

Dr. Ron Armstrong • May 7, 2023 • Wanting

Luke 12:15 ... "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."

Luke 15:11 ... "There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

¹³ "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. ¹⁴ After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

¹⁷ "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! ¹⁸ I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against

heaven and against you. ²⁰ So he got up and went to his father.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

A. Are we wanting because we want, or wanting because of other peoples' wants?

1. This question is tougher than it sounds because most wanting is mimetic. (Imitative)
2. Clothes, cars, houses, jobs, and most of everything you buy are greatly influenced by broad mimetic wanting we call trends.
3. Do we even decide "pretty," "handsome," or "attractive"? Or is that influenced by others?
4. Most mimetic wanting is relatively harmless. It becomes a problem when:
 - a. It makes us judge ourselves harshly or leads to poor physical or emotional health.
 - b. It leads to coveting and greed.
 - c. We become trapped in an unsuitable path because of it.
5. If it's important, make sure it's your want.
 - a. The rich man?
 - b. Son?
 - c. The father?

B. How do I know it's my want? Some ideas:

1. Put them in order of feeling. If it's ours, we tend to want it more strongly.
2. Try it on. This is especially important for career and business wants.
3. Be honest; are you moving a goalpost?
4. Write down your "why." Need? Help others? Enjoyment?

5. Is your want in alignment with what you were created for? Connection with God, closeness to others, and for good works he prepared.

(Ephesians 2:10)