

Pastor Dolapo Lawal



COVETOUSNESS

Transcribed and Published by LivingSermons.com

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Published By: LivingSermons.com

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Title: Covetousness

Author: Pastor Dolapo Lawal

Publisher: Livingsermons.com

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First Edition — 2026

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Foreword

Covetousness is not loud like many sins. It does not always announce itself with obvious rebellion. It often wears the clothing of ambition, motivation, comparison, even “holy” desire. But beneath it, something deeper is happening in the heart of man — a turning, a shifting, a quiet dissatisfaction with what God has placed in one’s hands.

This manuscript carries a burden that is not common in today’s pulpit conversations. It does not flatter desire. It does not entertain hunger for more. It exposes the inner movement of the heart where man begins to reach for what was never assigned, and slowly loses peace with what already is.

What makes this teaching weighty is not only its clarity, but its honesty. It refuses to separate theology from daily life. It touches the quiet wars inside comparison, the hidden discomfort when others rise, the subtle dissatisfaction that grows even in answered prayers. It brings light to places many believers have learned to ignore.

The preacher does not merely define covetousness as desire gone wrong. He traces it to its roots — from the fall of Lucifer, to the garden, to the commandments, to the thoughts that shape actions. And in doing so, he reveals something sobering: that what we often dismiss as “normal desire” may in fact be spiritual displacement.

Yet, this is not a message of condemnation. There is a tone of rescue throughout. A call to return. A call to learn contentment. A call to see again. Because at the heart of it, the issue is not only what a man wants, but what a man cannot see in God.

This is why this manuscript matters.

It is not just about money. It is not just about things. It is about sight. It is about alignment. It is about the inner order of worship that keeps the heart from quietly building another god beside the Lord.

As you read, do not rush. Let it speak slowly. Let it confront gently. Let it correct deeply. Because sometimes, the most dangerous captivity is not without chains, but within desires that have gone unexamined.

May this message bring sobriety where there has been comparison, and peace where there has been striving.

—Wisdom Epsi, Chief Editor

Livingsermons.com

A Spirit-Led Christian Publishing Ministry

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Publisher's Note

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The message you are about to read was originally ministered in a live congregational setting. As such, it carries the weight, urgency, and atmosphere of that sacred gathering. Minor grammatical and structural adjustments have been made solely to enhance readability, without altering the substance, intent, or power of the original delivery.

The live sermon from which this message was transcribed can be accessed here: [Live Video](#).

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It is our prayer that as you read, the same grace, conviction, clarity, and impartation present in the live service will minister to you afresh.

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A Spirit-led Publishing Stewardship

Main Message

Begins Here:

Introduction

We're starting a new series this month, and it is called *The Believer and Gold*. The idea is to discuss the believer's disposition towards money.

When I teach about money, I do not teach about money from the perspective of "go and get money." I teach about money to check your heart and make sure you are not chasing an idol, because God will not bless you with an idol. Especially if He is interested in your life, He will fight your idol.

So, what you call delay as the devil might just be God resisting your pride.

The difference between you and wealth is one idea, and that thing has to come to you.

How God blesses is light.

Seeing What God Has Prepared

Jeremiah 17:5

"Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD." — Jeremiah 17:5 (KJV)

God said cursed is that man. Now look at the functionality of that curse:

"For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh..." — Jeremiah 17:6 (KJV)

God's blessing is in sight.

God says, *"I will bring good to justify that I am good,"* but the man will not see it.

Oral Roberts said, *"Every day a miracle passes by."* The problem is that we cannot see.

That is why Paul prayed that prayer:

“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened...” — Ephesians 1:18
(KJV)

That is what happened in Genesis 21 with Hagar and her son. When the boy cried, the Bible says:

“And God heard the voice of the lad...” — Genesis 21:17 (KJV)

What happened next?

Then God opened her eyes to see a well. The well was there, but she could not see it. Are you getting what I’m saying?

And if you do not see the ram coming, you will kill your Isaac. You now start praying and fasting: “Lord, let my Isaac multiply.”

But is it not Jesus that multiplied five loaves and two fishes? If that bread is in your hand, you eat it and die. You put it in the hands of Jesus, it multiplies, and twelve baskets remain.

Are you understanding what we are saying here?

Your hand only kills things. His hand gives life.

So, that blessing, that thing He wants to give you, is light and sight.

It does not cost God anything to lift a man.

And if you are here in Zoe Household, at least you can have an idea with my life. In 2024, we only knew each other.

Amen.

Covetousness

We want to start this series with a conversation on covetousness.

I do not want to freestyle this message. I want to make sure I lay precept upon precept. This is a very serious thing.

As I studied this subject, I was shocked that I had never preached about it before.

The Hebrew word most commonly translated as “covet” is *chamad* — meaning *to desire, to long for, or to take pleasure in something that belongs to another*.

In simple terms, coveting is seeking to own what belongs to another person.

It is as simple as that.

This is not admiration. It is evil in itself.

It is a desire to possess a specific house, a specific wife, a specific husband, or a specific car that belongs to someone else.

That is the distinction between covetousness and greed.

Greed says:

“I want more.”

Covetousness says:

“I want this one.”

So, even if I have one hundred billion houses, if I do not have *this particular one*, there is still leanness in my soul.

In the New Testament, there are two words that describe covetousness. One speaks of an intense inward craving or longing directed towards what is not yours.

Covetousness is therefore a disordered desire of the heart — specifically when the craving for something that belongs to someone else, or something God has not assigned to you, consumes you.

A Disorder of the Heart

This thing we are talking about is first a thought.

It is not primarily an action.

It is a posture of the inner man — a discontentment with what God has given you, combined with an obsessive fixation on what He has given someone else.

That is covetousness.

How Covetousness Sounds Practically

Let me show you how it sounds in real life.

- “Why does he have that and I don’t? I work just as hard.”
- “If I had his connections, I would be further than him by now.”
- “They are not even using it properly.”
- “God has been blessing everyone else. When is it going to be my turn?”
- “I have been faithful longer than them. Why are they ahead of me?”
- “I will be happy once I get the job.”
- “I will be happy once I get the car.”

That is covetousness.

Something is wrong.

Somebody rises quickly and immediately you say:

“Nobody rises that fast without cutting corners.”

Somebody is poor today and rich in two weeks, and you conclude:

“It is ritual.”

Go and do your own then.

Is that how easy it is?

You stand before a wardrobe full of clothes and say: “I don’t have what to wear.”

Why?

Because you saw something on social media, or you are comparing yourself with where you are going.

“My clothes are not good enough. They will look better than me.”

Then you put pressure on yourself and start buying what you cannot afford.

A lot of people do not know that just because money is in your account does not mean you can afford it.

Are you hearing what I’m saying?

Covetousness hides behind ambition, faith, language, and comparison dressed as discernment.

The sign is that your focus is always on what someone else has.

Why Understanding This Sin Is Important

It Is Not Spoken About Enough

I have been pastoring actively for ten years, apart from campus ministry.

Nobody has ever met me and said:

“Pastor, I am struggling with covetousness and greed.”

As I prepared this sermon, I realised something: This sin has become so normalised that people no longer recognise it.

I have counselled people battling bitterness.

I have seen bitterness become murder.

But I have never heard someone say:

“Pastor, I want my friend’s girlfriend.”

Or:

“Pastor, I am struggling with greed.”

Covetousness is one of the most socially acceptable sins in the modern world, and in many cases it is actively celebrated.

Seeds of Covetousness

Parents aid covetousness when they say:

- “Is that not your mate?”
- “Why can’t you be like your brother?”
- “Why can’t you date that guy instead?”
- “Those making it, do they have two heads?”

Those are seeds of covetousness.

This generation lives in envy disguised as goals. Everybody suddenly wants to become an influencer because they want the life they are seeing.

This thing is demonic. There is something called a lying spirit. And if you study the Bible, you will notice that lying spirits often come with confirmation.

One prophet prophesies a lie and other prophets confirm it. Only Micaiah spoke truth.

So, just because there is confirmation does not mean it is God.

Something can be a lie and still be aided spiritually. So you can be operating in envy and still call it: “My goal.”

Ask yourself: *“If nobody had it, would you still want it?”*

If everybody around you was unmarried, would you still desire marriage?

Some people do not even have a mental picture of marriage. What they are thinking about is a wedding: *“One day they will celebrate me.”* You forget there is work inside marriage.

You are now tied to this woman. No coming out. Right now, you can do whatever you want. A time is coming when you must consider another person in every decision.

Be careful what you pray for. If you want something only because of how it looks on another person, it may not be desire — it may be covetousness.

When Desire Becomes Obsession

Your friend buys a car and suddenly you feel an overwhelming urge to buy one too.

Every day you are checking prices online.

“How much are they selling it now?”

That thing begins to consume your life.

You cannot give.

You cannot help people.

You cannot breathe freely.

Meanwhile, you have eight million naira in your account, but the car costs ten million.

So, you have money, but you are broke.

Do you understand?

Because that money has not yet reached your obsession.

This is why some people give money in church just to gain attention or favour, while neglecting their responsibilities at home.

A selfish person can give if giving brings recognition.

They crave status.

They crave visibility.

They crave approval.

The Poverty of Discontentment

You are scrolling through social media silently wishing your life looked like someone else's.

If you are looking at an unbeliever's life and wishing it was yours, then you have not understood the Gospel.

Paul said:

"As poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." — 2 Corinthians 6:10 (KJV)

A man once entered a room full of billionaires. He was the only millionaire there, and someone whispered to him: *"You are the poorest person here."*

He replied:

"No, I am the richest."

Why?

"Because I have enough."

Look at all of them.

Do they look like they have enough?

You are not rich until you are content.

A man with ten million dollars can still be broke if he believes he needs one hundred billion to feel secure.

Meanwhile, another man can have one million and sleep peacefully.

What can make a widow drop her last mite into the offering? Detachment from need.

Jesus looked at that widow and said she gave more than everyone else because she was free from the grip of lack.

Imagine living like that.

You see something beautiful on another person and you are genuinely happy for them.

Grace Differs

In Romans 12:4–8: Paul explains that grace differs from person to person.

Some are graced for prophecy.

Some for teaching.

Some for exhortation.

Then he says:

“He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity...” — Romans 12:8 (KJV)

Giving itself is a grace.

Which means there is an election of grace concerning wealth.

Just as God can ordain someone to be a prophet from the womb, God can ordain someone for wealth.

That is why there are foolish rich people.

Some people were simply positioned correctly.

Some relationships opened doors they did not labour for.

It is not always about hard work.

So, you cannot compare yourself only by effort.

Grace matters.

Some people are operating in environments that trained their minds differently.

Wealth is also an environment.

Do not be unnecessarily hard on yourself.

You are doing better than you think.

The First Sin Was Covetousness

Do not become like Eve.

She had everything, but the one thing she was not supposed to touch became her obsession.

That is covetousness.

The first sin in the Bible is linked to covetousness.

“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise...” — Genesis 3:6 (KJV)

Notice: She had every other tree.

But she wanted the one thing that was forbidden.

Covetousness is belittling everything God has given you because of one thing you do not have.

That was the essence of the fall.

And from that one sin came every other thing.

When you look at Isaiah 14:12–14, this is Lucifer speaking:

“I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God... I will be like the most High.” — Isaiah 14:13–14 (KJV)

So, there is a case to be made that Lucifer’s fall was the first act of covetousness in all created existence.

The first person that fell was Lucifer, and the sin he committed was covetousness.

And we do not teach about this.

This is what brought us into all this mess.

Covetousness is therefore not a modern problem.

It is the oldest sin in the universe.

Satan said: “This is what made me fall. This is what I will present to man.”

So, when you are being covetous, there is a demonic undertone to it.

You are behaving like the devil.

Are you getting what I’m saying?

Covetousness and the Ten Commandments

Covetousness is one of the Ten Commandments — Exodus 20:17.

If we had time, I would show you that most of the laws in the Old Testament deal with behaviour and actions.

But covetousness deals with thoughts.

It is internal.

And Jesus told us in Mark 7 that what defiles a man is what comes from within.

So, this is the mother of sin.

That was what made Cain kill Abel.

Cain coveted the acceptance that Abel received.

Trace almost every sin carefully and you will often find covetousness at the root.

If you are covetous and pushed to the wall, you may become capable of things you once thought impossible.

People overestimate themselves all the time.

“I can never do that.”

Really?

I was once speaking with a friend in Houston. He said: “There are things I can never do for money.”

I let him speak.

Later, I pointed to a dirty trash bin and said: “I dare you to jump inside.”

He refused.

I increased the amount: "I'll give you one hundred dollars."

Still no.

Then: "I'll give you five hundred dollars."

Immediately he said: "Show me."

I laughed and said: "So, you have a price."

The truth is that many people do not know what they are capable of until pressure comes.

You watch the news and hear about a woman stealing food for her children and you say: "That can never be me."

Until you have three hungry children.

Learning Contentment

Paul said:

“...for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.” —
Philippians 4:11 (KJV)

Contentment is learned.

It is not automatic.

It is a trained response of the soul.

You learn to pause and say: “Something is wrong with my heart here.”

This thing can become so dangerous.

You wanted another job, but then your colleague gets promoted above you.

Suddenly, you no longer want to leave the office.

Now what you want is the position.

That is not vision.

That is not ambition.

That is covetousness.

The Root Behind Many Sins

Commandments against murder, adultery, stealing, and false witness all flow from covetousness.

Paul even calls covetousness idolatry.

“...evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.” — Colossians 3:5
(KJV)

Covetousness is another god.

That is how serious this thing is.

“For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater...” — Ephesians 5:5 (KJV)

Paul’s theology is clear:

A covetous man is an idolater.

So when God says: *“You shall have no other gods before me,”* covetousness breaks that commandment.

You move into a new house, kneel down, and thank God for it.

Then you visit your colleague’s house and suddenly your own house no longer looks beautiful to you.

Before long, there will always be a better house.

Then another better one.

So, when do you stop?

The Illusion of Comparison

Many people relocate because of pictures.

Covetousness.

How many people do you know in the UK who are billionaires?

People relocate there mostly to survive, not necessarily to become wealthy.

Be wise.

Some people sold properties here just to rent apartments abroad.

Now they cannot come back because shame will not allow them.

Meanwhile, many of the billionaires I have met are here.

Nigeria may be difficult, but it is also a land of opportunity.

Life bends towards people who carry light.

That thing God gives is called light.

As you stay with God, He begins to position you, connect you, and direct you.

A man's gift makes room for him.

Practical Ways to Deal with Covetousness

1. Spell It Out in Prayer

Be honest before God.

Do not speak vaguely.

Say: “Lord, I am covetous.”

Name it specifically.

“Lord, I repent of coveting marriage.”

“Lord, I repent of coveting wealth.”

“Lord, I repent of comparing myself.”

Unnamed sin stays hidden.

Named sin can be dealt with.

That was what God tried to do with Cain.

“Sin lieth at the door...” — Genesis 4:7 (KJV)

If Cain had responded rightly, the story may have been different.

Envy became bitterness.

Bitterness became murder.

You must stop it before it grows.

2. Replace Coveting with Thanksgiving

When you see someone blessed, respond with thanksgiving instead of envy.

Your friend gets engaged to a godly and successful man, and your heart begins to struggle.

Instead of secretly grieving, go before God and say:

“Father, thank You for what You have done for her.”

Celebrate grace instead of competing with it.

Do the opposite of what your flesh wants to do.

That is how healing begins.

And let us be honest: Many people have felt bad at another person’s good news before.

That feeling reveals something.

Saul was destroyed by this spirit.

As long as the praise belonged to him, he was comfortable.

But the moment the songs shifted towards David, he could not handle it.

And that bitterness opened the door to torment.

Many people behave like Saul.

If you are gifted, understand this: You will not always be the centre of attention.

Another person will rise.

If you do not settle that truth in your heart, you may begin fighting who God has blessed.

3. Giving Breaks the Grip of Covetousness

“Take heed, and beware of covetousness...” — Luke 12:15 (KJV)

Jesus Himself warned about it.

Then He showed how to fight it.

“Sell that ye have, and give alms...” — Luke 12:33 (KJV)

One of the strongest ways to break covetousness is giving.

A man of God once shared a story about hearing a sermon on prosperity in America.

At first, he was offended by the message, so he decided to “test” it.

He gave away all the money he had on him.

Afterwards, fear entered him.

For hours he sat there wondering what he had done.

Then a woman walked up to him and said: “The Lord asked me to give you this.”

She handed him fifty dollars and walked away.

He said: “For the first time in my life, I understood prosperity.”

Prosperity is not merely having much.

It is having enough confidence in God that you are never stranded.

It is knowing your needs will be met.

Godliness with Contentment

“But godliness with contentment is great gain.” — 1 Timothy 6:6 (KJV)

Do not compare yourself with people who are living beyond wisdom.

You do not need to impress people at the expense of your future.

Some people spend enormous amounts on weddings while lacking basic financial stability.

Wisdom matters.

Contentment matters.

Stewardship matters.

Many people are not poor because they lack money. They are poor because comparison has destroyed their judgement.

Final Charge

Be satisfied with what God has given you.

Learn contentment.

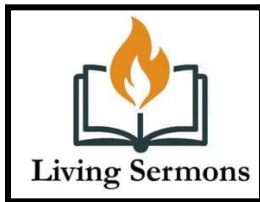
Celebrate others genuinely.

Reject comparison.

Pray honestly.

Give freely.

And ask God for light instead of envying another man’s portion. Because covetousness does not just corrupt desire — it slowly turns the heart away from God.



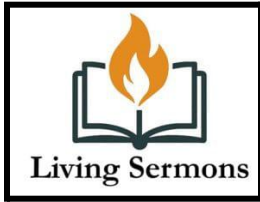
About the Speaker

Pastor Dolapo Lawal is a teacher of God's Word with a clear, practical, and uncompromising voice. His ministry is marked by biblical accuracy, spiritual depth, and direct application to everyday life.

He is committed to raising believers who are grounded in Scripture, mature in character, and intentional about growth. His teaching addresses real issues—faith, relationships, purpose, leadership, and personal responsibility—without exaggeration or sentimentality.

Pastor Dolapo Lawal is known for clarity, accountability, and balance. He challenges listeners to look inward before looking outward, to embrace process over shortcuts, and to pursue transformation rather than appearance.

His desire is simple: that believers grow into stability, wisdom, and Christlike maturity through the uncompromised teaching of God's Word.



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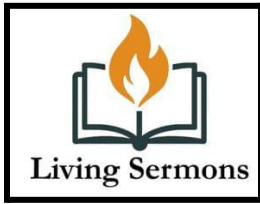
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Our mission is simple: to preserve the wisdom, revelation, and anointing carried in the preached Word and make it accessible in formats that can be studied, shared, and revisited for generations. By turning sermons into high-quality Christian books and eBooks, we extend the life and influence of each message far beyond the pulpit.

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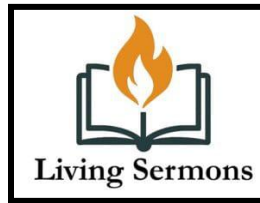
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