

“Two things have I required of thee; deny me them not before I die: Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.” This is a well-balanced request in the Christian’s life. If we will seek God’s kingdom and righteousness first, all that we need in this life will be given to us (**Matthew 6:33**). Remember, one of the characteristics of the last days is covetousness (**II Timothy 3:1-2**).

In conclusion, if you really want to see how well you are doing with the tenth commandment in **Exodus chapter twenty**, just add up everything you value highly that money cannot buy or death cannot take away.

“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.”

Exodus 20:17

“I have heard thousands of confessions, but never one of covetousness.”

-Francis Xavier

The RICHES OF GRACE

Robert W. Reed
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"hath appeared to all men." Titus 2:11

Covetousness

“And he said unto them, 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

Covetousness is the opposite of contentment and is a very grave sin. It is listed in the Bible among the worst of sins (**Romans 1:29**) and is equivalent to idolatry (**Ephesians 5:3-5**). According to **I Corinthians 6:9-10**, covetousness has damned many souls to hell. It is born from an evil heart (**Matthew 7:21-23**) and will be prevalent in the last days (**II Timothy 3:1-2**). The sin of covetousness is forbidden by the tenth commandment (**Exodus 20:17**). Today wealth has become a status symbol and success is measured by it. In **Luke 12:15**, God said that *“a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.”*

“COVETOUSNESS IS DRY DRUNKENNESS”

-Thomas Watson



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*“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”*
Acts 16:31

Covetousness is the opposite of contentment. It is excessive desires for what we do not have, or the desire for what someone else has. It is also the grasping for more and more in view of hoarding it, that is, greed for wealth. The word “covet” or “covetousness” is usually used in a bad sense in the Scriptures. In many cases, we mistakenly look upon ambition, zeal, and enthusiasm as something great, when in fact, the motivating force is simply covetousness.

THE CAUSE OF COVETOUSNESS

According to **Mark 7:21-23**, covetousness is a sin of the heart (lower nature), *“For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.”* Every human being shares this built-in natural tendency to covet and must guard against it. In **Romans 7:7**, the Apostle said covetousness is lust and that the law reveals what is in our sinful hearts, *“What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.”* Covetousness is listed in the Bible among the worst of sins according to **Romans 1:29**, *“Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers.”* Please consider the entire context of **Romans chapter one**, especially **verses 18-32**. In **Ephesians 5:5**, covetousness is equivalent to idolatry, because it is putting self in the place of God in our lives as the object of our devotion. The pursuit of personal gain can become idolatry as we worship at the altar of self-interest. Covetousness cools one’s love for God and has caused many to stay away from the house of God in their quest to gain more possessions.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF COVETOUSNESS

According to **I Corinthians 6:9-10**, covetousness excludes a man from the kingdom of God and damns his soul to hell. We are told in **Luke 12:15** to *“beware of covetousness.”* The context (**Luke 12:15-21**) reveals a rich farmer who had a bumper crop one year. In his quest

to hoard what he had gained, instead of using it for the glory of God, he lost his possessions and his life. Greed is like drinking salt water, there is no satisfaction and it will drive you crazy. According to **Luke 18:18-30** and **Matthew 19:16:22**, the rich young ruler did not inherit the kingdom of God because of covetousness.

Covetousness (lust) is the cause of all sin according to **I John 2:15-16**. For example, in **Genesis 3:5-10**, it brought about the fall of man when Eve coveted the wisdom of the world; in **Joshua 7:21** Achan coveted the accursed thing; David committed adultery when he coveted another man’s wife (**II Samuel 11:2-5**); Elisha’s servant became a leper after coveting money and clothes (**II Kings 5:1-27**); Judas Iscariot coveted money and committed suicide (**Matthew 27:1-10**); the Prodigal Son coveted pleasure and was brought to ruin (**Luke 15:12**); Ahab coveted another man’s land and was later judged (**I Kings 2**); Lot’s wife coveted city life and was judged by God in **Genesis 19**; and Balaam coveted money and later lost his life (**II Peter 2:15**).

“One can be covetous when he has little, much, or anything between, for covetousness comes from the heart, not from the circumstances of life.”

THE CURE FOR COVETOUSNESS

-Charles Ryrie

Obviously, the cure for covetousness is contentment according to **Hebrews 13:5**, *“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”* In **I Timothy 6:6**, God says that *“godliness with contentment is great gain.”* The context of **I Timothy 6** shows that riches cause blindness (**verse 5-8**), and bondage (**verse 9-12**), and boasting (**verse 17-18**). This is why in **Matthew 13:22**, the Lord refers to the *“deceitfulness of riches.”* The Apostle Paul makes this statement in **Philippians 4:11**, *“Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.”* Another way to deal with a covetous heart is to develop a giving attitude according to **Acts 20:35** and **II Corinthians 9:5-10**. To deal with a covetous heart is to develop a giving attitude. The Psalmist, in **Psalms 119:36**, said, *“Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.”* I believe every Christian should pray according to **Proverbs 30:7-9**,