

# Defiling the Inheritance

by David Wilkerson

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*The sin of covetousness is a spirit of wanting, lusting, and acquisition that leads to cursing and blaspheming God, and it is essential to avoid this sin by being humble and seeking God's guidance and wisdom.*

**Duration:** 53:06

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 1:10, Jeremiah 2:7, Amos 7:14, Matthew 6:33

**Topics:** "Inheritance"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of recognizing the blessings and goodness of God in our lives. He compares the Israelites entering the promised land to believers who have experienced God's special work in their lives. The preacher highlights the humility and surrender that Joshua displayed when he encountered the captain of the Lord's army. He also mentions how the people of Jericho acknowledged Joshua's fame and the great things God had done through him. The sermon concludes with a reference to Jeremiah's message to the people of Jerusalem, urging them to remember their holiness and turn away from the corrupting influences around them.

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## Transcript

This is a message this morning that God worked me over real good about, and maybe he'll work you over good, too. I don't want to, I was preaching, in fact I preached this message at a conference and I got a note, in fact one of the leaders met me before I got up to preach again and handed me a long note rebuking me. He said, man, do you know who you're preaching to? These aren't sinners, that's what he was trying to say.

He said, man, these people are dedicated to lives. And I told them, if you don't know Jesus ten times better this year than you did last time, you really don't make any progress. And he said, how can you use such extracurricular terms like that ten times? And I got up and said, folks, I really have to repent.

I'm sorry that I've not used biblical terms. I should have used 30, 60 and 100 times better. Now I'm being facetious, but man, some of them went right over their heads.

You have to be ready, you're not going to take this unless you've got an open heart, you'll get mad at me, like they did. Not all of them, but some of them enough that the Holy Spirit had the second service and had to break through it so I could preach. And he did, he met their hearts.

Those criticisms may not have represented the whole group, but it's hard to get up and preach when you get the whole group's against you. Let's see where we are this morning. Defiling the inheritance.

Jeremiah 1.10, you'll find very, please don't turn it, because I'm going all through, I've got probably 30 verses I'm going through here, and I'm not even preaching out of Jeremiah. Yes, I am, Jeremiah 2.7. Go ahead, Jeremiah 2.7. Look at Jeremiah 2.7. This is going to be the basis of my message. When ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made my heritage an abomination.

When ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made my heritage an abomination. You just leave your Bible open on your lap, and we'll go back to that, and then just give me your good eye and your good ear. Jeremiah 1.10 is a very concise explanation of the role of a prophet.

Now, you know I'm not a prophet, and I don't like anybody call me one. My role is an Amos who, as a sheep herder, is told to prophesy. But the role of a true prophet, according to Jeremiah, is to root out, to pull down, to destroy, to throw down, and to build and to plant.

That's a concise role of a prophet. Boy, have you ever had the Holy Spirit, through a ministry, root you down, pull you down, destroy you, throw you down? If he doesn't then turn around and build you and plant you, then he's not a true prophet. Furthermore, the prophet of God must go wherever God sends him, and he's got to speak whatsoever the Lord shall speak.

He's to fear no man's face, he's to spare naught, he's to utter the awesome judgments, touching all wickedness on the face of the earth. He's got to strike when God says strike, but he's also got to bless and build and plant when God directs him to. And it was with this kind of mandate in mind that Jeremiah began walking the streets of Jerusalem, and he was crying a message into the ears of God's people, and he was pricking their consciences, and he was reminding them of a terrible spirit that was upon the people of God, people who were in the land, and he said, you've been corrupted by a horrible spirit, there's a spirit upon you that you don't know about.

He reminded them, he said, you were once holiness unto the Lord, Israel was holiness to the Lord, but now you walk in vanity, and you've been slipping away from him. He said, you're forgetting the pit from which God delivered you. He brought you through wilderness of drought and the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through before and where no man ever dwelt, and I brought you in.

Now there's the key, I brought you in. These are not people in Egypt now, these are not people in the wilderness, these are people in the inheritance. They have already arrived.

He said, I brought you into a plentiful country to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof. Now you've got to keep that in mind, they're out of sin, they're out of bondage, they're into a good land of blessing and glory, the type of those of us who really believe in our heart and can testify that the Lord has done something special in our lives. Not that we lord it over anyone else, not that there's a spirit of pride, in fact it's a very humbling thing to be brought into a holy place with God.

Very humbling before the Lord, because there you see sin in the awesome presence of God. And this is the people that have crossed the Jordan, they're in the promised land, these are veterans, these are warriors of the cross, so to speak. These are veterans, they've been through war now.

They've witnessed great miracles, they've seen deliverances, they've overcome. They are people that are in, a very special, highly anointed people. And I shuddered when I read Jeremiah's indictment against

these highly anointed in people.

When you entered in, in other words, when the Lord brought you in, you did something to defile that good thing God was doing in you. I rejoice in what God's doing with our staff at World Challenge. The confessions that have come forth, and the cleansing and the purifying, and most of our staff are not sitting around watching television, they're praying, they're seeking God, and God slowly but surely is bringing us into a place, isn't he? Many of you here have been brought in, he's bringing you little by little.

You know that you're not where you were a year ago, don't you? And you rejoice in that. But he said when you entered in, you defiled it. You made this heritage an abomination.

And I tremble at this horrible indictment because it struck an arrow in my soul, it was something that happened to me, and I'll share it this morning, but I think it's also the act being laid to the root of the whole Church of Jesus Christ. We live in a day of Christians who boast that they've come in. The whole health and wealth people talk about revelation knowledge, coming into special revelation.

Those in the Pentecostal charismatic movement talk about the fulness of the Holy Spirit, a fulness, that's coming into something, isn't it? There's no doubting that the Holy Spirit's doing a tremendous work in the remnant. He's separating the Bridehood from the Laodicean Church. And in this Bridehood there's a revelation of Christ and the glory of the Lord.

But he said all you who have entered into a new walk with God, having separated yourself from lukewarmness, and you've come into this radical kind of Christianity, and that's what God is going to demand of us, a radical Christianity. And he said when you entered into this kind of thing, you defiled it. You trod underfoot a great work of the Spirit in you, and then you brought in something that God wasn't pleased with.

You brought in some filth, and you brought in some corruption. In this glorious place of resurrection, this realm of the Spirit bringing you into, this progress that you've made, and you were on the brink of waters to swim in, but then suddenly you did something that grieved the Holy Spirit. You began to indulge in something, and the very good thing God did in you, you turned it into abomination in his very eyes.

And this is a scorching word to me, and I dare not cast it aside. You see, he's rooting something out. The role of the prophet, remember, is rooted out.

He's pulling down a stronghold still in the flesh of those who are moving into the promised land. He's got to throw down a form of idolatry in all of us who want to move on in God. Israel's failure in this matter is an example for us, and the Holy Spirit directed me to go into the word of God and find these corruptions of the people of God after they'd entered in, and I found three sins of those who enter in to a deeper walk with God.

I don't think you'd be here this morning, I really don't, unless God had done something in you. You're drawn, because this is, Jerry's talking about, there are a lot of us saying that in these last days it's going to take more than we have been giving him. It's going to take a lot more, and after what I've seen this weekend, I know it's going to take a lot more.

It's going to take a lot more even than some of those very dedicated missionaries were willing to give more. I heard the confessions, and I saw things that just grieved my heart, and it's going to take more! And by the way, if you think you've arrived, Brother Ravenhill had a man come to see him once who said he

wept over me in particular because I was searching for something I hadn't found. I thought, God help me if I ever get to the place where I think I've found it.

I want to be searching, I want to be seeking, but I hope I'm moving further than him. And the Lord woke me up one night and sent me to my room and said, I will not give you sleep until you deal with something in your life. And here I've been rejoicing in the good thing he was doing.

And this started, you know, if you followed my ministry about three years, four years ago, and Brother Ravenhill gave me Christian in complete armor, and I realized I didn't know God like that man. I didn't know God like those Puritans. I didn't know the Lord in his fullness.

I didn't know what was commanded of me. I didn't know anything about the government of God. I knew his mercy, but not his government.

And God started bringing me in to a new realm. And then God showed me this. Let me talk to you about it.

The first sin is covetousness, the sin of covetousness. You look at Israel now, they're across the Jordan, remember? They're finally in, and they've already had a bloody encounter at the hill of the foreskins. Remember, Joshua made him sharp knives and he circumcised the children of Israel at the hill of the foreskins.

I was telling Brother Ravenhill the other day, I see three hills in the life of a Christian. The dung hill of Paul, where you get rid of everything and say, that's enough. And then you've got this hill of the foreskins where you're circumcised before the Lord, and then you've got the heap of stones, and that's Achan.

I'm going to talk about him right now. There are three heaps in all of our lives, and if you're going to walk on, you've got to be able to show them to the Lord. You say, there's my dung heap, there's the circumcision heap, and there's the valley of Achor and the door of hope, and I've got a heap of stones on top of my Achan.

Let's get into it here just a minute now. They're in, they're circumcised, they're ready to move on in God, and it's time to bring the walls of Jericho down. It's time to show the whole world that God is with them.

And just before they moved into Jericho, Joshua knew there was something lurking under the surface of these inn people, these highly anointed people. He knew that they had not been dealt with about the spirit of covetousness, and so he finds it in the spirit necessary to give a special warning to these people who are in the land, warriors, anointed, called, commissioned, and under the directionship of the captain of the Lord's army, which was Jesus Christ the Lord himself. And hear it, he said, keep yourselves.

Now, you're about to go into this thing. You're going deeper now. You're going to see victories like you've never seen.

God is going to take you all the way. But keep yourself from the accursed thing, lest you make yourself accursed. When you take this accursed thing and make the camp of Israel accursed, you trouble it.

Don't touch it. Don't covet after anything that you see in Jericho. Israel was a covetous people, anointed, highly called.

In fact, remember God said, of all the families of the earth, you alone have I known. And yet there are people that have a spirit of covetousness lurking under the surface. That accursed thing was not a

Babylonian garment, it wasn't 200 shekels of silver, it wasn't a wedge of gold.

The accursed thing was a spirit, a spirit of covetousness, of wanting, of lusting. The walls come down, remember, and they slay the inhabitants of Jericho, except, remember, the harlot that was saved. By the way, I don't think that was much of a battle.

I don't think there's much fighting if people haven't been through an earthquake. I mean, all ground, everything falling around, who's going to fight? They're just running for their lives, they run into an Israeli sword. And the walls are down now, and the silver trumpets are about to blow, bringing the warriors back to base camp, and there are things laying everywhere.

I mean, the whole ground is covered, because the walls and I believe the houses, everything came down, because they finally burned it to the ground and cursed, Joshua cursed the very ground. Look at all these things laying around, and don't tell me Achan was the only one. Achan is the expression of what was in all their hearts.

There were a few knowing Israel, and only two of them coming out of it surviving in faith. You know what was in the hearts of these people. Joshua would have never warned them if it was only one man.

He'd have taken him aside and told him. He knew what was in all their hearts, and later when he was caught, he said, I coveted these things, and I took them and I hid them in my tent. Now, evidently, he saw that Babylonian garment, and his thing was clothes.

He said, I have never seen anything like that. He picked it up and looked at the stitching. He said, man, that's the best piece.

He looks around, and he said, if I could just have this, that's all I'd ever want. I would have the most unusual garment in the place. He saw himself strutting everyone in this garment and telling everybody he made it.

He rolls it up and sticks it under his turban or wherever you stick it in those days. He said, I've got it. That's it.

I'm satisfied. Suddenly, his foot hits a bag of shekels, shekels, money. He looks down, and there's 200 of them in there.

He thinks of that garment, and he says, now, that will buy a ranch or something. When I get in there, this will really do it. That will set me for life.

He said, I'll just take this now. Now, I'm really satisfied, until he sees something shining there, and he lays it down, and that's a wedge of gold, pure gold. He said, now, that's stupid to leave that there.

I'll drop that in the basket when I get time. I'll give it to God. Now, you see, if the silver trumpets hadn't blown, he'd have come out of there like a packed donkey with one of everything.

I used to think the covetousness, that every one of us had a button the devil could push, that we've got a weakness. You see, he thought his was closed. It's not closed, because now he's after silver.

Now he's after gold. He's after one of anything. Do you remember the millionaire from Dallas that flew in here the other day with two helicopters right in front of our place there, and a lot of people don't know who

they are? That's one of the richest men in Dallas.

And Teddy said, Bud Dave, I've got one of everything ever made. I've got one of everything. I'm a poor man.

He's a good man, I guess. I don't want to make a judgment on that. I don't need to, but he said, I've got one of everything ever made.

And you know, I used to think covetousness was one weakness we had, and the devil could get that. You know, I thought mine was cars, good German cars, well-built German cars. And then, you know, I thought, well, some men have a weakness, a lust in them toward women, or some others have a lust toward boats, and some of you men, pickup trucks, and shotguns, and you ladies that are laughing, furniture, and shoes.

My wife, shoes. My wife could sell shoes. Now she gives a lot away, and the Lord's helping her, but I always thought, you know, every one of us, now there is a trigger.

There's no question the Babylonian was a trigger. There's a trigger in all of us. But God showed me, no, that's not it.

It's a spirit. It's a spirit. Covetousness is a spirit.

And if you give in to this one thing that you want, you'll not be satisfied. You know, I was reading Psalm 10.3 out of Helen Sparrow, an original Hebrew, and I'll tell you, those who preach this gospel of covetousness, health and wealth, listen to this scripture. The unspiritual man glories in acquiring his soul's desire, and in getting gain, he curseth and blasphemeth Jehovah.

Wow, isn't that awesome? Listen to it again. The unspiritual man glories in acquiring his soul's desire, and in getting gain, he curseth and blasphemeth Jehovah. Covetousness is a spirit of acquisition.

It's a spirit of reaching out and taking gain. It's lusting after the things of this world, lusting. You know, I really thought mine was cars.

And after I'd written this book on judgment, I'd lost about 8 or 9 pounds, and my wife and brother Ravenfield, a few of my friends, can tell you the intensity that I was under during that time. And after it was all over, there's a tendency to relax, and the most dangerous time in a minister's life or your Christian's life is after great victory, and then relax. The devil moves in during those times of relaxing.

And it was whispered to my heart, you've earned a rest, and I'm taking this ease. And I had a 1974 BMW, I was 11 years old, and having problems in the air conditioning wasn't working, and I knew my weaknesses, and I said, Lord, I've got to stay with this car because, now, don't think I'm something because I'm driving an old car. My wife drives a new Cadillac, so that explains that it's not a humble kick I'm on.

And I was driving down the road, and I said, Lord, I've got to have a better car. Air conditioning, and I started, you know how you do, you justify. If you want something, you can make a list of 50, 100 things, reasons why you have to have it.

Don't you? You can write a book on why you need it. So I prayed, and I seemed to have been released in the spirit to buy a Toyota or a Datsun. I thought, well, that's not, that won't hurt, that won't trigger me.

So I go into Dallas one day, take a day, and I hadn't, man, I hadn't fooled with those things in a long, long time. I thought that was out. Man, I got the victory.

I told the Lord I had the victory. I shouldn't have told him that. Lord, of all things, that's gone.

That'll never bother me again. Don't ever say that. So I go into Dallas to the Toyota garage, and while I'm looking at a Toyota, I look over there, and there's a 1984 Porsche.

I thought, well, I'll just look inside, and I shouldn't have done that. And I drive it, and it's, wow, zero to 60 in six seconds. And I go in, and I signed on the line.

I didn't pray. I knew if I whispered to the Lord, he'd say, no. And so they're cleaning up the car, and I'm sitting out there, oh, God, I'm sick inside, and my tummy hurts.

I'm just so stupid. And a man comes out, and he said, Reverend, we can't sell you the car. He said, there's an oil problem.

We found an oil problem. We canceled on that premise. And the Lord said, you see, I bailed you out.

And wouldn't you think that would do it? Now, you're laughing at me, but, boy, I'm explaining you, too. And I'm driving down to a Datsun garage, and I have to pass a BMW place. And I don't know why I drove in.

And, again, I sign on the line. And I'm driving home, feeling real good about this, and all of a sudden, I'm saying to myself, now, for the price, and believe me, it was a very reasonable price. It was brought over from Germany.

It wasn't an accident. You know, the price I had justified it was the price of a new car, an American car. And I had a beautiful justification, so I was enjoying my justification and driving my justification back to Tyler.

And I was thinking, you know, that 928 that was next to it was the same price, and it would have been faster. And, suddenly, I'm lusting after every car there is. And this rich man that comes to visit us from Dallas, I'm showing him some property.

And he just blurted out, he said, Dave, I think I need to give you a brand new Rolls Royce convertible Cornish. Now, that will never happen, and I wouldn't drive it. I would sell it and give it to Mrs. before the Lord.

I know that. But, you know, that was in my mind coming down the road. I thought, man, a Rolls Royce convertible.

And, suddenly, I'm lusting after every car there is. And it was out of control. And I came home, and I'm sitting there talking to some friends, and I'm finding that the conversation, that covetousness, the spirit that was on me spilled over on everybody around me.

My wife, who hasn't talked about material things in so long, was talking about some material things. And our friends that were visiting us up that time, we'd been talking about the Lord. We were talking about a condominium they thought they could look at at Palm Desert, which they don't need, and they know it.

And, suddenly, everybody is talking materialism around me. That spirit had leaped upon them, and I couldn't sleep that night. That's when the Lord said, Go up and turn to Jeremiah 2.7. He directed me by the spirit of this very verse after you entered in.

After you defiled it, you defiled it by the spirit of covetousness that's upon you. Now, I haven't been able to get in that car since. It's stuck in my garage, and I have to find a way for it.

Now, for me, that's sin, and it's not just cars. It's not And it did it to Israel here. It incited the anger of God that he would not hear them, and he would not go with them anymore.

Now, you see, the battle of Jericho is over, and they're going against Ai, and Ai is such a little town. They don't even take it seriously. They send just a small army, a small contingent of soldiers against this motley army of Ai.

And they fled, the scripture says, before the men of Ai. Therefore, the hearts of the people melted, and they became as water. Joshua and the elders rent their clothes and put dust on their heads, and Joshua cried, Why, Lord? Would to God we be content to dwell on the other side of Jordan.

Can you imagine a great man of God saying just what Israel had said in the worst hour? Why did God bring us out here to die in the wilderness? Now Joshua is saying, Why didn't we stay in Egypt? Why, Lord? And what was said of Israel can be said of us when there is lust in us and covetousness. They fled before their enemies. They fled.

They couldn't stand against their enemies. They can't stand against the enemies of the flesh or the devil. And listen to this.

God refused to have anything to do with these people while they were bound with this spirit. Israel has sinned. They've taken to the accursed thing.

Neither will I be with them anymore, except you destroy the accursed from among you. Now, that's called brass heavens. It's called brass heavens.

It's called not getting your prayers through. That means not having the witness of God being with you, not having the glory of his presence in your life. And things going wrong, the enemy prevailing, trouble and heartache, they are in, but God is not working with them.

There is a cursed spirit of covetousness. They are trying to do God's work without dealing with the root of the cause of their defeat. And I'll tell you, when the anointing stops flowing, you'd better look for Achan.

Lord showed me very clearly, covetousness can't be curbed. It has to be killed. You can't curb it.

You can't live with it. And Joshua and all Israel with him took Achan and the silver and the garment and the wedge of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his asses, his sheep, his tent, and all that he had and brought them into the valley of Achor. And all Israel stoned him with stones and burned them with fire and raised over him a great heap of stones.

Oh, what an object, listen, the Holy Spirit is giving us about God's revealed wrath against the spirit of covetousness. He said, I want it killed. You stone it, you burn it, you bury it.

Then you pile a heap of stones on top of it. How severe, he says, this thing is. And I want it dealt with that severely.

And that's what God's been saying to me. You've got to roll in death on this. I believe I've died to sin once at the cross, but I die to the flesh daily.

I die to the flesh, if necessary, a thousand times a day, every time it raises its ugly head, to roll in death on it and stone it and kill it. Sadly, today, we make Achan the hero in many churches, many circles. The man who goes for the gold, the man who goes for the clothes, the man who goes for the rest, he's the hero, he's got faith, he's figured God out, he's got all the blessings.

What a tragedy we've made Achan the hero. Through Isaiah, God said to his people, for your sin of covetousness was I angry. For your sin of covetousness was I angry, and I punished you, and I hid me, and I was angry, and you were rebellious in the way of your own heart.

Jeremiah, for from the least of you, even to the greatest, every one of you, given over to covetousness, and even from the prophet, even to the priest. He said, you're all given over to covetousness. Thine eyes and thine heart are not but for your covetousness.

O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasure, thy end is come in the measure of thy covetousness. I believe that's America. Ezekiel gives the strongest words of God on this matter, and they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before these my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them.

For with their mouth they show much love. We showed much love here this morning. We're the end people showing him much love, coming into his courts with praise.

But their heart goeth after their covetousness. And lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song, of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well upon an instrument. For they hear thy words, but they do them not.

That shudders my soul. It just echoes deep in me that I was that kind of man. And I'm not trying to lay a heavy burden on you, but I wonder if that's what God is saying to all of us.

And I wonder sometimes if the church of Jesus Christ isn't too far gone. There are times I really feel deep in my heart that unless God strips us all and brings a total economic collapse and strips us down, because if we're not careful, we're going to want one of everything. You're just going to reach for this and reach for that.

And just when you think it's dead, we reach and we reach and we reach. And you sound not like that. Oh, and one way or another, we all reach for something.

And God says, I want that reaching stopped. I want that spirited out of you. I want it killed.

And you remember Hosea said, he referred to the valley of the door of hope in the valley of Acre. And I believe that is our door of hope. And Acre, remember, was the heap of stones here.

He said, that's the door of hope. That's where you're no longer coming, is she? But husband, I'll bring into a new relationship. If you deal with this spirit of covetousness, if you'll just slay this thing by the spirit, if you'll isolate it and take it like Achan and say, God, I want to deal with this spirit.

You know, I looked at missionary wives up there and I could just see them sinking in their seats. And there was love in my heart for them, but some of them had packed so much they were going out like royalty. And still they were saying to their husband, I need this, I need that, and I need that.

And here is this beautiful call of God to go to the mission field and give themselves. It's overlaid with the spirit of covetousness. And that spirit of covetousness is in all of us.

You know, you go looking for houses. Don't start looking at the \$200,000 house. Look at the \$30,000 house and then move up if you want, but don't start up there.

You'll want that. You'll never come down. There's something in us.

It's in all of us. I don't care, the holiest, most devout, most pious man on the planet. This spirit is in him.

It has to be dealt with, all of us. The spirit of covetousness, it hides the face of God. You know, the man of God who lusts after the big church, he'll eventually lust after the woman in that church.

A man who lusts for ambition and recognition will start lusting after everything else because it comes in many, many pairs. Listen to me closely. Covetousness leads to carelessness.

These are twins. On the hill of every Achan, there's a hillbight. And I'll tell you what that means.

That means that on the hill of covetousness is carelessness. Jericho and Ai have been defeated now. Achan's out of the way, but there's still a spirit of carelessness that this has created in the camp.

Now remember, after Ai is Gibeon, where the Hivites live, and that's three days journey. And can you imagine all of the messengers that there had to be, the whole time Israel was in the land, they had all kinds of spies from all these countries. There were Canaanites, Hivites, Amorites, all those hills and areas out in the distance, all those camels, those raiders out there.

These were the spies. And they saw those walls come down. Can't you imagine them running to Gibeon? Don't you know they ran everywhere and the fear of God was on them? The fear of God was on these people and they know Israel was coming.

You remember what they did? They made as if they had been ambassadors and they took old sacks upon their asses and wine bottles, old and torn and bound up and old shoes and patches on their feet and old garments upon them. And all the bread was dry and moldy. And they said to Joshua, now remember, they're only three days away and they're pretending to be ambassadors.

Listen, we've come from a far country, now therefore make a league with us. And they were setting a well-conceived trap. Joshua and his princes were about to make a careless, careless mistake.

And they said unto him, from a very far country thy servants are come because of the name of the Lord thy God. Now watch how they start stroking this great man of God. We've heard the fame of you all.

We've heard that you're famous. You see the princes smile at one another. Hey, everybody knows what God's doing here.

I had a pastor of a great church in Dallas say to me once, you've got to come. You just have to come. I don't want you to preach, just sit and see what God's doing.

We just want everybody to know. That's why every time they build a big church, they call in all the press, they call in every well-known people, they call in the magazines and newspapers and television to let everybody know what's happening. And these men of God are being stroked by these men.

He said, we've heard thy fame and all that he did in Egypt. Therefore, our elders and all the inhabitants of our country said to us, take victuals with you for the journey and go meet them and say to them, we are your servants. Therefore, now make a league with us.

This bread we took hot for our provision out of our houses on the day we came forth to go to meet you. But now look, behold, it's dry, it's moldy. And these bottles of wine, which were filled and were new, look now, they're all torn.

And these, our garments and our shoes have become old by reason of the very, very long journey. Now, keep in mind that this man, Joshua was the one who met the captain of the Lord's army. And that was Christ.

And he said, take off your right, take up your shoes, you're on holy ground. And any Jew knew what that meant. That meant I give up my rights.

And from that day on, Joshua said, what sayeth my Lord? On all things, that's what Joshua said. About Jericho, about Achanathia, what sayeth my Lord? That was what God wanted out of this man. And I'm convinced that, remember, it came to pass with Joshua by Jericho that he lifted up his eyes and looked and behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand.

Joshua went to him and said, are you for us or for our adversaries? And he said, no, as captain of the host of the Lord am I come. Joshua fell on his face in the earth and did worship and said unto him, what sayeth my Lord unto his servant? And the captain of the Lord's host said to Joshua, loose your shoes from off your feet for the place where thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.

But remember what he said, what sayeth my Lord? He didn't do anything until he consulted with the Lord. Listen to this now. Joshua gets careless and ask not counsel at the mouth of the Lord, Joshua 9.14. He doesn't ask counsel at the mouth of the Lord.

And Joshua made peace with them. He signed on the line without praying. Now he's careless.

What a horribly careless act this is. And I'll show you the consequences of it. It was awesome.

Joshua made peace with them and made a league with them to let them live. And the princes of the congregation swear unto them. And it came to pass at the end of three days after they'd made a league with them, then they heard that they were their neighbors and that they dwelt among them.

Now you say, all right, it wasn't so bad. All Joshua did was make them servants. He said, all right, you fooled us.

But from now on, you're going to be our servants. And the Gibeonites and the Hivites from Gibeon say, all right, we're your servants. And he made them hewers of wood.

I mean, cutters of wood and hewers of water, drawers of water, hewers of wood for the house of God. Now I'm going to give you something here. He made a league with them to let them live.

And what he actually did was give the flesh and nail in the house of God. He made the flesh to live on as servant to the things of God. The Hivites from then on to the very cross, it was all the way to the cross that the Hivite system lived.

And not only is it giving the flesh and nail in the house of God, it's a distraction, a total distraction. And that's what happened to me when I went into Dallas and I began to look at this. And the Lord says, you see, your mind was on me.

I was revealing myself to you. You were deep in the word of God. Now you have cards in your mind.

Now you have to sell this. You have to extract yourself. Your secretary has to make calls.

Look at all the distractions around you now. Covetousness causes distraction, terrible distraction from the burden of the Lord, from the vision of the Holy Ghost. It's a total distraction.

Let me show it to you here now. This is sad. I'm not suggesting Josh was covetous.

He was careless. But the spirit was in the camp now. Every one of the princes, not one of them thought of calling on the name of the Lord.

Five kings come against Gibeon, against the Hivites. And they call on the terms of this treaty that Joshua made. And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua.

They're surrounded now by five kings ready to move in, Gibeon. And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the camp of Gilgal, saying, Shrink not thy hand from thy servants. Come up to us quickly and save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the mountains are gathered together against us.

So Joshua ascended from Gilgal. He and all the people of war with him and all the mighty men of valor. And if you read that story, they had to march all night long.

They had to fight all day long. And that's when Joshua had to command the sun to stand still. They were fighting somebody else's war.

It wasn't even their battle. His men were being killed and being slain, fighting a battle for the Hivites. You tell me it's not all the consequences of covetousness, the carelessness of their causes.

And you watch Christians walking through a shopping center and watch that spirit of covetousness leap upon them. Watch how quickly they sign on the line. Don't pray about it, just sign on the line.

And that's what the devil is trying to get the whole church of Jesus Christ to do now, without prayer, without thought. Sign on the line. Prayerlessness becomes carelessness.

You look at David. I wept the other night when I was reading about David, this great man of God, a man after God's own heart. And here's Uriah now.

He's already committed adultery with Bathsheba, and she's expecting a child, and he's trying to cover his track. And he sends a mess of meat and food with Uriah to go to his house. And I tell you, I think one of the best sermons in the Bible, somehow I hope someday God will give me it.

A good sermon. And Uriah slept at the king's gate. He slept at the king's gate.

And you know what he's, he had more honor than David. He said, my brothers are out there on the field, Job's out there in the field sleeping. I'm not going down there where my brothers are suffering and living ease.

I won't do it. And he slept at the king's gate. And they came to David and said, he didn't go to his home last night.

He didn't go to his bed. So David invites him in. You know, that must've been something for Uriah to be invited into the king's house.

And the king says, have a drink. And can you picture this holy man of God that wrote all these precious psalms? How his heart, like a heart panted after the water brooks, the Lord is my shepherd. Can you imagine this tender heart pouring one drink after another into this man, getting him drunk? If that's not carelessness, I don't know what is.

Look at him, just getting him drunk. You know what he's going to do? He's going to have those men carry him and throw him in his wife's bed drunk. So that even if nothing happened, he could say, well, you don't remember you were too drunk.

He had a perfect alibi. Those soldiers get him to the gate and Uriah shakes him off and sleeps again at the king's gate. What a careless act.

And I see that step. And I don't want to go that way. That's why I want to deal with the spirit of covetousness in me.

I don't want that carelessness. I don't want to be careless of the things of God. I don't want to sign on the line without seeking him in all things.

Isn't that the desire of your heart? All right. There's covetousness leads to carelessness and then carelessness thirdly leads to compromise. Compromise.

And this is where my heart just fears. Remember what Jesus said to the church at Pergamos? Listen to it. I have a few things against you because you have there them that hold in your midst the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balaam to cast the stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols and to commit fornication.

Idolatry and fornication. These are the twin acts of compromise. Everywhere you go, compromise, it's pride, idolatry, fornication.

Balaam taught Balak to seduce Israel into fornication and idolatry. Remember Balak and his armies were gathered against Israel and he hired Balaam to prophesy against him. The Stanimites said curse him.

And he couldn't curse him. Holy Spirit would come on that man or whatever spirit came upon him and whatever happened to this man, he was tongue tied, he could do nothing but bless them. But somehow, and it's not recorded in the Old Testament, that this doctrine of Balaam is so awesome, incredible, it's mentioned by Joshua, Nehemiah, Micah, Peter, Jude, and John.

The doctrine of Balaam. And you have to go into the New Testament to find it here. In 2 Peter, let me read it to you.

Having eyes full of adultery that cannot cease from sin, beguiling unstable souls, a heart they have exercised with covetous practices, cursed children, which have forsaken the right way and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Bozar, who loved the wages of unrighteousness. And the New Testament says that Balaam taught Balak to seduce Israel. And what Balak couldn't do with his armies and his swords, he did with his women and wine.

They had parties and invited Israel to come. And these men had been in the wilderness. They hadn't been to a feast, hadn't been to a party.

And Micah, can't you see him? Jeremiah and some of the prophets said, you went by troops. You neighed after their like horses in the open fields. And they ran by troops.

And look at Israel, all the soldiers who should have been at war, who should have been purging them from the face of the earth, are dancing with their women, getting drunk, committing adultery. The doctrine of Balaam is a doctrine of seduction. And that's where it leads.

It leads into turning God's house into a playhouse, turning holy Christians into slaves of ease and pleasure. You know, all over the country today, I hear of ministers, in fact, you go to some of these conventions where, you know, what are these products they sell? Well, don't name it, don't name it, because somebody may be selling them. But you know, I know ministers who are well cared for.

They have good churches. They don't need to supplement their wages. Now, it may be something different for a man.

In fact, I don't care who he is. If you're in the ministry, you're worthy of your hire, and God should take care of you. There's nothing wrong with Paul working your hands, and I believe that may be just as honorable, in Paul's eyes, more honorable.

But my point is, there are men all over the country that I meet, and if you get together with these men, and some of them pastor great churches, and they're selling products on the side. You know why? It buys the Mercedes, it buys the swimming pool, it buys the bigger house. I know one in particular I can think of right now.

He lives in a mansion, way above his people. It's incomprehensible the way the man is living. And someone says, how could you do that on your salary? He says, I don't.

But he's the head of a pyramid system, and all the money is flowing in there. And how many ministers, how many in the gospel, are selling all these things on the side? Now, that's not for you that are laymen. This is for those that are in the ministry.

You've got to be careful of that spirit of covetousness. And by the way, I don't care what business you're in. I don't care what you do.

When are we ever going to have enough? And if we don't have a line we can draw in our lives, and say enough is enough. And I don't want to put condemnation of guilt under anybody, because I've seen people drive Volkswagens, more proud of that Volkswagen than the man who has a Rolls Royce. I have seen people come into our centers that would come with a little knapsack, and they, I tell you literally, they'd almost kill if you touched anything in that knapsack.

They were so covetous for those little things that they had. They carried them all around, and one would have a mouth organ, you know, the thing you play with in your mouth, what do you call it? Harmonica, a mouth organ. But to him, you can take the whole world, but don't take that organ.

And God dealt with me, said if you don't curb, brother, if you don't kill the spirit of covetousness, you're going to get careless, and eventually you'll compromise. And it'll be serious, because you'll compromise on something so black, so blasphemous. And I have the fear of God on me today.

I have his fear on my heart this morning. And so that I can stand here and tell you in all honesty, all honesty, and hear me please before I close. Saints, we've got to deal with it.

You know that, don't you? Otherwise you'll never be satisfied. You'll be reaching out to everything but him. And I've almost given up the thought of even preaching in churches anymore.

It's overwhelming to stand in the pulpit and just see it coming at you. Wave after wave of covetousness. Men in the church lusting after other wives.

Women lusting after other men. Women who are supposed to be women of God, having problems in their home and saying, if I had only waited, or it could have been better, and measuring their husbands against somebody else. Covetousness, reaching out, lusting, wanting.

After you entered in, you defiled it. And I've wept my way through to this, and I'm at the place now where I say, Lord, I recognize it. You see what I've done? I've isolated.

How would you like to have been when God started moving into camp and isolating the sin? And you're sitting there, and all these thousands, and you're thinking, well, there's so many. How could he ever find me? You know, if there are 600,000 warriors, for example, how would he ever find me? And suddenly the Holy Spirit's casting the lot, and it comes down finally to a tribe. And his tribe is taken.

And the tribe moves forward. That's the first level. And then the clan is isolated.

And then the family is isolated. And can you imagine how hot Achan was getting? How worried he was getting? And now there's the family, Achan and his family, his sons and his daughters. And the Holy Spirit says, Achan, come forth.

And there he stands. You know, the marvelous thing about living under grace that we're not plucked out of the Father's hand like Achan. We're not plucked out of the hand like Nadab and Abihu.

We're not plucked out of that hand if we repent. When we isolate it and repent and deal with the Spirit, we have grace. We have mercy because he stood in our place.

He stood there. He took the stones. He took it all.

And when you isolate it and say, Jesus, forgive me, I'm sorry, that very moment his grace and mercy moves in. And I tell you, I have to stand here and offer you mercy and grace because that's what I found. He has given me such grace.

You know, I thought, Lord, you're right. I'm guilty. I'm Achan.

What are you going to do to me? That's the first thought I thought. Because, you know, we've got so many of these crazy prophets around throwing curses. I thought, Lord, you know, you start thinking that way once in a while.

And we're going to have to go to bed, to hospital. You know, those thoughts that race through your mind. And then you remember the new covenant.

Then you remember the blood. Then you remember the curse that he took for us. Then you remember he said, if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous.

And then the Lord just said, lay it on me now, David. Lay it on me. Roll in death and receive your mercy and grace and go forth rejoicing.

Hallelujah. Rejoicing. Isn't that amazing? Aren't you glad you live in this day? Every one of us would have been stoned under law.

The way we live? How far we stray from God, we'd all been killed. Thank God for the mercy of the cross. Will you stand and thank him for that for just a moment.

Lord, we thank you for your mercy and your grace. Thank you, Jesus, for standing between us and the curse. But Lord, we lay our covetousness down to you now and ask you, Lord, to deal with this spirit and not slay it, Lord.

Kill it, stone it, bury it. We raise up that heap of stones by faith this morning. Lord, take the covetousness from our hearts.

For just a moment, let him search you. Lord, I want to tell you, I hear it loud and clear in my spirit right now that this is for some of you here this morning, not for the past, but for the future. Something that lays ahead of you and the Lord's preparing you so that you'll not rush off and sign on the line and be careless.

He's raising up a warning. He's preparing your heart for something. I feel it very strong.

I want to say that to you. Lord, thank you for speaking to us in your kindness and your love. What mercy you've given to us.

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