

Audio Transcript of Sermon

July 29, 2023

Evil Boasts of Personal Desire and Praises the Greedy

Hello. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Tom Laign with Sabbath Bible Study. Evil is personified in wicked people who do bad things. They persecute poor people, boast about what they would like to do, and think that people who are greedy are worthy of praise. All of these are the opposite of what God would expect of us. Let's look at what David wrote in Psalm ten starting with verse one.

Psalm 10:1-3

- 1. Why standest thou afar off, O LORD? why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?**
- 2. The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.**
- 3. For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth.**

Last week we focused on how evil persecutes the poor, and this week we will examine how evil boasts of evil desire and praises the greedy. Today we tend to think of boasting as something that only obnoxious people do, but from the Bible we can see that boasting could be something even done by a nation. Back in the time of Gideon, there was a need to fight the Midianites, and while God was willing to give Israel the victory, He would not give victory until after the number of fighters was reduced, because God feared they would become boastful in victory, attributing the victory to themselves instead of to God, driving a wedge between them and God. Judges seven verse one.

Judges 7:1-2

- 1. Then Jerubbaal, who is Gideon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Harod: so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley.**
- 2. And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.**

Even in the New Testament we are warned about not being boastful, because celebrating what we boast about is evil. While we can plan for the future, there is no reason to celebrate a future accomplishment, where like the people of Israel with Gideon, we conclude that we by ourselves have saved us. In whatever plans we have for the future, we must always factor in the will of God, knowing that we can do what is within God's will. James four verse thirteen.

James 4:13-17

13. Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:

14. Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

15. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

16. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.

17. Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

We can look to Jeremiah who wrote that wise people are not to glory in their wisdom, strong people are not to glory in their strength, and rich people are not to glory in their riches. Unlike what James wrote about, these people are not celebrating something to happen in the future, but something in the present and very recent past, and Jeremiah admonishes us to instead of taking glory in any kind of accomplishment, to take glory in God. Jeremiah added that both the circumcised and uncircumcised will be punished, and at the lead for all of this with Israel is taking glory for oneself instead of giving glory to God. Jeremiah nine verse twenty-three.

Jeremiah 9:23-26

23. Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:

24. But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

25. Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will punish all them which are circumcised with the uncircumcised;

26. Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the children of Ammon, and Moab, and all that are in the utmost corners, that dwell in the wilderness: for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in the heart.

Even when it came to punish nations fighting Israel boastful glory would be their undoing. Take for instance the King of Assyria who is described as having the glory of high looks, never considering God and only considering that that he the king did it all, by his effort, wisdom, and persistence. Isaiah ten verse twelve.

Isaiah 10:12-19

12. Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks.

13. For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent: and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man:

14. And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs that are left, have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped.

Isaiah goes on to use an axe as a comparison asking if the axe boasts that it is better than the person using the axe, or if the saw, rod, and staff are better than the person using these. This kind of boasting brings rebuke from God where leanness overtakes the fat and forests are reduced to just a few trees through fire. Verse fifteen.

15. Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood.

16. Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire.

17. And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day;

18. And shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both soul and body: and they shall be as when a standardbearer fainteth.

19. And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be few, that a child may write them.

Psalm forty-nine gives more insight into people who boast because of their wealth, showing that in times of extreme trouble, not even money can save you,

and neither can another person be redeemed through money. All of this is sin. Psalm forty-nine verse one.

Psalm 49:1-8

- 1. Hear this, all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world:**
- 2. Both low and high, rich and poor, together.**
- 3. My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.**
- 4. I will incline mine ear to a parable: I will open my dark saying upon the harp.**
- 5. Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?**
- 6. They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches;**
- 7. None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him:**
- 8. For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:**

When people do not glorify God, they could be boasting in idols serving what the Bible calls other gods. It is not these other gods with a small g- who can bring happiness to this planet. Only God can bring happiness and we know when God and Jesus Christ return to earth, that this happiness will be evident in the Kingdom of God. Yet, there are those who reject this idea and God himself instead choosing to boast in other gods. Psalm ninety-seven verse one.

Psalm 97:1-7

- 1. The LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.**
- 2. Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.**
- 3. A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about.**
- 4. His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled.**
- 5. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.**
- 6. The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.**
- 7. Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him, all ye gods.**

Boasting in what a person does diminishes the value of God in the eyes of the person who is boasting. It is not through God that something happens, but through their own action. Even when people are united in what they have done, joining hand in hand, God sees this type of boasting, often swimming in pride of what is seen as an accomplishment, as an abomination. Boastful pride can never replace the mercy and truth that is needed to purge sin in our lives, and that comes through mercy from God through truth. Proverbs sixteen verse five.

Proverbs 16:5-6

5. Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished.

6. By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil.

Sometimes people boast about things that are more imagined than real, where the truth is stretched. We can appreciate cold weather coming when it's time for harvest in the fall, or a faithful messenger who delivers the message. Those who boast about things that are more imagined than real are sort of like a rain cloud that doesn't give any rain. If you were hoping for rain, you will be disappointed. Proverbs twenty-five verse thirteen.

Proverbs 25:13-14

13. As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters.

14. Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain.

We are told not to boast of tomorrow because we do not know what tomorrow may bring, and to refrain from patting ourselves on our own backs. If praise is to be given about us, that praise should come from other people, and not from us. Proverbs twenty-seven verse one.

Proverbs 27:1-2

1. Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

2. Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.

If we think we don't have a problem in boasting about personal desire and think we are already giving glory to God, that we know God's will and the more excellent way, that we are confident we could lead the spiritually blind, the spiritually foolish, babes through the knowledge we have about God's way of life, we need to consider if we are holding ourselves to that standard, or if we just apply that standard to others. Even though we might think we are boasting of God and not ourselves, we would be dishonoring God by not doing what God expects of us, and when others who are not called yet see that, this could cause them to think less of God because of what we are doing. Romans two verse seventeen.

Romans 2:17-24

17. Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God,

18. And knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law;

19. And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness,

20. An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.

21. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?

22. Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?

23. Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?

24. For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.

If we want to make sure we glorify God and not just boast about what is important to us, we will exercise care in the words we use and what we do will reflect what is spiritually important to us. Bitterness and strife get in the way of our ability to glorify God because it is rooted in the evil of Satan not the righteousness of God. What we do needs to be based in the righteousness of God. James three verse thirteen.

James 3:13-18

13. Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

14. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

15. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

16. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.

17. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

18. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

In writing to the Corinthians, Paul urged them to think of men above that which is written lest they become puffed up one against another. Thinking of people above that which is written is like boasting about that person, and that boasting about a person takes away the glory from God. We shouldn't find ourselves favoring one person or minister above another as everyone receives spiritual gifts through God the Father. When we allow that distinction to happen, then we start favoring people, and we see ourselves as spiritually superior to others. First Corinthians four verse one.

1 Corinthians 4:1-8

1. Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

3. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.

4. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

5. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

6. And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.

7. For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?

8. Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.

Evil is personified in wicked people through boastings of personal desire. God prevented the Israelites from having this happen with Gideon when He limited the number of fighters with Israel taking on the Midianites. Isaiah and Jeremiah wrote about this in some of their prophecies, and Paul warned the Corinthians from allowing this type of boasting to give us reason to favor one person or minister above another.

Greed is another personification of evil, and wicked people tend to see greed as something that is worthy of praise, almost as if greed and being hard working are the same, when in fact, these are not. When we go back and look at the request of the Israelites to have a human king over them, God correctly linked that request to a rejection of Him. Leading up to that rejection were the sons of Samuel who were greedy. Samuel was old and made his sons judges over Israel, and instead of being like Samuel, money drove their agenda. The elders approached Samuel and asked that a king be established to judge them. First Samuel eight verse one.

1 Samuel 8:1-9

1. And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel.

2. Now the name of his firstborn was Joel; and the name of his second, Abiah: they were judges in Beersheba.

3. And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.

4. Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah,

5. And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

6. But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD.

7. And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.

8. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.

9. Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.

Samuel's sons thought they could use their position for personal financial gain regardless of what was right or wrong. Today, some people have twisted that idea believing that wealth is a sign of the blessing of God. They believe that gain is godliness, and some today might call this the prosperity gospel. Paul told Timothy to withdraw himself from such people, because along with that idea that gain is godliness tends to come religious pride steeped in ignorance, and getting caught up in debates over the meaning of words, and getting into religious accusations. Paul then went on to tell Timothy that godliness with contentment is great gain explaining that we need to avoid the desire to be rich where we succumb to the love of money. First Timothy six verse three.

1 Timothy 6:3-10

3. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

4. He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,

5. Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

6. But godliness with contentment is great gain.

7. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

8. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

9. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

In Hebrews, we are told to even watch what we say so that what we say does not reflect greed and covetousness. We should remember that we are told we will never be left or forsaken. Hebrews thirteen verse five.

Hebrews 13:5-6

5. Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

6. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

In Ecclesiastes we are told that people whose focus is money and wealth are not satisfied with what they have. They tend to want more of what they have and when they finally get more, it seems like more people want part of their money. Driving that is covetousness, not contentment. Ecclesiastes five verse ten.

Ecclesiastes 5:10-12

10. He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity.

11. When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes?

12. The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.

Jeremiah writes of a time when God is angry because the people, all of the people, from the poor to the extremely wealthy, are all greedy, including religious leaders. Because of that greed, God's anger will be poured out on the people. People will lose what they thought they had to others, and lies will be used to temporarily make people feel good. Jeremiah six verse ten.

Jeremiah 6:10-15

10. To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it.

11. Therefore I am full of the fury of the LORD; I am weary with holding in: I will pour it out upon the children abroad, and upon the assembly of young men together: for even the husband with the wife shall be taken, the aged with him that is full of days.

12. And their houses shall be turned unto others, with their fields and wives together: for I will stretch out my hand upon the inhabitants of the land, saith the LORD.

13. For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.

14. They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace.

15. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.

Ezekiel writes of people who on the surface seem religious, but really are just greedy. What seems like religious devotion and love for others is all just an attempt to get while the getting is good. People will listen to what is being said religiously and ignore the message, all because they are focused on greed. Ezekiel thirty-three verse thirty.

Ezekiel 33:30-33

30. Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, everyone to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the LORD.

31. And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.

32. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not.

33. And when this cometh to pass, lo, it will come, then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them.

When we recall verses about who will not be in the Kingdom of God, for some reason we tend to focus mostly on sexual sins that are listed, forgetting that other types of sins are listed as well. People who steal, the greedy, and extortioners are

just some of the additional people who will not be in the Kingdom of God. First Corinthians six verse nine.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

9. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

10. Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

11. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

When James writes of wars and fightings among you, he is not writing of armed conflict, but of conflict between brethren, because the you he is referencing is you the brethren. James attributes this to greed, lusting for things without ever asking God and being content with whatever response we receive from Him. James concludes his thoughts by sharing asking and receiving indicates we are asking for something to placate our lusts, our greed. James four verse one.

James 4:1-3

1. From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?

2. Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

3. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

James also has sharp words for those who are rich explaining that their riches are corrupted by being deceptive with employee wages while they themselves live the rich life doing whatever they want. Greed can lead anyone to do wickedness, and the rich are not immune just because they might already have money. James five verse one.

James 5:1-6

1. Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

2. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten.

3. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

4. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.

5. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.

6. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.

Of much greater worth than money is our spiritual salvation. Jesus explained that it is possible for a person to gain the entire world but lose out on salvation. In the end it makes no difference how much money we have, because salvation is a gift given to those whom God determines are to receive the gift. There is no amount of money that can buy salvation. Both Rich and poor, as well as everyone else in between are unable to purchase salvation. Mark eight verse thirty-four.

Mark 8:34-38

34. And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

35. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

36. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

37. Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

38. Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

Even religious leaders can be guilty of greed. Maybe they want money, a big following, or just notoriety. These are the people who count people like a merchant might count customers in a store. Watch the words of religious leaders to see if what they say is aligned to what the Bible says, or if they are just trying to separate you from your money. Second Peter two verse one.

2 Peter 2:1-3

- 1. But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.**
- 2. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.**
- 3. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.**

In writing to the Corinthians, Paul explained that they were not to keep company with any person claiming to be of the faith who have sins inconsistent with the faith, including the sins of greed and extortion, both of which have a monetary component to them. Sometimes we focus so much on those who are not called, we do not focus on those who are called, and for those of the faith, a higher standard is expected, and the family of faith is not a place for wickedness. First Corinthians five verse nine.

1 Corinthians 5:9-13

- 9. I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators:**
- 10. Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.**
- 11. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.**
- 12. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?**
- 13. But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.**

The scribes and Pharisees were called hypocrites by Jesus as he explained their religious focus was too much on smaller matters and not enough on those larger matters of faith. Linked to their hypocrisy was sin, and Jesus added they were full of extortion and excess, both signs of greed. Matthew twenty-three verse twenty-three.

Matthew 23:23-28

23. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

24. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

25. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

26. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

27. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.

28. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

Sometimes greed is disguised as compassion. Judas Iscariot made statements about supporting the poor, but only did so not because he cared anything about the poor, but because he knew he could use the money intended for the poor on just about anything he wanted, for himself. John twelve verse one.

John 12:1-8

1. Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

2. There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

3. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

4. Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,

5. Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

6. This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

7. Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

8. For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

We know greed drives much of what we see in this world today, and there remains a foundational element for us to understand. We cannot escape the physical needs we have. We have need of food, water, clothes, and shelter. Jesus told his disciples that God knows we need all of these things and should never lose focus on the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness. Greed will definitely get in the way of that focus. Matthew six verse twenty-four.

Matthew 6:24-34

24. No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

25. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

26. Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

27. Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

28. And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

29. And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

31. Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32. For after all these things do the Gentiles seek, for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

33. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

34. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Evil is personified in the form of wicked people who do things like persecuting the poor. We are to treat the poor like all other people. Evil also shows up as boasting of the heart's desire. Instead of focusing on what we are doing and going to make happen later this year or next, we are to defer our future focus on what is according to the will of God, and yield ourselves to God's will. Evil shows up in greed, and all people, the poor and rich, and the religious and irreligious are all susceptible to greed. Instead of greedily wanting something, we need to be content with what we have knowing God will provide our needs.

Thank you for joining us today. God-willing we'll get together next time on the Sabbath. Until then, thank you for joining us today.