

The Fall

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Date: 09 February 2003

Preacher: Paul Dudley

[0 : 0 0] This is the evening service at Holy Trinity on the 9th of February 2003 The preacher is Paul Dudley His sermon is entitled The Fall and is based on Luke chapter 12 verses 13 to 21 Is that the way things are now as we look around?

I've made a little video which might be good to have a look at to help us understand this a bit better The reality is we all reject our Creator Tonight I want to look at our passage and I want to look at one particular area which our society at the moment is very good at rejecting our Creator The ruler and we reject his rule and that is in the area of money and possessions What I want to do is have a brief look at that and the way that money and possessions affects our life and the way we reject God in that area and then at the end I want to make some general points about what the Bible has to say about our rejection of God in general So if you look at your Bible passages in chapter 12 verse 13 we see there Jesus and he is with a crowd

In chapter 9 Jesus has told his disciples who he is that he is the Messiah but he has also told them that he is going to go to Jerusalem where he will be rejected where he will be killed and three days later rise again and so on his way to Jerusalem he set his face to Jerusalem that's where his future lies he gets his disciples beside him and he starts teaching them about the way that they should live In particular in chapter 12 we've been seeing the way that Jesus has been teaching them about the way they should live in the midst of persecution that they were to trust God they were to pursue his kingdom and not the ways of the world and in the midst of this teaching a certain person comes up and he asks Jesus Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me Now back in those days the rabbis would often deal with particular issues and there is this issue Here is a guy who's obviously got some trouble with one of his brothers about the inheritance and he wants a fair share of it so he comes up to Jesus and asks him to try and sort this out

Look at Jesus' comment But he said to him Friend, who set me to be a judge or an arbiter over you? And he said to them Take care Be on your guard against all kinds of greed for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions Jesus doesn't want to get involved in this little dispute Instead he tells them he talks to them about this principle of being careful of possessions that they were not to be people who store up possessions for themselves they were to be people who avoided greed Well then Jesus goes on to tell a parable The parable starts in verse 16 Then he told them a parable The land of a rich man produced abundantly and he thought to himself What should I do?

For I have no place to store my crops So you can just imagine it The land is just full All his crops Are full It's been a great year It's been a bumpy year Very different I guess to our Victorian farmers at the moment who are having a terrible time Very little crops if none at all Someone told me at our meal yesterday that we should start stocking up on some meats and things like that because the prices of meat and our vegetables will go up in light of the fact that it's been such a bad year But for this guy here in the parable It's been a great year And he looks at his barns and he goes I can't fit them in here They're not going to fit here So he says I will do this I will pull down my barns and build larger ones and there I will store my grain and my goods And I will say to my soul Soul, soul You have ample goods laid up for years Relax, eat, drink and be merry That seems to be wise advice doesn't it?

[4 : 26] You know Build bigger barns Seems to be quite sensible Seems to be a good use of resources But notice his attitude in verse 19 I'll say to my soul Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years Relax Eat Drink and be merry Look at the way that he's putting his security in possessions Well notice what God has to say about this attitude at the end of the parable Verse 20 God said to him You fool This very night your life is being demanded of you and the things you have prepared whose will they be?

Jesus points out the foolishness of putting confidence or trust in your possessions and wealth Jesus concludes right at the end of this parable with verse 21 So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God Well let me make three points about this parable that comes out from this little section here The first thing is wealth itself is not evil the possessions and the gifts that we have come from God We saw a couple of weeks ago this when Paul was speaking from Proverbs They are God's gift to us and we are to use them richly for his kingdom The point is the problem is is that the attraction to money and possessions is very dangerous When we pursue comfort and possessions we have a goal of being able to kick back withdraw from life and have no responsibility for anyone and in the process of it all neglect to pursue God what we have done is we have put a false security in money and possessions exactly what the man in the parable did

There is great temptation to do this Look around in our society It is a great temptation to pursue money and wealth and possessions to hoard them up I have a good friend and a very close family member who are very strong Christians He went on beach mission with me and gave some of the great talks at beach mission but then he started working He started earning money Just a little bit to start with but then he got a taste for it Within a few years his goal in life was to retire at 40 with 2 million dollars have a yacht and a nice house somewhere Was he a Christian anymore?

Was he pursuing God? No God was pushed out of the sidelines A close friend a close family member has done the same The lures and the temptations of the world the pleasures the pursuit of money and possessions The problem with this is the problem with this attitude of pursuing these possessions and money is that you can't take it with you when you go My sister at an early age realised this and so the day that it dawned on her that she couldn't take it with her when she went to heaven she declared to all of us that she was going to get when she died she was going to get all the possessions and throw them in the dam so no one else could have them she realised she couldn't take them with her go so she thought she'd not let anyone else have them security is fleeting I guess this truth has come home to us with September 11 with

Bali and even the bushfires recently notice in this passage the way the person is speaking and I will say to my soul notice the eyes and the my what shall I do for I have no place notice the eyes and the my how it is central place here God has been replaced instead of having God the ruler the man has decided that he is and he is in pursuit of possessions and money instead of sitting under God's rule he wants to make himself ruler he wants to put his trust trust not in a loving creator and sustainer but himself and his possessions before you dismiss this and think although I haven't got that problem at all just stop and reflect on it a moment think of the possessions that you have at the moment be it a car a computer a house

[9 : 31] I don't know think of your possessions and your money what if everything that you had when you arrived home tonight was burnt up like in the bushfires how would you react to that I imagine you'd be fairly sad and I guess it's right to feel sad but at what level do you feel sad I guess it came home to us when we were reflecting on missionaries would we be prepared to give up all our lovely furniture to go to Africa I love my furniture and we've got all this old stuff that I've been doing up and I put my blood sweat and tears into some of these bits of furniture give them up so I could become a missionary not sure well I wanted to have a quick look at just this very big problem of materialism in our world because it is a huge problem problem the sad truth that this rejecting of

God's rule of not trusting him goes right back to the very beginning it goes right back to the garden of Eden and the Bible calls this problem sin let me make three points about sin the essence of sin is seen in Genesis chapter 3 after God has created humans in his own image after placing in a garden which has great provisions tree of every kind that was good to the eye he told them not to eat of one tree the tree of knowledge of good and evil for if they did they would die well as we know the sad story the tempter comes along and he says surely you will not die and in the end they both disobeyed God and they went their own way they bought the lie and they went their own way this is what it is in essence sin rejecting God and his word rejecting what he has to say rejecting his instructions and living your own way this rebellious self self-sufficient attitude of preferring to follow your own desires and to run things your own way without

God is the essence of sin but don't think that it's just restricted to Adam and Eve or the issues of money and possessions for you see the second point that I want to make is that sin affects every person we all sin each one of us including me we are all rebels against him in lots of different ways or you might be sitting there thinking oh look I'm not a sinner like Wayne Carey or Saddam Hussein or Itham the Lat I'm not like them but we can sin in many different ways in thoughts words and actions we can fail to obey him or just take the issue of possessions and money how's your attitude to those things what about the way that you treat your friends family or neighbours how often do you get angry with them in an unrighteous way how often do you not love them the way that you should what about your motives are they pure motives but it's not just the bad things that we do it's also the good things that we fail to do each of us each of us fail to live under God's rule part of the reason this is the Bible tells us is that every part of us is affected by sin our thoughts our words our actions our motivations it affects every part of our life in reality we shake our puny little fists in the face of God and tell him we want to live our own way we tell him to get lost the trouble with this our rejecting of God it messes up not our own lives but also our society and the world so my third point is that sin is serious can you imagine a whole world of people bent on doing what suits them of not following

God's ways acting like little gods competing with one another what's the result of this misery we mess up our own lives we mess up our relationships with each other our friends wives husbands children schoolmates work we mess up our relationships between countries between nationalities we mess up our world we exploit it and destroy our planet the suffering and the injustice that we see around us go back to this basic rebellion against God we try to run life our own way but in reality we fail to rule ourselves or society or the world let me make a point for us to go away with we've seen what sin is we've seen the scope of sin and the way that can affect every part of our life we've seen the way that it makes a mess of things but it is also deceptive do not be deceived we all sin each one of us we try in our own little way to think that we are basically good we deny the sin in our lives we fail to see it we think basically

I'm a good person I'm sure I didn't murder anyone haven't committed adultery I'm basically a good person the Bible tells us that this is not the case sin and then there's the other way that we try and deceive ourselves about sin by relabelling it by renaming it oh it's just a little white lie it's just a silly thing that I've done it's not much it hasn't really hurt anyone we claim it as our freedom our rights it's one of the great catch cries of our society we're free to do whatever we want to do I can live my life the way that I want I don't have to sit under God's rule I have my rights I'll live the way that I want to do because I'm free the reality is we are not free under sin you talk to the drug addicts you think about the areas of sin sin entraps us we are not free we are slaves to our sin we cannot by ourselves break away from it do not be deceived by sin we are so blind and yet this problem is so big so serious is this problem that God sent his son into this world

[17 : 51] Jesus one who knew no sin whatsoever he became sin for us he took its punishment on a cross for us so that now even now the power of sin has been broken in our lives and when he comes again sin will be no more but more of that in weeks to come do not be deceived sin is serious while you reflect on this we are going to have a look at the way that two ways to live two ways to live presents this in the little booklet on the screen let me pray father we do pray that you help us to see the areas of our life which we try to rule ourselves father help us to acknowledge our sinfulness before you father show us those areas which we do not live in accordance with your word help us to take sin seriously in our lives amen to ourselves together thank you

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