also "sell our responsibilities and obligations"
 - Sometimes we give up our time (to work, to get better deals, or...) in order to get more money that doesn 't help us
 - When we give away responsibilities and obligations, we are paid with time that we can give to the Kingdom and those in need

Application	
"Seek God 's Kingdom"	
"Sell your possessions"	
"Give"	
 To those in need 	
 For God 's Kingdom 	
 Cautions 	
- Giving <mark>poorly</mark> hurts people	
 So don 't give poorly, and don 't stop giving 	
 Rather, give well 	
 Boundaries are still wise and godly 	
 "All" is neither stated nor implied in the command to sell 	









Ideas for how to give money and time

Thanks to our External Ministry Team!

- Developing relationships with organizations and people
- Giving on behalf of the church throughout the year
- Guiding our people as we have opportunity to give directly



Ideas for how to give time

Medilodge worship services

 Contact Jean Eddy, jeddy57@gmail.com

Love Clothing Center

- http://www.judsonmemorial.org/about/lcc.html
- August 14
- Contact John Tilden, tildenjjr@gmail.com

Cornerstone Church in Detroit

- Moving and community service, **August 7** (tentative)
- Contact Allan Greig, <u>allan@africarevolution.org</u>

31

When we give generously for God's purposes >> seeking His Kingdom and giving to the poor << He generously cares for us in this life and gives us priceless treasures in the new heaven & earth We follow a God who paid everything to rescue us for the new heaven and the new earth Yet sometimes we act like He might not be able to, or He might not be willing to.

care for us until then