

TRAPS:

The TRAP of More Stuff

Luke 12:13-21

Three Major Symptoms of Affluenza

- **The Debt Burden:** Affluenza convinces us to borrow against our future to fund a lifestyle we cannot afford in the present. Americans are currently carrying over \$1.13 *trillion* in credit card debt.
- **The Storage Crisis:** The U.S. has over 50,000 self-storage facilities—more than all the McDonald's, Starbucks and Subways combined. We have to rent out millions of square feet just to hold the excess "stuff" we bought trying to satisfy an internal craving.
- **The Happiness Paradox:** Clinical studies on affluenza consistently show that individuals with highly materialistic values report significantly lower life satisfaction, a lack of motivation, profound isolation and higher rates of depression.

1. **THE TRAP OF MISPLACED IDENTITY:** Anytime we allow material possessions and the symbols of success to define who we are, our identity is misplaced (vv. 12-13).

Beware and Be Aware

- **Beware of Ill-Motivation** – Watch your motivation! The *TRAP* of materialism often masquerades as a desire for “justice” or “financial security,” when the root is actually greed (vv. 13-21).
- **Be Aware of the True Definition of Life** – Greed turns our possessions into a substitute for God, making it a form of idolatry. Our lives are most pleasing to God only when we allow our lives to be defined, first and foremost, by our relationship with God (vv. 13-15).

2. **THE TRAP OF BEING “SELF-MADE”:** Never forget, God is the Creator. We are God's creation. We did not make ourselves and ALL that we are is because of God (vv. 16-20).

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Only Fools Do That!

- ▶ **Only Fools Manage Their Lives Independent of God** – It is foolish to think so highly of yourself that you reject the knowledge of God and the precepts of God as being the basis for a truly prosperous life (vv. 16-20).
- ▶ **Only Fools Believe in the Myth of Being Self-Made** – It is foolish to become so impressed with yourself that you believe your blessings come from you. That is possessing a fake ID (vv. 16-20).

3. **THE TRAP OF TEMPORARY:** Affluenza is a cultural virus that causes us to become overly fixated on things that are temporary—money, cars, homes and clothes. Yet, the cure is simple: shift your focus from things that are temporal to that which is eternal (vv. 18-20).

The Cure for Affluenza

- √ **Don't Think Temporary** – The *TRAP* of Temporary will only result in you dedicating your entire life to building a personal empire that you cannot keep and cannot keep you (vv. 18-19).
- √ **Think Eternity** – The point of Jesus' interaction is that soul satisfaction comes when we stop focusing on accumulating earthly, temporary treasures. Instead, focus on leveraging the resources entrusted to us for God's Kingdom (vv. 18-20).

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