

THE LOVE OF MONEY

Text: *1 Timothy 6:9-11:*

9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.



They have erred from the faith — men and women like Balaam, Gehazi, Judas, Ananias and Sapphira.

Never, at any time in history, have there been so many millionaires or so many greedy after filthy lucre.

1 Timothy 3:3: Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

1 Timothy 3:8: Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

Titus 1:7: For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

Titus 1:11: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

1 Peter 5:2: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

There are so many in fierce pursuits of the wages of unrighteousness, and it strikes everywhere. And for what? For more money. This was foretold by **James 5**. We ought to be alarmed and outraged at the extravagance of our times.

James 5:1-7:

1 Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth eaten.

3 Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

4 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

5 Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.

6 Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.

7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the Coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

It is a topic of conversation everywhere, and should be a matter of instruction and warning against in the House of God. They whose lust after riches, sacrifice the Word of God. They sacrifice His Word for money making.

They use it not for the furtherance of the Gospel, but for their own selfish interests which is a great peril and a snare of the devil. It is this snare of satan that Paul warns against, for the money grabber will sacrifice honor, truth, and will even dishonor the Lord's Day by working for double time.

Soon, such will learn to say that a man cannot be honest, a Christian, and be in business. How did you come into such a business then? Why do you remain in it after you had found out that which should turn an honest Christian corrupt? They that will be rich, therefore, say to their conscience: "Farewell". Then, as the prodigal went after pleasures, so you go after wealth.

Men who will be rich give up faith, love, conscience, and honor, all of which make life on earth a joy. So, there is nothing else left in life to enjoy. Money gotten dishonestly or by hurting another is miserable stuff to live with. So, the devil tempts them to be miserly, and finally leads them to hoard, and to commit suicide after fears mount thinking someone will take it away from them, or it will be devalued. Thus, justice matches up with him who becomes — in the midst of plenty — wretched, despairing, bitter, hateful, and greedy. These are the viper's stings he has to die with.

They that will be rich fall into temptation. What temptation? Feigning poverty – pretending to have nothing. Acting a lie and even telling it. They talk as though they are flat broke; they become hypocrites. No wonder they have no time for the Bible, the House of God, or prayer meetings. These do not agree with the spiritual warnings given by in the Bible. They say they do not have time — while their heart is bloated with pride and a false sense of security.

The next snare the devil tempts a man with is to make him feverish to get money quick, more easily. Even by cheating, stealing, cutting the other fellow's throat — all to satisfy a selfish, greedy heart.



Greed and love of profits grind a man's morals to powder like an emery cloth, or grit on a carpet, or dirt that rots curtains. It cannot be seen at first, but the dirty work is done, and it

becomes too late to salvage the life.

Yes, you will cheat and lose your own soul, neighbor, if you do not repent!

Do you remember Jesus' Words?

Matthew 13:22b: and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the Word, and he becometh unfruitful.

The Word is the fuel that keeps the soul's light burning, and when neglected, the light soon goes out and we become like the foolish virgins. One may still be cunning and crafty enough to pretend in outward appearance that all is well and right, but when the storm clouds come and the tempest beats on your life, it will soon be discovered how the termites of greed, scheming, cheating, avarice, and conceit have eaten away the very foundation of your life. You cannot stand the vehement winds of trouble and testing when the foundations are destroyed.

Strewn along life's pathway are many victims of covetousness. There is only the one safe insurance policy against eternal ruin, and that comes from taking earnest heed to the Word of God which you have heard, lest at any time you should let them slip.



But, many will not take heed to His Word. They think they are smart and become conceited. It is here that mankind begins the downward fall.

The mournful sight of the man Jesus told of in **Luke 12**. One cannot see God's laws set aside or defied, and no punishment follow. That is why God has given me this message of warning, to shake you until your bones rattle and get you to wake up — before the Bridegroom cometh.

Don't be like the Laodicean Church which claimed to be rich and increased in goods, but was actually poor, miserable, wretched, blind, and naked — and didn't know it! Jesus told them that they were the opposite of what they thought they were.

In the devil's snares, some of you have not gone to the extreme of the man Jesus describes, but you are more cold and calculating, not given to excess or lust and self-pleasure, but are drinkers. Drinkers in moderation, you have fallen into many foolish and hurtful lusts that drown men in destruction and perdition anyway.

Love of money becomes stronger than love of family, mankind, Heaven, and God. Even in death their accumulation of money curses them. I see again that German etching of a deer that lay dying. About it the eagles were hovering; one eagle was perched on the right and another, a little piece away. All were sure of their prey, but waiting until that last gasp. The saying over it was, "*Like children at the bedside of a dying, wealthy parent*".

Often the old man lingers, using every means to recover health; but it hurts him to spend his money, even on himself. He will haggle and try to cut corners as though he were nearly broke. His offspring, having received the same kind of spirit, waits and wonders when he shall die. He has held the purse strings, and they are sitting like vultures, waiting for their victim to die so that they may pick his bones. Oh, the love of money! How it extinguishes affection!

What is there in wickedness that money has not been accessory to? Almost every crime that has put men in prison – money is at the root of it: Swindling, stealing, prostitution, kidnapping, mugging, smuggling. Covetousness drowns men in destruction and perdition.

1 Timothy 6:10: For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

This speaks of the saints — of all the suffering and remorse we have seen men suffer, and how sad that they learned this truth too late to profit from it. Oh, the disaster to press a dying pillow, and to discover you are weighed in the balances

and found wanting — and you can't do anything about it. Time has played misery and disgrace forever; he drinks the cup of his own making.

Neighbors, wealth need not corrupt you. All the more shame it is to you if you are corrupted by it, or spoiled in seeking it.

God gives men power to get wealth, they use it for His glory; and He will crown them with honor and blessing.

Deuteronomy 8:18: But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is He Who giveth thee power to get wealth, that He may establish His Covenant which He sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

Money is also like snow. If blown into drifts, it blocks the way and nobody can travel; but if it lies evenly distributed on the ground, it enriches all. It is one of the best fertilizers God has given us. You may wish to be rich and yet not possess \$10.00, but can be just as ensnared by the love of money as the man with a million dollars. You say, "If I were rich, I would help many poor widows and orphans; I would help the church and missionaries." The Lord will not believe a word of it and will not trust you with riches when you do not use properly what you do have.

In **verse 17**, Jesus reveals the rich man's desires. Let us remember that the Lord Jesus reads our very thoughts.

Luke 12:16-19:

16 And He spake a Parable unto them, saying, "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

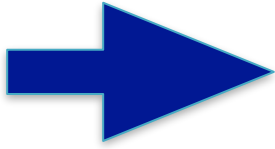
17 And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?'

18 And he said, 'This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.'"

Our thoughts may be hidden from each other, but that is as far as we can hide them. This man had no idea God was listening in on his thoughts. Further, he had no idea God would do anything about it either, and he shut God entirely out of his plan. He wasn't satisfied with the riches he had acquired, but he never got it done. He was going to say to his soul . . . "This is the straw that broke the camel's back!" Notice what God said:

Luke 12:20a: *Thou fool! this night thy soul shall be required of thee:*



He wasn't a fool because he was rich, for God never calls a man a fool because he is intelligent, diligent, or successful in business. Rather, a fool is one who substitutes riches for eternal life, things that perish in place of Jesus. This man had no place for Jesus in his life; thus the man is a fool.

Most of us go after riches, but most of us never get them.

There was a mule in the Barnes Circus that they loved to tease by tying a pole on its back and hanging an ear of corn on one end of the pole, about 18 inches from his nose. That mule just about wore himself out trying to get that corn, but he couldn't quite reach it. Maybe you haven't realized it, but the majority of us are just as foolish as that mule. We are after riches and they evade us while we lose our souls trying vainly to catch and hold them.

In **Luke chapter 12**, this rich man was never satisfied. Jesus tells us this in order to keep us from thinking we would be satisfied if we were in his shoes. Won't you take this lesson to heart? Jesus told us this, and shows us what happens in the end of the shortened day to the man who died before his time. He had talked sinfully to his soul:

Luke 12:19: And I will say to my soul, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry."

Jesus told us this and shows us what happens. Let me tell you what a washer-woman said one day when asked why she was so happy.

"Well, I'll tell you. I ain't got no money to lose so I never worry about losin' none. I ain't got no furniture to lose for I gave it to the Lord and if anythin' happen to it, the Lord did it to His Own stuff, not mine. I have a fine, healthy body – but if I get sick and die I am going to Heaven - - and you don't think I'll worry about that, do you?"

She was happy with Jesus, alone. You can be happy, too, if you really have Him "real good".

Solomon was worth 7-1/2 million dollars. He had the finest musical instruments obtainable, hired the finest musicians to play. He had beautiful gardens and everything the heart could wish for. So you know what he said:

Ecclesiastes 2:17b: "For all is vanity and vexation of spirit."

God is very kind to you and me, for He never hid these heart secrets from us.

Luke 18:18: And a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit Eternal Life?"

We read of a rich man who had great possessions and wanted to keep them. The **23rd verse of Luke 18** says he was very rich; he had plenty. But notice, he did not have eternal life, and he knew it. Notice that he knew who did have it, and tried to get it. Why don't you go to Jesus, too? Go and kneel before Jesus and say, "*I have come to get this marvelous, precious gift of eternal life that my soul needs so badly. What shall I do to inherit eternal life?*"

Jesus said, "***Thou knowest the Commandments . . .***" (**Mark 10:19a**). He lived good and Jesus loved him for it . . . loved him so much He told him to unload that which was keeping him from eternal life. Why not be honest? We have human life and we can understand human things, but that never gave me eternal life. My human spirit enables me to understand printing, music, repairing cars - - but these do not produce eternal life. This young man had money, but he couldn't buy eternal life. Why didn't he educate himself into eternal life? Because education can never bring a new heart which is necessary to have this new life. Jesus is the one he had to have, and he left Him outside.

Why don't you learn the lesson that this man did. He needed eternal life like you do. He kept the commandments from his youth up, as some of you have - - many others of you haven't done so well here. But, moral success – or failures – need not stand in your way. Do you ever notice that those who trust in commandment keeping, Sabbath observation, baptisms, and reforms never tell or sing about the Lord Jesus. They spend time talking about their ordinances, their do's and don'ts, and do not know the preciousness of Jesus. They have never been saved. Only those who are redeemed by His grace and washed in His precious Blood sing His praises.

All the young man had, he got from God. Christ asks, "Will you have the Giver, or the gifts?" "If you would rather have the Giver, go sell all you have and give to the poor, and come and follow me."

For which did the rich man care most - the Lord Jesus and an eternal Home with Him? No. He believed a bird-in-the hand is worth more than two in the bush.

Luke 18:23: And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

He kept the gifts and had no further interest in the Giver.

The third rich man had so many riches and held onto them so tightly that he wouldn't even feed a beggar more than crumbs. When he died, he left his wealth on earth, and upon arriving in that hot house called Hell, he started now to beg . . . and not for crumbs, either.

The beggar had what the rich man did not have. The beggar became rich and the rich man became poor.

Luke 16:19-32:

19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:



20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24 And he cried and said, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame."

25 But Abraham said, "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence."

27 Then he said, "I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment."

29 Abraham saith unto him, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them."

30 And he said, "Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent."

31 And he said unto him, "If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

Why did Jesus leave us this record? So we don't make the same mistake. How good and kind Lazarus had been to the rich man in testifying to him. Such kindness Jesus brings to us in calling these facts to our attention.

A KANSAS CITY GIRL

There is a girl in Kansas City whose riches were her beauty. But when she was 20, she sold her beauty. When ten years passed, she was in the hospital, her beauty gone. She bemoaned the fact that she was like an old hag at 30 and nobody wanted her. The world took her prize possession from her. The devil deceived her into thinking worldly pleasure and fast living is all life is for. He has not stopped deceiving the hearts of the simple ones.

GEHAZI

In **2 Kings 5**, we are given the account of Gehazi, a servant of the prophet Elisha. When Naaman, the captain of the host of the king of Syria, was healed from leprosy by Elisha and wanted to give him an offering to show his heartfelt gratitude, Elisha refused to take it. However, Ghazi, driven by covetousness for riches, ran after Naaman, lied to him that Elisha had changed his mind, and asked for the offering.

We are told in **2 Kings 5** that Gehazi overtook Naaman, who stopped his horses, fearing something had happened:

2 Kings 5:21b: And when Naaman saw him running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, "Is all well?"

Then, Gehazi broke the news with a crafty lie. He told him that two of the young theological students had come to visit Elisha, and they were very poor. He said Elisha had sent him for some clothes and money for them.



There must have been a look of disappointment on Naaman's face. No doubt he wondered how Elisha could have changed his mind so quickly. But he pressed Gehazi to take two talents instead of one. Congratulating himself upon a good day's take, he then went back to Elisha . . .

We hear much in the newspapers today about the invention of the lie detector. When this device is connected with a witness, it gives a supposedly infallible record as to whether or not he is telling the truth. If such a device is really perfected, it will eliminate a vast amount of false witnessing in our courts. It will save the people large sums of money in prolonged and disgraceful trials.

Ages ago, Elisha had his own lie detector. He knew by the Spirit of God where Gehazi had gone and what he did.

2 Kings 5:25-27:

25 But he went in, and stood before his master. And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went no whither.

26 And he said unto him, Went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants?

27 The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow. .



JUDAS

He flung down the 30 pieces of silver which he had received for betraying Christ, in front of the high priest and scribes, and cried:

Matthew 27:4: I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent Blood.

How degrading. Avarice and love of money can root itself in the heart until one becomes merciless and corrupted.

Judas' warped soul pays the wages of sin in death.



Matthew 27:5: And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.

Love of money turns good men into bad men. It prevents men of character from staying the same, and reaping day will bring bitterness, disillusionment, shame and destruction.

Gehazi and Judas held religious offices. (Balaam is the third worst recorded in Bible history for using religious position for worldly profit). They have more successors than you think. When religion is used as a cloak for ambition, it is worse than infidelity itself.

There are different degrees in the ancient and dishonorable likes of Gehazi, Judas, and Balaam — with Ananias and Sapphira thrown in.

Almost every church will have some members who make their appearance only when they have something to sell, or to get some business.

Worse than that, Christianity is often wounded in the house of its friends who use their office or association with the church to gain its friends for selfish purposes.

Take a good look at these five birds, for a solemn truth can be gained — lest gluttony for gold make us worse than a leper, a suicide, or suffer God's judgment directly in death. God would not let them occupy space on earth — they were not fit company, for even demons!

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