

How To Overcome The Curse Of Covetousness – Part 2

1 Timothy 6:7-8

Introduction:

1. TV preachers talk about the “curse of poverty.” Last week we began to look at a far greater curse—“the curse of covetousness.”
2. What is covetousness? The concept is seen in verse 10.
 - It is an excessive desire for things you don't have. It manifests itself in such ways as greed, selfishness, jealousy, envy, and pride.
3. Why is it a curse? Because it is the mother of so many other sins, such as killing, adultery, stealing, cheating, lying, etc.
4. Let's read 1 Timothy 6:6-10. According to God's Word, covetousness can cause a person to drown in destruction. We see this in the world all the time.
Illustration: CEO scandals, political leaders caught in scandals, Pete Rose, etc.
 - But it happens to common, ordinary people every day in America and never makes the newspaper.
 - Marriages break up, people go to prison, people cannot pay their bills, friendships break apart, churches split, people commit suicide, etc.
 - Many people are simply inwardly miserable, day after day, because of this curse of covetousness.
5. But this doesn't have to happen to the children of God if we understand that our identity is in Christ, not in our possessions.
6. Paul shares with us another key principle in overcoming this deadly sin of covetousness.

We must recognize that:

Our true treasure is in heaven, not on earth. vs. 7-8

1. In verse 7, the Bible makes it clear—you will take nothing from this earth with you to heaven—*“it is certain.”*
 - **Illustration:** A guy wanting money in his casket with him.
 - None of this stuff down here will go with us into eternity—that is guaranteed! Psalms 49:10-11, 16-17
2. So does this mean it is wrong to own anything here on earth? Absolutely not—we all have physical needs that must be met. This is acknowledged in verse 8. We all need food, clothing, and shelter.
 - All of you put on clothes today, you will sleep under a roof somewhere, and I guarantee you're going to eat—am I right?
3. The questions you must ask are: “Where is your heart?” “Where are your affections?” “How do you view your possessions?” Remember, covetousness is a heart issue. If Christians are to truly understand that their identity is in Christ, then they must understand and follow the teaching of Colossians 3:1-2:
 - *“Seek those things which are above.”*
 - *“Set your affection on things above.”*

4. Why is this? Because that is where Christ is—**He** is our identity and our life!
Colossians 3:3
 - Christians that are in love with Jesus understand that their true treasure is in heaven and not on earth, and when Jesus returns, they will lay hold on their eternal treasure. 1 Timothy 6:19
 - Therefore, they aren't consumed with the temporal things of this life and the accumulation of them.
 - **Illustration:** a dot and line—our life has two phases:
 - Our present life on earth is the dot. It begins and ends—it is brief.
 - But from that dot extends a line that goes on forever. The line is eternity, which Christians will spend in heaven.
5. Right now, we are living in that dot. But what are we living for?
6. The short-sighted person lives for the dot.
 - **Illustration:** A guy putting money in the attic.
 - When you live for the dot, you are living for stuff that will end up in junkyards to decay and corrupt.
7. The person with perspective lives for the line.
 - When you are living for the line, you are living for treasures that are stored in heaven, which are eternal and incorruptible.
8. How do you live for the line—for eternity? 1 Timothy 6:17-18 teaches us how.
 - You cheerfully give and share the blessings He sends your way.
 - What is the result? Verse 19 informs believers that they are storing up treasures for eternity.
 - Jesus taught that heaven is a place of reward.
9. As we use the resources God gives us to further the work of Christ on this earth and do good for others, it brings eternal reward in heaven. Ephesians 6:8; 2 Corinthians 4:18; Colossians 3:23-24; Philippians 4:17
 - How does your account in heaven look?
10. You say, “But I don't want to part with my money.” You really don't have any choice! Verse 7 says that “*it is certain*” that we will part with it—it's just a question of **when**.
 - What we choose to part with now on this earth will turn into eternal treasures that we will enjoy in eternity.
 - What we choose to keep and hold on to, we will part with when we die, and it will be gone forever.
 - Suppose I offer you \$1000 today to spend however you like—not a bad deal. But suppose I give you a choice—you can either have that \$1000 today or you can have ten million dollars one year from now. Only a fool would take the \$1000 today. Yet that is what we do whenever our sole pursuit and focus is after temporal things, when we can have something far more valuable that we could enjoy later, but for much longer.

In Conclusion:

1. Covetousness is a snare, a trap. Like a black hole, it can suck you in.

2. But when you understand that your true treasure is in heaven and not on earth, and begin to live that way, it breaks the chains of covetousness, and brings freedom.
3. Contentment loosens the grip that materialism has on you. You are free! You recognize that Jesus is your life, and heaven is your home. You are looking for opportunities to invest in things of eternal consequence as God blesses you.
4. Your life is not characterized by the word "*covetousness*," but "*contentment*."