

MEDITATION ON COVETOUSNESS

Several years ago my niece, Joslynn, and her family were visiting us while we were on vacation in Boone, NC. We were downtown shopping in the Mast General Store and Josie fell in love with a beautiful pair of white suede boots. She stood quietly gazing at them for several moments and then, as I was the only one with her at the time, looked at me and said, "I'm going to ask my father to buy me these boots." I replied, "Oh Josie, do you think he will?" I had seen the price tag and even though they were adorable, and perfectly suited for my beautiful niece, it would be an extravagant purchase. Josie replied, "Oh, I know he will." There was no doubt in her mind, no question, no hesitation. When I asked her how she could be so sure, she replied, "Because I rarely ask for anything, and when I do, he knows how important it is to me."

Josie's parents had taught her well the principle of covetousness. They had taught her to recognize her sinful heart and to carefully scrutinize her desires in order to suppress those that were merely lustful. She had also come to know that her father would reward the honest, thoughtful, sincere desires of her heart. He did not disappoint; Josie got her new boots.

When we approach our heavenly Father, do we come with a list of desires that are presented offhandedly, almost by rote? Have we, like Joslynn, taken the time to examine our list of wants, mortifying those desires that are of a lustful, covetous nature?

Our sinful hearts are so full of lust and greed that God himself, with his own finger, had to engrave the command permanently for us:

Romans 7:7

Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for **I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.**

James, the recorder of sacred Scripture and the man who was on his knees so often before God that he earned the name, "camel knees," also knew of the snare of covetousness. Thus the caution:

James 4:3

Ye ask, and receive not, because **ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts.**

It is amazing that when we truly take heed to this warning and examine our desires, our petitioning becomes more effectual. We find ourselves more often looking on the things of others instead of on ourselves, and our prayers become more Spirit-filled. Then, in answer to the question, "Will God grant you the desires of your heart?" we can answer like Josie, without doubt, without question, without hesitation, "I know He will."