

Slaying The Green Eyed Monster

Based on the command of Christ #31 – “Beware of covetousness”

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not make for yourself an idol. . .
3. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God. . .
4. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. . .
5. Honor your father and your mother. . .
6. You shall not murder.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not give false testimony . . .
10. You shall not covet.

Illus: All of us are probably familiar with America’s favorite five year old, “Dennis the Menace.” You can learn a lot about yourself from watching kids, and Dennis is no exception. On one particular day Dennis is found looking at the new department store catalog that had just arrived at the Mitchell house. Dennis looks up from the catalog at his mom and dad and says, “Wow! This catalog has lots of toys and things I never even knew I wanted!”

Illus: A pastor arrived at the local ministerial meeting early. The pastor of the church where the meeting was being held was out front changing the message on the church sign.

The sign read: “God saved the best for last—You shall not covet.” The first pastor said to the other, “I sure wish we had that message board at our church so we could put messages like that on it.”

The 10th commandment is a matter of the heart!

It deals with the inside.

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

The actual original Command given by God is found in...

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."

Jesus reiterated #10 in...

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."

The NIV says it this way...

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."

Paul also mentions #10 as well...

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."

Now, I want you to notice that this command is different from the other commands dealing with relations among people.

Commands 5 through 9 deal with actions, which we know stem from the heart, but they have actions at their core.

Coveting, however, is an attitude!

It is something that is within us!

Covetousness starts with a thought that leads to making a decision.

That decision is going to end in life or death – danger or benefit.

Remember the decisions you make will make you.

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

The scripture doesn't say "he who doesn't covet".

It says "he that hates covetousness".

There is a difference.

When faced with the temptation to covet, we must realize the dangers involved and make right decisions.

There are things we desire that may not be harmful, but God never intended for us to have them.

We begin to feel that we "deserve" certain things because of situations in our lives.

Then self-righteousness comes in and gives us the freedom to make wrong decisions and take liberties from our justification.

We engage in "self-talk"...

"I work hard for my money and I don't steal and I've had to do without a lot, so I owe myself this thing in life".

That's how people justify stealing from their employers all the time!

Self-talk buys a license to covet and have things that God never intended for us to have.

When we make the choice to "hate covetousness" we are promised prolonged days.

Many believe that you find your joy in things...

And when you see the things other people have, you feel like you are lacking in the joy you could have if only you had what they did!

So you covet what they have because by obtaining it, you believe you will have more joy!

But for Christians, while many of us may know this isn't true in our heads, many still struggle to live free of covetousness!

And listen... you can covet people, possessions, prestige and positions that are not "legally" or "legitimately" yours...

And a pursuit of those things will bring destruction upon you and your family!

So God has given this 10th commandment to help us.

Covetousness is certainly something that God does not want us to have and we see Paul reiterate this in the New Testament as well.

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?

God is prohibiting an attitude of covetousness.

Why is that?

To understand that, I think it is important that we understand what coveting is.

What is coveting?

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

In scripture, you'll find that to covet is very closely related to "lust".

The Hebrew word for lust is "chamad".

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

We are told in the New Testament in...

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.*

And it all started with a covetous heart that wanted something that belonged to somebody else.

The other 9 original Commandments deal with actions, but this one with attitude.

The others are about behavior, but this one is about our inner motivation.

"Don't Steal" says keep your hands off.

"Don't Covet" says don't even think about it!

It is the mother of the other 9 sins in the commandments:

No other gods = This is the covetous worship of the gods of money and materialism as people's security.

No idols = This is the covetous bow before things that they want to possess, when in reality, those things end up possessing them!

God's Name in vain = People covet things that they never really asked God for His opinion on all the time!

Things that would possibly bring destruction to them,

And the even claim them in the name of Jesus!

Sabbath Day = stores are open on Sunday because it's one of the biggest shopping days of the week...it's all about money.

By the way, let's look at...

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"!

Honor Parents = children covet which causes them to steal from their parents, or dishonor their parents who have passed away by fighting over inheritance.

Don't kill = many are killed every day by someone who coveted what they had.

Adultery = this always begins with covetousness, wanting the spouse of another or someone who is not your own spouse.

Don't Steal = this one's obvious!

Don't Lie especially about others = usually this is done for personal gain of some kind, coveting a different reality than you've made for yourself.

The dictionary definition of "covetousness" is "grasping for more."

Casinos make billions of dollars because of the coveteous hearts of people!

This is the sin of selfishness.

You're never content!

Dr. Lee Roberson calls this, "An ancient sin dogging the steps of modern man."

Illus: A story is told of a peasant who murmured to a giant landholder of the unfairness of it all. Knowing the nature of men, the landholder promised to give the peasant all the land he could walk around in a whole day. The peasant, greedily trying to take in all the area possible, overexerted himself and dropped with a heart attack and died. He ended up with nothing.

Coveting is the matters of the heart that lead to the outward expression of all our sin in what we say and do.

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.

Coveting is the root of all sin!

You could never be able to get total control over the other 9 until this one is dealt with!

That's why you must be born again by the Spirit of God!

The inside must be cleansed so that the outside can also be cleaned up!

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.

Listen, God will not only judge us for the obvious external sins that we commit by what we say and do...

But God will also judge the sins of coveting—the inside out matters of the heart that lead to all our other sin.

God knows our hearts.

He knows the condition of our hearts better than we do!

But what really is greed or lust or covetousness?

Is it wrong to desire anything?

I think most of us realize that some desires are good, or at least not sinful.

So we need to be able to determine between legitimate desires and desires that would be covetous.

And we need to realize that Satan is out there trying to take even the legitimate desires we have and tempt us to increase those desires to covetous proportions!

He will tempt us to move beyond the legitimate desires for what God intends for our life to an illegitimate desire of people, possessions, prestige and positions that God never intended for us to have!

When we covet our desires have been misplaced.

So how can we identify covetous desire verses legitimate desire in our hearts?

I want to take a look at some principles that will help to assess our own desires and see if they are legitimate or covetous.

To do that, we first need to realize that...

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

If your desire is legitimate, it will do no harm to people.

Legitimate desires will be willing to sacrifice the thing that you desire for the good of another person or people.

If I see a new tool that my neighbor has...

Something that I like and I want one of those for myself, I should ask...

"Do I want this because my neighbor has one and if he or she has it I need to have it?"

"I couldn't let him have something that I don't have, then he might feel better than me, and I can't let that happen!"

"If they are happier than me, then it depresses me!"

That is not acting in a very loving way!

Many times we think if someone else experiences more than us, then we must not be happy!

One way to know if covetousness is in your heart is if you find it hard to rejoice when the other guy gets blessed in a way that you didn't!

The Lord tells us through Paul to love each other and he tells us what that looks like.

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.

If your desire is legitimate, then you would be willing to say,

"I'm going to be thankful that they were blessed and I'm happy for them!"

Instead of "Aww man, I wish I had that!"

"When are you going to give it to me?"

"That's not fair... I want it!"

A covetous desire will have no regard for people or relationships if they get in the way of what is desired.

Listen to this story of King Ahab who coveted a vineyard of Naboth.

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."

Now we don't know just from this whether this desire was covetous or legitimate by this statement, but we see by Ahab's response, that this was purely covetous.

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.

Ahab felt that the only thing that would make him happy was Naboth's vineyard.

He didn't care if it would have harmed Naboth to give it up.

He didn't care that Naboth didn't want to part with it.

He just dwelt on what he wanted and would not let it go.

What happens?

Ahab's wife, Jezebel, has Naboth killed and then Ahab takes the vineyard he wanted.

If people or relationships get in the way of covetous desire, so be it.

But God call them out through the Prophet and condemned them which affected not only Ahab and Jezebel...

But also their children!

And it all started with a covetous heart that wanted something that belonged to somebody else.

The person with a covetous desire thinks people or relationships can be sacrificed!

“Don’t get in the way of what I want!”

“If you do, you can be eliminated, or at least our relationship can be sacrificed!”

Another principle to know in determining if a desire is covetous or legitimate is to know that...

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

Paul writes to the Philippians and says...

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.”

Paul trusts the Lord and His provision.

He says he has learned to be content.

How did he learn that?

He learns it by being in close communion with the Lord.

He knows that God will not only provide, but that God desires to bless us.

The only way we can live in that contentment is as we draw close to the Lord.

If we don’t, we are not going to be content with the Lord’s provision no matter how much we have.

Illus: John Rockefeller, the founder of the Standard oil company and the richest man in the world around the turn of the 1900's, was once asked, "How much money is enough money?" He replied, "Just a little bit more."

The only way to be content is to draw close to the Lord.

If covetousness is a problem for you in this area, then be generous with your possessions and trust the Lord in his provision and learn to be content.

Paul tells Timothy in...

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."

Covetous desire will only lead to destruction and pain in life.

We think great gain is great stuff, but He said just the opposite.

Godliness with contentment is great gain.

This means you can have godliness and not be content.

Covetousness brings great loss, but contentment brings great gain.

Contentment is enjoying what we already have and covetousness is focusing on what we don't and can't have, thus never enjoying what we do have.

That's what Got Adam and Eve into trouble!

They couldn't see the blessings they had because they only had their eyes on what they couldn't have!

The secret of contentment is focusing on and enjoying God's presence.

In His presence is the fullness of joy and riches evermore.

If Christ is our greatest desire and our fullness of joy, our riches, our ego, our success, then there is nothing of the world that can compare!

However, if you find that you are empty, not complete, waiting for something out there and willing to do whatever you have to do to get it,

There is something wrong with your relationship with God!

Seek first the Kingdom and His righteousness!

Learn to be content by drawing close to the Lord!

Another way to determine if our desire is legitimate or covetous is to know that...

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

Listen to what James says...

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.

James says that fights and quarrels and killing come from the desires that battle within you!

Covetous desire leads us into other sins!

David is a perfect example of this in the situation with Bathsheba...

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.

As he looked on Bathsheba and coveted her, it led him to numerous other sins.

He not only coveted her – and broke the 10th commandment...

He tried to cover it up (lying)... 9th commandment!

He stole another man's wife... 8th commandment!

He committed adultery with her – broke the 7th commandment!

He committed murder – breaking the 6th commandment!

By doing this, he certainly dishonored his parents and their family name breaking the 5th commandment!

The Prophet Nathan said to him when rebuking him, "you despise the word of the LORD" AND "you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own" and "by doing this you have shown utter contempt for the LORD".

The 4th commandment which is the "Sabbath" commandment is really about honoring God and resting and reflecting on His Word and the Prophet accused him of doing just the opposite whether it happened on a "Sabbath" day or not.

By the way when people so easily put everything else before church attendance, they really are doing the same thing!

They reveal the spiritual adultery in their hearts!

In 2 Sam. 10:12, David had said - 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."

So in doing what he did, because He claimed to represent the Lord, he was breaking the 3rd commandment by taking the name of the Lord in vain!

We could also say his covetousness of her was an idol –breaking the 2nd commandment!

And pretty obviously, He had put the false gods of pleasure and self before the Lord, breaking the 1st commandment!

So David's covetousness led him to break really ALL the other commands of the Lord.

That's why it's the Heart of the commandments!

If you think that you could never do such a thing, then you don't understand the subtle nature of Satan!

He does not try to get you to go from "faithful saint" to "sinner" in one action...

He tempts you with one small step at a time!

The next thing you know, you're saying... "How did this happen?"

Subtly, step by step, we did not guard our heart against the lies of Satan and we let ourselves be led away from being close to the Lord!

II. COVETOUSNESS in your Heart brings terrible CONSEQUENCES!

1. A COVETOUS HEART will become CORRUPTED!

As we have already said coveting on the inside within our hearts will lead to all other sin expressed on the outside in what we say and do.

a) Whatever moral standard we may think we have, no matter how good of a person we think we are will quickly deteriorate if the covetous nature of our hearts is not changed.

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.

Paul lays it out plain and simple for us.

If as believers we continue to have a heart that covets the things of this world and the pleasures that money can buy, then it is only a matter of time before we wander from the faith.

Like the child who wanders away from his parents in a department store to look at the toys he/she wants to have, we also will separated ourselves from the presence of God.

2. A COVETOUS HEART will become CALLOUSED!

Covetousness hardens your heart towards the love of God and others.

Those who covet only really care about getting what they want.

For some, their hearts get so hard that they are willing to do anything to satisfy their desires.

Only to find that when they finally get what they want, they still feel empty because they just want more!

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."

When our hearts are full of covetousness, we they become hardened to others and it's impossible to keep the commandment "Love your neighbor as yourself."

3. A COVETOUS HEART will be CONDEMNED ETERNALLY!

God calls the man or woman whose hearts are full of covetousness a FOOL!

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."

Notice what Jesus says about this man...

- He was a successful farmer with an abundant harvest.
- Jesus said nothing to indicate that this man was dishonest or evil.

What this man had... he worked for.

He was not a thief.

Nothing is said to indicate that he didn't treat his servants righteously.

- This man was a wise investor... a shrewd business man.

He was not frivolous or wasteful.

He saved his wealth and prepared for a rainy day.

- He would enjoy the fruit of his labor.

Now it was time to retire and celebrate a good life.

By the standards of this world, this man was a great success.

He was someone to be admired and respected by others.

But God called this man a fool!

Why? The matters of his heart were all wrong.

His desires were only directed toward the wealth of this world.

This man looked for security in the things of the world and not in a relationship with God!

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!

How do we overcome covetousness?

Battle the Lies of Satan with the Truth of God!

We need to battle Satan and his temptations toward covetousness with the truth!

People covet because they believe a lie!

They believe that if they obtain the thing desired, life will be better, it will be full.

This is what the author of psalm 73 believed.

He began believing the lies that Satan told him....

Psalm 73:1-5

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

(He starts out repeating what he has learned, Basically, "I know God is good, but...")

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.

("I wanted what they had because it seemed like they had a better life")

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.

He is believing the lies of Satan here!

This is what happens to people so often...

"I know God you are good, but look at them."

"Do you see what they have?"

"How come they have been blessed and not me?"

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

"God this isn't fair. I am a good person. I deserve more than them. What is the point of living for You if I can't have a better life?"

The problem with this view that it's too narrow!

We are looking at a moment and not the eternal!

The psalmist continues on...

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.

(The psalmists perspective changes due to being in the presence of God.)

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.

To battle the lies of Satan, we need to draw close to God in relationship and learn the truths of His word so we can stand firm against Satan's attacks!

God is with us, we just fail to remember that!

Overcoming the sin of coveting is the only way to be able to overcome all the other temptations of sin!

We have to get to the root of the problem!

Coveting began in the heart of Satan!

Satan desired to ascend to the throne of God.

He wanted for himself what rightly belonged to God.

Satan wanted to take for himself the worship and praise that was God's alone.

Since the fall of mankind in the Garden of Eden, by nature, we are self-centered and selfish.

We want even what is not ours.

But we are powerless to cure our hearts in our own strength!

Only Jesus can transform our covetous hearts and restore the image of God within us!

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.

When we humble ourselves and come near to God through Jesus, our hearts will be transformed from the inside out.

Paul describes the process by which we can overcome covetousness.

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!

We need to do as James 4:7 says, “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)

The way to keep your focus on the Lord and be free is through some very practical ways...

Bible study, fellowship, serving, worshiping.

This is why being part of a church is so important!

This is why it is important to take advantage of our discipleship opportunities that the Church offers!

If you have found yourself living a life of covetousness...

Again... God has one word for you... REPENT!

Start battling the lies of Satan by changing your way of thinking to God's way of thinking!

You do this by... growing in the truth of God's word, trusting in His provision, and loving God and people through His power!

Know that God will take care of you!

Understand that no good thing will God withhold from you!

Come into agreement with the Word of God that, "God gives me everything I need and I lack nothing!"

Before that Resurrection Sunday morning 2000 years ago, there was no way for mankind to overcome the sin nature,

But because Jesus overcame and now lives in the heart of born again Christians, we can overcome too!

On Resurrection morning, Christ overcame the power of death when God raised him from the dead.

As the Scripture says, "Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your sting? Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

As Christians we are joyous today because HE IS RISEN and our hearts have been made new!

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.

God has made provision for everything we will ever need!

We NEVER have a legitimate reason to EVER covet anything!

The heart of ALL God's Commands is "Beware of Covetousness"...

How's your heart doing?

Prayer of recommitment