

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 11



FALSE RICHES

Scripture Text: 1 Timothy 6:3-10

Is one right in believing that health and wealth compose Christianity? When you drive through a community and see well kept houses and big, well filled barns, is that Christianity? Is it right or wrong to have good things and a prosperous business? In what does the right or wrong lie? In the *love* of money, lies the wrong. The right attitude toward possessions, money, and necessary provisions is the difference between them being a blessing or a curse. Material riches are temporary. To love them is sin.

This lesson begins with two classes of people and traces their lives from the beginnings down through to their different ends. In these verses, main attention is given to the evil. The next lesson considers the righteous.

MEMORY VERSE: *And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.—1 Timothy 6:8*

DAILY READINGS:

- Mon.—**Deuteronomy 8:10-20** The giver of riches.
- Tue.—**2 Kings 5:20-27** Punishment for covetousness.
- Wed.—**Ecclesiastes 5:9-16** Money does not satisfy.
- Thu.—**Matthew 19:16-29** Possessions can be a hindrance.
- Fri.—**Luke 12:13-21** A rich fool.

Devotional Reading: **James 5:1-9** Moth-eaten garments.

Christ's Way Versus the World's Way

1 Timothy 6:3-5 **If any man teach otherwise**—other than Paul had just outlined in the previous verses. Paul taught the Words of Christ and said (**verse 2**), **These things teach and exhort**. Paul urged in similar words a number of times through this Book. But some—sinners—would not **consent** or agree with Christ's Words, with **doctrine . . . according to godliness**. Those people, because they started off from the wrong foundation (their own human thoughts) and set before them the wrong principle, are filled with all kinds of evil—pride, ignorance, love of arguing over questions about the Word, twisting meanings and splitting hairs, name-calling and suspicion. Their minds are corrupt and filled with evil thoughts. Not taking the way of love, refusing the truth, they envy and fight and dispute. They reject the principle of godliness and take that of gain—thinking **gain is godliness**. They seek money and earthly possessions instead of things of God. Paul said, **from such withdraw thyself**.

Godliness and Contentment

1 Timothy 6:6-8 The natural, unsaved, worldly man lives by the false principle that gain is godliness, but Paul says the exact opposite is true—**godliness . . . is great gain**. Riches do not make one good, but godliness does make one rich in a better way. **Godliness with contentment**—because one has the godliness he most desires, he is contented with whatever he has of less value. Material comforts and possessions last only for this life. We do not bring them in with us, and we cannot take them out with us. If we have **food and raiment**—clothing and shelter—it is enough. Temporary things do only for a temporary life. For the eternal life of the soul,

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better and lasting things are needed. It requires but little of this world's goods to satisfy a person who realizes he is not a citizen of this world, but of Heaven. Truly rich is the one who has godliness in his soul, food on his table, raiment and shelter for his body, and desires nothing more.

Covetousness Is the Way Down

1 Timothy 6:9-10 There is a very different result for those **that will be rich**. This desire is covetousness, the wish to get and to have, not to give, but to keep. One filled with this desire falls. The way is down, down, down. First, **into temptation**—they are tempted to selfishness, pride, stinginess, dishonesty, lying, etc. Further down into a **snare**—a trap with which Satan deceives and binds one in habits he never intended to practice. Down into **lusts** where chains of Satan are bound tighter and tighter. **Foolish** lusts which bring no lasting good, no spiritual blessing, and no soul-satisfaction. **Hurtful** lusts which lead to sins listed in preceding verses, make the heart hard, unloving, and selfish, and shut out God's voice. Finally, these lusts **drown men in destruction**—cut the line of communication with God and destroy their souls—**and perdition**—hereafter cast them into hell forever. Not much gain on this downward road, is there? **For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? (Mark 8:36). The love of money**—not money, which can do much good, but the *love* of it in the heart—**is the root of all evil**, or all kinds of evil, as were named. Coveting it causes one to err **from the faith**—to miss the mark—and to pierce oneself through **with many sorrows**. Such is the end of those who set gain rather than godliness and things more than God as their goal in life. **Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death (Proverbs 11:4).**

The Deceitfulness of Riches

Does it seem that our text is too severe with a lot of nice people? People who dress well, eat well, live in luxury are generally respected. To gain these and money besides seems to most to be a praiseworthy goal. Worldly riches deceive souls and cause them to feel that they are rich when they are truly poor. This goal is not enough. **That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God (Luke 16:15)**. Often the rich are looked up to rather than the godly person. Why? Because there is a deception in worldly riches.

A story is told of a certain man who died. His obituary stated that "his chief ambition had been to own his own home, and he realized his ambition." Yet, even as that was being written, he lay dead. The earthly home was no longer his, and he had no greater ambition. Still, people said he had done well. Were they deceived? Was he? Are you deceived, dear one?

JUST A THOUGHT

Don't expect a bargain when you are shopping for sinful pursuits.

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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