

## **Slaying The Green Eyed Monster!**

Jer. 17:9 - The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

Exodus 20:17 - You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

Luke 12:15 (ESV) - And he said to them, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

Luke 12:15 (NIV) - Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

Romans 7:7 (NKJV) - What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet."

Proverbs 28:15 - "He that hates covetousness shall prolong his days."

Colossians 3:5 - Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, (Covetousness) which is idolatry.

### **I. What is Covetousness?**

The word "covetousness" comes from 2 words – "more" and "to have". Covetousness means to desire things in an inordinate, ungoverned manner.

There are primarily 3 categories of lust in scripture: (1) sensual; (2) property or things; (3) prominence through money.

1 John 2:16 - For all that is in the world—the LUST OF THE FLESH (sensual), the LUST OF THE EYES (property or things), and the PRIDE OF LIFE (prominence through money)—is not of the Father but is of the world.

- *Covetousness has to do with your THOUGHT life.*

It's having a strong desire in your thoughts towards anything that is forbidden by God.

- *Covetousness is also an EXCESSIVE UNHEALTHY desire for something you don't have.*

There's nothing wrong with wanting certain things, like something better for your family, etc...

But covetousness is a desire that compromises convictions to gain something you want!

- *Covetousness is also an envious desire for what someone else has... desiring what THEY have to be yours.*

1 Tim. 6:10a- For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil.

That term "love of money" in the original Greek is "philarguria" and it means "avarice" which is extreme greed for material things and "covetousness"!

Matthew 15:19 - For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.

James 2:10 - For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.

Romans 7:7-8

7 What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "Do not covet."

8 But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead.

**1. Legitimate desire will sacrifice the thing desired for people, but covetous desire will sacrifice people for the thing desired!**

1 Corinthians 13:4-6

4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

5 It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

1 Kings 21:2 - Ahab said to Naboth, "Let me have your vineyard to use for a vegetable garden, since it is close to my palace. In exchange I will give you a better vineyard or, if you prefer, I will pay you whatever it is worth."

1 Kings 21:4 - Ahab went home, sullen and angry because Naboth the Jezreelite had said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." He lay on his bed sulking and refused to eat.

## **2. Legitimate desire only wants what God wants for us, but covetous desire is not content with God's provision!**

Philippians 4:11-13

11 "I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.

12 I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.

13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength."

1 Timothy 6:6-10

6 "godliness with contentment is great gain.

7 For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.

8 But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.

9 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.

10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs."

## **3. Legitimate desire will not lead to other sins, but covetous desire will always lead to other sins!**

James 4:1-3

1 What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you?

2 You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God.

3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

2 Samuel 11:2-4

2 One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful,

3 and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "Isn't this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"

4 Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her.

2 Sam. 10:12 – "Be strong, and let us fight bravely for our people and the cities of our God. The LORD will do what is good in his sight."

## **II. Covetousness in your Heart brings terrible consequences!**

### **1. A COVETOUS HEART will become CORRUPTED!**

1 Timothy 6:9-10

9 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.

10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, HAVE WANDERED FROM THE FAITH and pierced themselves with many griefs.

### **2. A COVETOUS HEART will become CALLOUSED!**

Romans 13:9 - The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

### **3. A COVETOUS HEART will be CONDEMNED ETERNALLY!**

Luke 12:16-21

16 And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop.

17 He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'

18 "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.

19 And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." '

20 "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'

21 "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."

- He was a successful farmer with an abundant harvest.
- Jesus said nothing to indicate that this man was dishonest or evil.
- This man was a wise investor... a shrewd business man.
- He would enjoy the fruit of his labor.

Luke 12:15 - Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

Ephesians 5:5 - For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person — such a man is an idolater — has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

### **III. A COVETOUS HEART must be CHANGED THROUGH REPENTANCE!**

Psalm 73:1-5

1 Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart.

2 But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold.

3 For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

4 They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong.

5 They are free from the burdens common to man; they are not plagued by human ills...

Psalm 73:12 - This is what the wicked are like-- always carefree, they increase in wealth.

Psalm 73:13 - Surely in vain have I kept my heart pure; in vain have I washed my hands in innocence.

Ps 73:16-28

16 When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me

17 UNTILL I entered the sanctuary of God; THEN I understood their final destiny.

18 Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin.

19 How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors!

20 As a dream when one awakes, so when you arise, O Lord, you will despise them as fantasies.

21 When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered,

22 I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you.

23 Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand.

24 You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory.

25 Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you.

26 My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

27 Those who are far from you will perish; you destroy all who are unfaithful to you.

28 But as for me, it is good to be near God. I HAVE MADE THE SOVEREIGN LORD MY REFUGE; I will tell of all your deeds.

James 4:2-10

2 You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God.

3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

5 Or do you think Scripture says without reason that the spirit he caused to live in us envies intensely?

6 But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says:

"God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

8 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

9 Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom.

10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

Philippians 4:6-13

6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable — if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things.

9 Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me — put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

10 I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it.

11 I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.

12 I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.

13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

### **Six steps from coveting to contentment...**

(Must be done through the power of the Holy Spirit)

1. Choose to stop worrying!

A covetous heart is never satisfied.

2. Choose to start praying!

Turn your worry into prayer and bring your requests to God.

### 3. Choose to be thankful!

We need to learn to be thankful even for the little things.

Everything we have is a gift from God, so be grateful at all times.

### 4. Choose to think differently!

Let God renew your mind by Word and don't let yourselves think the way you used to!

Jer. 15:16 - When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, O LORD God Almighty.

Shake down your thoughts—examine them and throw away anything that is not acceptable before God.

### 5. Choose to be generous!

Open your heart to share with others.

God so loved the world that He gave.

You are most like God when you give!

### 6. Choose to be content!

James 4:7 - "draw near to God and He will draw near to you"

We need to keep our eyes fixed upon Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:2)

We need to be looking ahead to our reward (Hebrews 11:26)

We need to hide the truth of God's Word in our heart that we might not sin against Him (Psalm 119:11)

Know the truth and the truth will set you free (John 8:32)

Eph. 1:17-23



17. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.

18. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,

19. and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength,

20. which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,

21. far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

22. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,

23. which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.