

The Love Of Money

“But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

1 Timothy 6:9-10

As might be thought at first reading, these verses are not judgments condemning the rich. The Bible does not read, “Money is the root of all evil.” In the first place, the admonition is directed to the materialist, not to the rich. True, the rich are often too attached to their acquired possessions, but quite often the poor waste their lives in an endless search of desired possessions. Paul writes of those who will or those who want to be rich.

The word “will” implies a longing or a craving to be rich. It is probable that most fall into the evils he names in their passion for riches, even if they never actually obtain them. Thus, he concludes in verse 10, “the love of money is the root of all evil.” This can be an evil in anyone’s life. It is this love — this craving to have — that identifies one as a materialist; earth-bound instead of heaven-bound. Christ warned, “Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth” (Luke 12:15). The purpose of someone’s life is not to “layeth up treasure for himself,” but it is learning to be “rich toward God” (Luke 12:21).

One of the greatest contributions to happiness in life is the ability to be content. Yet contentment is probably one of the most elusive temperaments of our society. Paul said in Philippians 4:11-13, “Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Paul learned contentment, not at the feet of Gamaliel, but at the feet of Christ (Matthew 8:20; Luke 9:58). Contentment can only be ours when we sincerely set our heart on what is heavenly instead of what is earthly (Colossians 3:2).

Jerry Johnson