

Covetousness

Objectives

To identify the causes of covetousness and ways to deal with it

Scriptural Verses

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor’s.” (Exodus 20:17)

References

Dr. Charles Stanley – www.intouch.org

Lesson Guidelines

Covetousness is a strong desire for something that someone else possesses which you feel you want in order to be happy or satisfied.

1. Characteristics of covetousness

- Form of idolatry (Ephesians 5:5)
- Motivated by fear
- Shows unbelief in the sovereignty of God
- Affects both rich and poor
- Is a sign of discontent with God’s blessings

2. God’s attitude towards covetousness

- It is a violation of the ten commandments (Exodus 20:17)
- It is a form of greed and therefore does not fit with the Christian lifestyle (Ephesians 5:1-3).
- It causes loss of eternal inheritance (Ephesians 5:5-6).
- St. Paul instructs us not to associate with covetous people (1 Corinthians 5:9-13).
- It is equated with immorality (1 Corinthians 5:9-10).
- It negatively affects the servants of God (1 Timothy 3:3).
- We are commanded to flee from it (1 Timothy 6:11).
- It plunges you in ruin and destruction.

3. Consequences of covetousness

- Creates increasing pressure to acquire what you are coveting.
- Generates ungodly desires.
- Decreases your sensitivity to God.
- Breeds ingratitude.
- Causes unhappiness and can lead to depression
- Negatively affects your health, relationships and finances.

4. How to deal with covetousness?

- Recognize it in your behavior, attitude and thoughts
- Repent and confess it as a sin
- Make a decision to change through God's grace
- Ask for God's will to be done in your life and be content with that
- Know that God has ordained a plan for you that is different from that of others

Conclusion

Covetousness is a common sin that we must be vigilant and aware of. It is a desire for what others have. Covetousness makes us discontented with the blessings that the Lord has given us. Through God's grace we can struggle and overcome this sin as long as we are aware of it in our lives.

Activities/Discussion Points

1. What are some things we covet?
2. Why is covetousness such a grievous sin?
3. How does covetousness affect me and those around me?
4. How can covetousness lead to other sins?