

TAKE HEED...BEWARE OF COVETOUSNESS

By Keith Greer

“And He said to them, Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.” {Luke 12:15} This is a word we don't use much in our vocabulary – “covetousness.” Yet, it very much practiced in our society. It means “greed.” God's people need to be beware of such conduct in our own life. We need to beware of such for:

Life consists not in a material abundance. *“Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.” {John 6:27}* This is such a danger in the country we live in. Why? We are so blessed with material wealth. We need to remember we are simply “stewards” of God's blessings. *“Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.” {1 Timothy 6:6-9}* God's people should desire spiritual riches and not material ones. Where are your treasures stored up? (*Matthew 6:19-21*)

It's the tap root of unfaithfulness. *“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” {1 Timothy 6:10}* Please understand it's not MONEY that is the root of all evil – the LOVE of money! How? *“Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity.” {Luke 8:14}* Sadly, the danger is it takes over the priority in our lives and our spiritual focus. One does not have to be a Bill Gates to be guilty of covetousness. Sadly, many of God's people have gone to “sleep” about this truth. The next point will point this out very vividly.

It is idolatry. *“Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience.” {Colossians 3:5,6}* How does “covetousness” become an idol? This occurs when money is placed before everything else in my life. Service to God, family and maybe even my own health! Pursuit of monetary riches becomes the main goal in my life. True, it's not wrong to save money for a rainy day and one's retirement years or even to invest money seeking a profit. The danger is when it consumes the majority of our time and energy – now its idolatry!

It causes one to be selfish and foolish. *“And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry. But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided? So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.’” {Luke 16:19-21}* Something takes over one's life and they begin to be selfish with their material blessings and this leads to acting foolishly. Yes, the rich man thought he had it made for years but in the end he lost his most important asset – his soul!

It causes one to miss heaven. “*Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.*” {1 Corinthians 6:10} Sadly, this should be a warning and present the best reason to avoid covetousness—missing heaven! What a tragic ending to one who possesses material wealth but will pay more than they ever intended to pay!

Please read Paul’s word *in Acts 20:32-35* with an open mind. Yes, we live in a country where we have been greatly blessed with material prosperity. Yet, beware of the danger it presents to our souls if we place too much emphasis on it in our lives. All I can say about Paul’s words are AMEN! ***