

The 40-Day Miracle Program

Sermon Title: **GREED - Swimming Pool in the Bathroom**

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Links to audio sermon – *Windows Media Version is best, MP3 is 2nd best:*

Windows Media Version <http://www.theonlineword.com/s/4006.wma>

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Welcome to Brothers of the Word, because, Brother, you need the word.

And today I'll be continuing the series on the 40-Day Miracle Program, located at 40day.com on the internet. This is a spiritual transformation program, and these 40 days in this program attack the seven deadly sins as identified by the early church. Today, I am going to be dealing with the sixth of these seven sins, which is greed. And even as a demonstration today, I wore a timepiece that would demonstrate my subject.

And many of us wear watches to tell time, and all are watches pretty much tell time the same way. You got some analogue, some digital. But when talking about greed, even though it only takes one watch to really know what time it is, no matter; it is instead of one watch, I got three watches on me. And even though there are three kinds of watches, there's no real purpose served. And many of us will think that, you know, I'm going to buy a second watch, and then I will be fulfilled. We don't get fulfilled. We'll say I'll buy a third watch, and then I'll be fulfilled. Still no more fulfillment past the first one. Then some of us, when we get real greedy, we'll go on to a fourth watch, saying, "Then I'll be fulfilled." That doesn't do it. We keep going, five and six, all the way, thinking that it's going to give us fulfillment the more we buy, the more possessions we have. You just better be glad. I tried to get some watches on my ankle; they just wouldn't fit. I tell you, there's no limit to the material world, and how far will it take you?

In the Bible in the book of Luke, the NIV Version, Chapter 12, beginning at Verse 13 -- all of you are familiar with this -- it reads, "Someone in the crowd said to Him, 'Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me'. Jesus replied, 'Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?' Then he said to them, 'Watch out. Be on your guard against all kinds of greed. A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.'" And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to myself, 'You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.'" But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night, your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself, but is not rich toward God."

And in today's time, the rich don't really build bigger barns most of the time; they build bigger houses. I searched on the internet to see what kind of large houses would demonstrate my subject best tonight. And I speak to you today from the subject of "Swimming Pool in the Bathroom" ... "Swimming Pool in the Bathroom".

Turn to your neighbor and ask them, "Do you have a swimming pool in your bathroom?"

Well, I'm here to tell you, there are some people out there that have swimming pools in the bathroom. And even though that sounds excessive, in our lives, we have some greed issues that are just as excessive that may not be obvious to the eye.

The book of Acts, Chapter 5, Verse 1, says, "But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession and kept back [part] of the price, his wife also being privy [to it], and brought a certain part, and laid [it] at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, 'Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back [part] of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou has not allowed unto men, but unto God.' And Ananias hearing these words fell down and gave up the ghost" -- that means he died -- "and great fear came on all them that heard these things. And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried [him] out, and buried [him]."

The story goes on to talk about his wife, Sapphira, how she came in, and Peter asked her the same question: "Did you pay this amount for the land?" She agreed with her husband, and then she dropped dead. And he said, "Didn't you just see the feet of them that just left here carrying your husband? They are on their way to get you."

And I searched the Scriptures, and I had a revelation: These two stories that I just read were the only two places in the New Testament that God passed instant judgment and killed the people. Now, He did a lot in the Old Testament; but in the New Testament, from what I could find, these were the only two stories that sins were committed and God instantly struck judgment on them. And both of these dealt with mammon and material possessions and greed. What time is it, somebody?

Jesus was betrayed by his own disciple, Judas, over 30 pieces of silver. And you may say, "Well, I don't have to worry about money and greed, because I don't have much money." But, listen to what Brother Timothy said that you should be content with and see if it applies to you; 1 Timothy 6, beginning at Verse 6, says, "But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment" -- that's clothes -- "let us be therewith content." How many of you got more than that today? "But they that will be rich fall into temptation in a snare. And then the many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition, for the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted it after, they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." Again, the Bible talks about the love of money and greed, how it is the root of all evil. It's a very serious thing.

The only thing God struck with immediate reaction in the New Testament, the only thing that he described as the root of all evil.

In this society, big corporations are getting into trouble with the Government today because of greed, reporting erroneous figures on their books. Drugs could be stopped in this country if it were not for the greed factor. Greed has even affected the churches and the preachers. It has caused the motivation for the offering to be greater than the excitement for souls that are saved. It causes ministers to measure revival success in dollars versus in souls saved. And many ministers today, I've heard them in meetings. They will say that the church is a business. The problem with this is, the goal of any business is to make a monetary profit; but the goal of ministry was never designed as a goal to make monetary profit.

And in your lives, you must know when enough is enough and how much is enough. Just take a minute to meditate within yourselves right now and ask yourself, "How much money would be enough for me?" Think about that for a moment. Then ask yourself right now, "What kind of car could I drive that would be enough for me, where I wouldn't want any more?" Ask yourself right now, "How many square feet of house would be enough where I would desire no bigger house?" And as you ponder on those questions, I can tell you right now that no matter what figures and things you come up with, after you get to the highest level, within six months, most of you would want more. I've seen it time and time again.

Rockefeller, a billionaire, when they asked him, "How much, Mr. Rockefeller, is enough?" he was honest and he said, "Just one more dollar." Now, it didn't matter whether he had \$10 billion, \$20 billion. If he had \$30 billion, "enough" would be \$30,000,000,001. And it illustrated so clearly the spirit of greed, where there's never a point when enough is enough.

We commonly describe sin as what is done in the closet. But what's actually in your closet can also show you what's in your heart. How many of you when you moved into whatever residence you're in, you looked around this residence and scoped it out, and you went and looked at the master bedroom, looked at your closet and said, "These are some nice closets. This will be enough room for my clothes and my shoes here. I'll finally get a closet that's big enough for me." And let me see the hands of those that are in the audience where you have some closet space left right now at home, and if your clothes are not just touching each other and you got excess closet, let me just see the hands right now. I think I saw one hand shoot up real quick and go back down.

Well, that tells you something, how blessed we are and how much we actually have, even when we don't think we have much. We don't even have room enough to house all of the clothes and the shoes that we have. Greed is the root of a lot of other sins, even though most of the time it's related to money. Gluttony is really a greed of

food. Alcoholism is a greed of alcohol. Envy and jealousy look at what someone else has and get greedy. Sloth is a greed for sleep and relaxation. Promiscuity is a greed for sex. Pride is a greed of ego. Impatience is a greed for speed. Men, I'm here to tell you today that the greed for women will get you in trouble. And if you don't believe it, ask Brother Solomon in the Bible.

And when I was in elementary school, the kids that were greedy at lunchtime, for those of you that may have had this in your school if you can remember back far enough, they would come around to the other kids' lunch table, and they would see something on their plate that they wanted, even though they had the same lunch. They would stick their finger or hand on it and say, "Are you gonna eat that? Do you want that?" And some of the kids, they just said, "That's nasty now. Somebody touched it." They would say, "Man, just go on and take it. I don't want it now."

Another group of kids, what they would do if somebody touched it and asked them what they wanted it, they would bend down and lick it, "No, you can have it." But even in elementary school in the lunchtime, greed was forming, even in the kids.

You may ask the question of how do I combat greed? Well, that is what I came here today to tell you. And when I spoke on anger, I gave ten keys. Well, for greed, I'm only giving one key, and that one key is giving. The opposite of greed is generosity; and if you want to eliminate something, just begin to do the opposite more, and you'll find that your nature will begin to change. So whatever it is in your life that you want to change, just begin to do the opposite of the fruit of that thing, and you'll begin to see the nature for that thing diminish.

The part of the daily proclamation that is on 40day.com that deals with greed says, "I pledge that I will give someone something material each day. The size does not matter. Whether it is a dollar or a doughnut or buying someone's lunch, I must give someone other than my own children something each day. At least every other day, it must be someone outside of my family. If I am a member of a church during this period, I will give to my church as directed by my church. Concentrating on giving helps me to control greed and realize my own blessings."

And with that proclamation, if you don't have a church home, that's no excuse. Some of you may think that you're off the hook, because you don't have a church home; but you can go and give at VirtualChurch.com and help support the online ministry there, so there's no excuse for finding someone to give to.

And on that 40-day program with that commandment to give and to help somebody materially each day, it causes a shift in your mindset that I find. It causes you from cringing on giving to actually being excited and looking for people to help. When you are required to help somebody outside of your family every day, then you actually become glad when somebody asks you for some help.

And normally when a lot of us walk down the street, we may see somebody on one side of the street that may look homeless. A lot of times we will hold off and say, "I don't want to go over there, because they might ask me for something." Some people even move to the other side of the street to try to avoid them. But when you're on this 40-Day Program, it changes and transforms your spirit, and you'll find yourself gravitating, actually, to them and asking how they're doing and what they need. And it's the difference of a shift in your spirit.

And even the other day, I was at the grocery store in the parking lot with my wife. I parked a good ways from the store, and my wife was telling me to drive down closer. She didn't know what I was doing; but I got out, and I wanted to walk the distance because I saw a man who looked like he needed some help, and because I was on this 40-Day Program, it had changed my spirit and I was out to see who I could help. And I took the long way to walk past this man, and I looked him in the eyes and asked him how was he doing and began to speak to him. He said, "Minister, do you have any change that I could have?" And I could tell by looking at this man he didn't have a television to know that I was a minister, he had never seen me before; but because I looked the man in the eyes and because I greeted the man with such love, he could tell that I was a minister. And even if I had not been an ordained reverend, I still would have been classified as a Minister, because I was ministering unto this man. I ministered through him through kindness and it just did something to him. It brightened his whole day, and he said, "Thank you so much, Minister."

We are doing 40 days, and a lot of the people will say, "Well, I can go back to not giving after the 40 days." But Jesus commanded us to do this all of the time. We're supposed to be givers all of the time. We're supposed to be looking for people in need. We're supposed to be a blessing unto the world. We're supposed to be the salt of the earth. People are supposed to look at us and know that we're Christian, representing Christ, just by the way that we carry ourselves.

I became so friendly with strangers on this programs that they just thought I wanted some money from them; they just weren't used to it. One fellow, he looked like he was in need, and I just came up and just started talking to him, "How are you doing?" I could look at him, and he started to cringe himself. He wanted to say, "Listen, Brother, I ain't got but a little change. I need this to get me something to eat." I said, "No, Brother, I don't want your money; I'm just trying to speak to you." I tell you, it just totally flipped the whole script. People just think you want something from them when you are just trying to be nice to them.

All of you ought to just try that. Just try being nice, and don't wait for them to greet you. Go up and begin talking with them, and see how it changes their very countenance.

Now let me tell you a little bit briefly about the benefit of giving, because people are concerned with benefits. They go to jobs and ask, "What's the benefit packet?" They want to know what the pay is. They want to know what's going to be provided with this job.

The NIV Version, Matthew, Chapter 19, Verse 27 reads, "Peter answered him, 'We have left everything to follow You. What, then, will there be for us?' Jesus said to them, 'I tell you the truth, that the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits down on His glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel; and every one who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.'" What time is it?

That's a hundredfold guaranteed for everything his disciples gave for Christ's sake. And people know I'm into investing, and they will often ask me, "What do you recommend that I put my money into right now, what stock or mutual fund or what other investment?" Well, I'm here to give you the best investment that I know about today. I have invested in stocks, mutual funds, options, high-yield interest programs, foreclosures, and I've studied tax liens, bonds, real estate. There is no investment that I know of that will yield the kinds of returns Jesus promised by giving.

If you invested your money in the stock market for 30 years and you received 10% a year compounding interest on that money for 30 years -- few people get 10% a year over 30 years -- and at the end of those 30 years, you'd have 17-fold whatever you put in. Jesus promised you a hundredfold, and that 17-fold is if you never touch that money for 30 years, compounded.

The other problem with that is that after the 30 years and the 17-fold, most of your 30 years will now be too old to enjoy it when you do get it. And then after you do get it and it's time for you to go on to the next world, you're going to have to leave every penny of that 17-fold here on this Earth. And what it boils down to is, Jesus was the best financial planner in all of history. And I've read about 30 financial books, and no formula in any of the books will produce the kind of returns that Jesus talked about. Not only does it produce a greater return, it produces a return that will last forever.

Giving is not always in money, but it always requires giving up something, whether it is time, energy, possessions or just sharing something you own. In all of the financial books that I've read, they talk about the time-value of money and the three things that determine the amount of money you'll have in the future is the amount that's invested, the interest rate and the length of time that is in there.

With this formula that Jesus gave, the interest rate is a hundredfold, and the longer the time, the more money at the end. The date that you enter Heaven will be longer than the last day that you spend on Earth. So Jesus' plan has the highest interest rate combined with the longest time span.

As I said earlier, Jesus was the greatest financial adviser that I have ever seen. And our vision is like that of children: the more immature you are, the shorter distance you can see into the future. If I ask all of my kids, "Would you rather have this bag of candy right now, or would you rather own the whole candy store in 20 years from now?" they'd all choose the bag of candy now. If I asked them, "Would you rather get a season's pass to Six Flags and we go once a week over the summer, or would you rather own Six Flags in 20 years?" they all choose the season's pass. If I ask them, "Would you rather have an Xbox right now with all of the games in the store, or would you rather own Microsoft in 20 years?" even though it's billions of dollars, they'd say, "Give me the Xbox and the games right now." That's childish vision; they can't see the future.

And God asked us for just a measly 10%. Yes, we'd rather keep the 10% versus having the favor of God over our finances by being in obedience. My time is up, but I'm not finished. I have some more key things that you need to hear about greed. So be sure to go to 40day.com, and listen to this message, "Swimming Pool in the Bathroom," and make sure you get on this program because, I tell you, your spirit will never be the same.

Everybody is looking for a blessing, but few want to become a blessing. Jesus said that it's more blessed to give than it is to receive. This may sound deep at first, but just think back on the last few people that have asked you for something. Now ask yourself, which situation would you rather have been in: the person asking or the person on the giving end? That simplifies that whole statement.

I'll tell you, your miracle awaits you at 40day.com. Thank you for joining Brothers of the Word, because, Brother, you need the Word.

My mother is a prime example of the giving and generous spirit. I don't think she has a greedy bone in her body. She has clothed and fed and helped people and underprivileged kids throughout the years, and people have always talked about seeing angels here on Earth through supernatural means; but I'll tell you, if you've seen my mother, you've seen an angel here on Earth.

Angels are always painted with halos over their heads. One time my mother, a photographer took a picture with her and some other people at a table, and on the picture my mother had a glow of light that was around her head that developed on this picture, and none of the other people at the table had this glow around them. So I tell you, God wants us to be angels here on Earth. Millions of people in the world,

you are the only angel that they'll ever see. They'll never see God on this Earth. You are the only God and representative of Christ that they'll ever see is through his Christians and the pastor.

One day, we were looking at an account online for one of the ministries, and there was an error there. It said instead of a few thousand dollars that the balance on this account was \$55 trillion. He checked it and ran a report, and it kept saying the same thing: \$55 trillion. He told me, "I logged in and looked at it every which way, and it said the same thing: \$55 trillion." He prayed about it and asked about the significance of it, and God told him that that figure is accurate: "That is the balance in your heavenly bank account."

And I tell you, there is no investment that could have yielded that type of return here on this Earth. The more we understand, the more we can see why Jesus told you to store up treasures in Heaven instead of on Earth, where the cankerworm can get to it and the moth can eat the \$55 trillion. I tell you, you're looking for a good investment today, I'll tell you to give. God bless you.