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A Spiritual Lesson In Toon Language 45a

By God And Richie Heinlein

(In God I Trust And Write)

Series: The Muppet Show, The Simpsons

Episodes: # 106 (Jim Nabors), Sex And Violence—The Muppet Show and Springfield (Or, How I Learned To Stop Worrying And Love Legalized Gambling)—The Simpsons

Topic: The Seven Deadly Sins I: Avarice

Introduction:

We are starting a lesson series on “The Seven Deadly Sins”. This is a Catholic doctrine (In my opinion somewhat flawed) that these seven sins are the only kinds of sins that are punishable by Hell forever. Every other sin, (the way I understand according to them) will only send you to purgatory for a set amount of time. Now in the Catholic’s defense, I must say that these seven are arguably the most addictive kinds of sins and may have a higher probability of causing a soul being lost (of course because sincere repentance isn’t given in Jesus’ name). This is not to say that our Catholic brothers are not saved (we are talking about believers here too) but this is a fairly interesting topic (in a good way) nonetheless and I felt led to make a lesson set out of this topic and will be very in depth.

Please Note: Thanks to my wife Bonnie for helping with the scripture passages we are using.

Scriptures used for “Avarice” include: Proverbs 11: 28, Ecclesiastes 5: 10, Matthew 6: 19-24; Matthew 18: 8-9, Mark 10: 17-31, Luke 12: 13-21, 1 Timothy 6: 6-10

I) Opening Prayer

II) We are opening a special series of lessons involving sinful actions (The Seven Deadlies mentioned in the intro). Today we are talking about “Avarice”. This is typically known as “Greed”.

What is avarice or greed? Basically, avarice is an unhealthy and insatiable want in excess of something; it is very similar to another one of these sins in question--Gluttony. This can mean anything from power or wealth to unbridled selfishness of any type. A person that would be this way will never get enough of the thing he/she is addicted to. This doesn't include habits that are addictive that we want to get rid of necessarily, but things that are craved without remorse that we are looking at more.

I am going to show something different in this lesson than usual. The Muppet Show is a variety show that originally aired in the latter 1970's to the early 1980's and they had some very intricate and bizarre comedy sketches. One of these was in the original pilot of the series. We are going to discuss some of the scenes of this pilot called **Sex And Violence**. In this original episode they have a "Seven Deadly Sins Pageant". We are going to discuss the scenes in this sketch and their Biblical roots.

III) Cartoon Clips: **The Muppet Show: Sex And Violence; Jim Nabors**

Before we get to the clips, here is a picture of our sin of study (Avarice) from **The Muppet Show: Sex And Violence**



Cartoon Links:

http://toonspirit.net/lessons_and_studies/145/Avarice1.webm

http://toonspirit.net/lessons_and_studies/145/Avarice2.webm

From The Muppet Show: Jim Nabors

http://toonspirit.net/lessons_and_studies/145/Avarice3.webm

IV) What do you see in these clips?

We can see in the first part that Sam the Eagle is suspicious of the pageant idea. Why? What do you think about Dr. Teeth's attitude?

When "Avarice" comes he is obviously addicted to money and can't get enough.

The Bible talks against greed very strongly. I am using a scripture that I have used in the past, but I am spinning it much differently.

The Bible States In **Proverbs 11: 28,**
Ecclesiastes 5: 10, Matthew 6: 19-24

Prov 11: 28 Those who trust in their riches will fall, but the righteous will thrive like a green leaf.

Ecc 5: 10 Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income. This too is meaningless.

Mt 6:19 “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

Mt 6:20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.

Mt 6:21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Mt 6:22 “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light.

Mt 6:23 But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

Mt 6:24 “No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

God wants us to be free of such a trap. This is harder to do than a lot of people realize.

Addictions of this sort and the addictions like the rest of the sin issues in this series are everywhere and are hard to dodge.

Surprisingly, we can learn a positive lesson from Homer from “The Simpsons”.

V) Cartoon Clip: **Springfield (Or, How I Learned To Stop Worrying And Love Legalized Gambling)**

Cartoon Link:

http://toonspirit.net/lessons_and_studies/145/Avrice4.webm

VI) What do you see in this clip? Homer is actually doing a very good job at helping Marge with an addiction like this. He put his foot down and took control of this. This addiction could have torn the family apart, but instead they have another chance to be together instead of neglect and being distant.

The Bible States **In Matthew 18: 8-9:**

Mt 18:8 If your hand or your foot causes you to sin cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire.

Mt 18:9 And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.

And now, more from our Lord Jesus. The Bible States In Luke 12: 13-21, Mark 10: 17-31

13 Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”

14 Jesus replied, “Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?”

15 Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”

16 And he told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest.

17 He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’

18 “Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain.

19 And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."

20 "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?'

21 "This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God."

Mark 10: 17-31

17 As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

18 "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone.

19 You know the commandments: ‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.’”

20 “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.”

21 Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

22 At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.

23 Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!”

24 The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God!

25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

26 The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, “Who then can be saved?”

27 Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.”

28 Then Peter spoke up, “We have left everything to follow you!”

29 “Truly I tell you,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel

30 will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life.

31 But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

This is tough stuff coming from our Lord Jesus, but this is necessary because if we are so distracted by a problem like avarice we won't do much for the Kingdom of God and we will be very selfish on average neglecting important things.

Paul, an apostle of Jesus, also chimed in with these words in 1 Timothy 6: 6-10

6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.

7 For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.

8 But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.

9 Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.

10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

VII) What have we learned and how will we apply it to our lives?

We most importantly need to not be distracted by things that don't matter as much and be attentive to God and His ways. This means being unselfish with time and our resources which does include our money sometimes. This means that we need to discern the way of truth and be mindful of others' needs and sometimes their wants as well. Once we learn this, we will be more of what God wants us to be and less like "Avarice" and Dr. Teeth.

VIII) Closing Prayer