

MATERIAL MASTERS

“Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God...” —1 TIMOTHY 6:17

The most important aspect about our lives is our relationships, and foremost is the relationship we have with God. As Christians, we know that God works in us so that He may work through us for the benefit of others. That means we are under His Lordship, and Jesus tells us, “No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money” (Matthew 6:24).

A drive to acquire wealth for personal gain is dangerous because we begin to base our security on our possessions instead of God. Our purpose is usually focused on acquiring more, and our dependence is placed on the wealth we have accumulated. There’s nothing wrong with wealth, but when material things become our master and not our servant, it can turn deadly and destructive. The more we accumulate, the more we want, and when material gain begins to rule our lives, God withdraws and we’re on our own. That’s a frightening thought for a Christian, but it is reality when things that God designed to be our servants become our master. Inevitably, our spiritual and moral lives erode.

Paul makes a direct contrast between trusting in wealth and trusting in God. In 1 Timothy 6:9-10, he says, “People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of

all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and have pierced themselves with many griefs.” We all know someone whose life has been pierced with grief because of money.

The real success in life is not measured by wealth, but by relationships. No one nearing the end of their days says, “I wish I’d spent more time working.” It’s usually, “I wish I’d spent more time with my wife or husband, my kids, family and friends.” The pursuit of wealth for personal gain will not only hinder our relationships, but can become the source of painful regret. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, “So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.” (Matthew 6:31-32).

If we’re content with God’s daily provision, we are content indeed.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, there is no other master I want in my life but You. I am grateful, Lord, for all You give me, and ask that you keep me from wanting more than I need.

TO REFLECT UPON: Am I concerned about having enough or confident in the Lord’s provision?