

Jesus sets the stage for it when He says in Matthew 6:19-21,
“Don’t lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, for where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

Now how did Paul learn this contentment?

In the 12th verse of Philippians 4 he says:

“I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.”

Back to verse 6.

“But godliness with contentment is great gain.”

What is godliness?

Godliness is the result of God’s work in your life during an ever-deepening relationship to truth.

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The more you spend time in truth the more this relationship with Christ and your exposure to truth changes your life.

Godliness comes by faith, plus food, equals fruit.

What Paul is saying is you're going to want to invest in this stock because you're going to get a mega-gain.

It's going up fast.

It's going to go up rapidly.

“Godliness with contentment is (mega) gain.”

That's why in Philippians 1:21 he can say:

“For me to live as Christ and to die, is to gain more of Christ.”

He wanted that. *“Great gain.” “Godliness with contentment is great gain.”*

Bill Hybels wrote a book called, *Descending into Greatness* and he says:

God asks us to lose so we can gain. He makes a hard request, then offers a promise. Lose your selfish ambition; I will honor you for loving others. Lose your addiction to things; I will provide for you if you seek Me wholeheartedly. Lose your obsession to be in control; I will give you power as you follow Me. Lose your appetite for thrills; I will startle you with pleasures you could never have found on your own. Lose your life; I will give you eternity. (p. 22)

Verse 7, Is the reason why “*godliness with contentment is mega-gain.*”

V. 7 “*For we brought nothing into the world, so that (as a result) we can take nothing out of it.*”

**Here’s the reason “*godliness with contentment is great gain.*”
We brought nothing in we can take nothing out.**

Now it’s interesting in the verses sometimes and you might miss this if you don’t notice the little words.

Paul is going to use the word “*we*” three times.

That means he’s identifying with the people he’s writing about.

Then he’s going to turn to the word “*they*” and describe the false teachers again in the later part of the study who have a wrong attitude toward money.

Now watch how he does this. It’s “*we*” right now.

He says this: “*We brought nothing into the world, so we can take nothing out of it.*”

Life to a lot of people is nothing on both ends and a mess in the middle.

But to Paul, he's just saying, I'm living it this way.

I brought nothing in, I can take nothing out.

You know, there are a bunch of verses that teach that.

Remember in Job chapter 1 after he has these tremendous losses, I mean he loses all of his possessions, he loses all ten of his kids, he loses all of his employees except for four, and the guy is also stricken physically and at the end of it he doesn't charge God of any wrongdoing and he says in verse 21, *"Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord has given and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised."*

I came streaking in, I'm going streaking out.

I can't take anything with me.

And that's exactly what Solomon says after all that deal with his wealth.

And Ecclesiastes 5:15,

“Naked a man comes from his mother’s womb, and as he comes, so he departs. He takes nothing from his labor that he can carry in his hand.”

In essence, what Paul’s trying to remind us here is that we bring nothing in, we can take nothing out, therefore we need to have a right attitude toward these things.

And the right attitude toward possessions is principal #1: *godliness with contentment has a mega-gain.*

J. Vernon McGee says it so well:

Do your givin’

While you’re livin’.

Then you’re knowin’

Where it’s goin’.

(p. 455)

You know, that’s an important principle, to be a steward.

Here’s a statement where I think a lot of parents really make a mistake at this point.

Be sure you give your kids wisdom before you give them wealth.

That's a powerful statement. Because you can ruin kids with an inheritance by giving them a whole bunch that they didn't earn. *Give them wisdom before you leave them wealth.*

Let's go to verse 8.

V.8 "And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content."

Now, you're going to see what it takes to make a person content. Look how simple it is.

Something to eat and something to cover us.

I think the word "*clothing*" could also mean shelter.

So you have something over your head and something on your body and that's your clothing.

And you have food on the table.

That's the life of simplicity according to the apostle Paul.

G. K. Chesterton said: "There are 2 ways to get enough: one is to continue to accumulate more and more, the other is to desire less and less."

William Barclay says:

Content comes when we escape the servitude to things, when we find our wealth in the love and the friendship and the fellowship of men, and when we realize that our most precious possession is our friendship with God, made possible through Jesus Christ.

(p. 151)

Now the word “*contentment*” can be translated sufficiency, having enough of everything.

It could mean enough, sufficient, adequate.

It’s almost a *contentment* that is passive.

It is satisfied and *content* with everything like it is.

You don’t have to manipulate.

You don’t have to try to get ahead and there is a peace that comes from that.

A.W. Tozer in, *The Condition of the Church* says:

“We have God. We have Christ. We have truth.

We have a world needing help.

We have the saints, we have the power of prayer.

We have the joy of obedience and we have the sweet wonder of His presence.

We have the joy of Christian song.

We have all this and we do not need garbage.

We have God.

All we have to do is trust in His Son Jesus Christ and obey the truth, and the Lord will manifest Himself, show Himself through the lattice.”

(p. 58)

And that’s exactly what Paul’s trying to say.

Godliness with contentment is mega-gain.

We brought nothing in, we can take nothing out.

And having the basics, let us therefore be *content*.

Some writer put a relationship between greed and compassion as when you let greed dominate, it severs the cord of compassion to the heart.

And I believe that.

I believe a person who is never satisfied,

who never has enough,

and has to constantly keep on striving for more and more does not have a compassionate heart.

You don't find those people generally very compassionate and having deep feelings for being generous or helping others.

And so we're not talking about money as being evil, we're talking about the greed that desires to possess it and that never comes to *contentment*.

I want you to make that distinction in the passage as we get to it here.

Verse 9

V. 9 “*But those who are desiring to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many useless and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.*”

Notice we changed from the word “we” to “those.”

Now “those” is referring to these false teachers.

And these guys who are filled with greed.

“Those who are desiring to be rich.”

Now, what he says is they *desire to be rich* and because of that they're going to go through any means to get to this desired goal.

v. 9 “*But those who are desiring to be rich.*”

Look at the next word. “*Keep on falling.*” It’s a present tense. They just keep doing it. You can translate it.

“*Those who are desiring to be rich keep falling*” and they keep falling into four things.

First, *temptation*.

Second, *a snare*.

Third, *many useless desires*.

Fourth, *many harmful desires*.

Now let’s take those four and break them apart for a second.

First of all, “*those who are desiring to be rich keep falling into temptation.*”

When you look at money and the bottom line there are always three A’s that come to the surface.

And this is true of any temptation Satan’s going to throw at you.

1. It's *attractive*. It's impressive to have a big bottom line. And there is a sense of security in that, right, we know that.
2. It's *alluring*. It calls us to that kind of lifestyle. You've earned it. Take it easy.
3. *Altering the course*. That's exactly the way Satan works.

The picture in James 1 of temptation is a picture of a fish swimming along and he sees a flashing lure. And he alters his course to look at the lure. And then he takes the bait that is purposely designed for him only to find there's a deadly hook in it and he is hooked and fried.

You know, that's the story that's described here.

Falling into temptation by going for the things that are *attractive*, the things that are *alluring*, the things that will cause us to *alter our course* in acquisition of these things.

Secondly, it's *a snare*.

Now that word in two other places in the Timothy epistles is called a trap. In 1 Timothy 3:7: "*Moreover it is a necessity for him also to be having a good testimony from those on the outside, in order that he might not fall into disgrace and into the trap of the devil.*"

And then 2 Timothy 2:26: “*They might come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.*”

So the *snare* here in verse 9 doesn’t have the word “devil” with it but the other two do and the devil’s in the business of using traps to catch us.

And one of the traps he uses is greed, the pursuit of material things.

And 1 Peter 5:8, He’s like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour and so Paul says, “*those who are desiring to be rich keep falling into temptation*” and

#2: “*a snare*” and

#3: “*many useless desires.*” What does that mean?

That means *desires* that aren’t going to count for anything in heaven.

It’s *desires* for things here and now and you have to leave them anyway.

They aren’t really going to be of any benefit when you leave this earth.

The best illustration of that is in 1 John 2:15-16:

“Love not the world neither the things that are in the world”

and then verse 16, *“all the things that are in the world, the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes and the boastful pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world.”*

And if a man loved the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

It is useless desires.

It doesn't bring happiness.

And many *“harmful desires.”* Why are they so harmful?

Because a lot of guys will give up their health, their happiness, and their home to get it.

That's why it's harmful.

That's why many families are killed today.

Many marriages are destroyed because the guy becomes a workaholic to try to keep up with somebody else and he works his tail off and he can only see one thing, and that's dollar signs.

That's Satan's famous dance.

Take what is good and turn it into something which is rotten by distorting it and ruining it. And such is the case.

That's what he's describing.

“Those who are desiring to be rich keep falling into”
four things: “*temptation,*” “*snare,*” “*many useless desires,*”
and “*many harmful desires.*” Notice the last words now,
“which plunge men into ruin and destruction.”

You know what the word “*plunge*” means?

That’s in the present tense, too.

You could translate it “*which are sinking into ruin and*
***destruction.*” It’s the word for “*sinking.*”**

It’s literally the waves are covering the ship.

You could translate the word “*drown.*”

Chuck Swindoll in his book Laugh Again says:

The whole subject of finances and fund raising and
remaining pure, humble, and grateful in the
handling of money is a heavy weight hanging
on the thin wires of integrity and accountability.

(p. 222)

Now when we arrive at verse 10 we have the most misquoted verse in the whole of the New Testament.

For the reason these four things happen, they keep falling into them, and the reason they're drowning in it is

Verse 10, our Key verse

V. 10 “For a root of all the evils is the love of money, which certain ones in reaching for it have been led astray from the faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.”

Let me start with the first word in the Greek sentence.

And the word “*Root*” is the word that he emphasizes in this verse.

“*Root*” is the most important.

Where are you doing your *rooting*?

Because your *rooting* is going to determine your fruiting, and that's the bottom line.

Now, what is the Biblical concept of *rooting*?

Stop and think of the passages that you know where *root* occurs.

Well first of all you've got to go to Psalm 1:

“His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law he meditates day and night. He is going to be like a tree planted or rooted by the rivers of water.”

Jeremiah 17:7-8:

“Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and whose confidence is in him. He’ll be like a tree planted by the water that spreads out its roots by the stream.”

How about Colossians 2:7:

Paul says, “having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him (Christ) and established in your faith.”

William Barclay says of this verse: “Here is one of the most often quoted and misquoted sayings in the Bible. Scripture does not say that money is the root of all evil; it says the love of money is the root of all evil.” (p. 151)

Now, money is not evil. It’s the greed, the love of money.

And that’s the attitude.

A right attitude is what we’re saying this law encompasses.

That means greed is wrong.

It’s priority that puts money over the master.

That puts some other priority than our love for Christ first and that is the *root of all evil*.

The “*root of all the evils is the love of money.*”

“*Which is for love of money certain ones in reaching for it have been*”: (what?) **Two things**

1. “*led astray from the faith,*”

2. “*pierced themselves with many sorrows.*”

See that word “*reaching for it.*” stretching for, reaching out one’s hand, aspiring to, or striving for.

Compare that to Paul in Philippians 3:14 when he says, “*I’m pressing on, I’m striving for the prize of the high call of God in Christ Jesus.*”

The world is stretching in greed for material things.

And a believer who’s walking with God is stretching for the eternal goal.

Here's Paul saying the secret to life is forgetting those things which are behind, I'm pressing toward those things for which are front, I'm stretching, I'm running flat out to the finish for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ.

I'm getting close to the end of the race. And I want to give it my best shot.

Instead, these people, these false teachers are being *lead astray from the faith* and they've been *pierced with many sorrows*.

Are there any illustrations of that in the Scripture?

Judas Iscariot ought to just jump out of the Book at you!

And then you see the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16 where this guy is just content to live for only the here and now and then the picture is seen over on the other side when the poor guy is in Abraham's bosom and the rich man is experiencing the flames of hell.

And probably the most red light warning of all in Scripture are the first two fatalities in the early church.

In Acts chapter 5 Ananias and Sapphira were messing around with their bottom line.

And they said they sold this piece of property and gave it all to the church.

And they kept back some of it. They lied about it.

And the Spirit of God did an audit on them.

And they stood there in their lying and their dishonesty and as a result both of them died instantaneously.

So you get an idea that yes this is the root of all the evil.

And yes God is looking down and God is concerned about our effective and faithful stewardship in these matters.

LAW #14 A Good Leader Has a Right Attitude Toward Money

**Do you know how long it took Solomon to build the temple?
It took him just 7 years to build that temple because David
had acquired all the wealth for it.**

**But do you know how long it took him to build his own
place?**

Thirteen years.

**Do you sense a tiny, little prediction of what is about to
come as he lets material things come to the place where it
literally destroys his ability to relate to the voice of God.**

And no wonder he ends up in such a mess. You can sense his priorities have gotten out of whack.

There are 10 lessons that come out of this study.

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

Lesson #1: It is godliness with contentment that brings us the great gain.

#2: We came in with nothing, and we're going out with nothing.

#3: There is no such thing as ungodliness with contentment.

#4: The other possibility is ungodliness with discontentment.

#5: With something to eat and something to cover us, we should be content.

#6: Those who are desiring to be rich keep falling into 4 things: temptation, a snare or a trap, many useless desires and many harmful desires.

#7: Life to a lot of people is nothing on both ends and a mess in the middle.

#8: Those who are desiring to be rich find themselves sinking into ruin and destruction.

#9: The root of all the evils is the love of money.

#10: Principle: A good leader has a right attitude toward money.

STUDIES IN THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

PART II - 1 TIMOTHY 4-6

"The Laws of Leadership"

Key verse 4:12: *"Let no one look down on you (think little of) because you are young; but keep on becoming an example of the believers in word, in behavior, in love, in faith, in purity."*

LAW NUMBER FOURTEEN - A Good Leader Has a Right Attitude Toward Money

1 Timothy 6:6-10

Key verse 6:10

Notes

v. 6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.

v. 7 For we brought nothing into the world, so that (as a result) we can take nothing out of it.

v. 8 And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.

v. 9 But those who are desiring to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many useless and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.

v. 10 For a root of all the evils is the love of money, which certain ones in reaching for it have been led astray from the faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.

QUESTIONS:

- 1. Read 1 Timothy 6:6-10 and summarize in your own words what Paul is saying in this section.**
- 2. What is it that gives us "great gain," according to verse 6?**
- 3. How much did we bring "into this world" and how much can "we take out," according to verse 7?**
- 4. What two things should make us "content," according to verse 8?**
- 5. What four things do those "who are desiring to be rich fall into," according to verse 9?**
- 6. What two things do they "plunge into," according to verse 9?**
- 7. What is the "root of all the evils," according to verse 10?**
- 8. What two things are happening to those who are living for material things, according to verse 10?**

9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?