**Covetousness**

1. Covetousness Condemned
2. Among many heinous sins, covetousness is listed.
   1. Adultery, fornication, murder, thefts, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. (Among others.)
   2. **Covetousness is no small sin, and must be addressed as a serious offense toward God, and threat to the spiritual man.**
3. It can, and will keep you out of heaven.
   1. ***“covetousness…those who practice such things are deserving of death” (Romans 1:29, 32)***. (List of the things the Gentiles did as God gave them over to a debased mind.)
   2. Achan coveted and was stoned.
      1. After taking Jericho, God gave specific instructions to the Israelites about what to take and what to leave. There were accursed things to be avoided **(cf. Joshua 6:18-19**).
      2. Achan confessed his sin, saying he **coveted** the possessions (**cf. Joshua 7:21)**.
   3. The false teachers of which Peter warns were covetous in their practices (**cf. 2 Peter 2:3, 14)**.
      1. ***Covetousness is a vile characteristic of one who cares not for the things of God.***
   4. **Many see covetousness only as the desire for something that is someone else’s, or the desire for something that God has restricted. This can be the case, but there is more to covetousness.**
4. Covetousness Defined
5. Covetousness.
   1. “greedy desire to have more” (Strong).
   2. “desire to have more” (Vine).
   3. Most times the term is used with regard to money. However, the object of covetousness can be anything.
      1. **What may be of great value to you, and therefore you covet, may not be of value to another.**
      2. **It is also important to note that any class of man is subject to the temptation to be covetous. (One can always desire more!)**
6. **Colossians 3:1-7** (For a better idea about covetousness.)
   1. **(5-7)** – It is named among the sexual sins, which are wholly unclean.
   2. **(1-4)** – The Colossian brethren were reminded of their baptism and what it demanded.
      1. Seek and set mind on things above.
         1. One who submits to Christ in baptism offers his entire life in devotion to God.
         2. ***“whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus” (v. 17).***
      2. Not on things of the earth.
         1. The Christian is one who has placed his value in spiritual things.
         2. His desires for *“things of the earth”* are crucified.
   3. ***“covetousness, which is idolatry”***
      1. Greedy desire to have more is self-seeking.
         1. The list of things around covetousness exhibit this quality.
         2. **The sexual sins are never without selfishness.**
      2. The self-serving attitude actually leads to the opposite – serving something.
         1. ***“for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage” (2 Peter 2:19)***.
         2. Anything placed above God becomes our idol.
         3. ***Covetousness is the desire for something that is so strong and unrestricted it elevates above God****.*
      3. Covetousness reveals impaired logic.
         1. **1 Corinthians 8:4-6** – There is only one God. Idols are merely lifeless images made by man.
         2. **Acts 17:24-29** – God compared to idols shows the problem with, and folly in idolatry.
            1. The idol is nothing, and deserves no worship.
            2. God is Creator, and deserves full attention.
            3. ***Covetousness is “worship[ing] and serv[ing] the creature rather than the Creator” (Romans 1:25) like those Gentiles in Romans 1.***
      4. Covetousness shows discontentment.
         1. **1 Timothy 6:6-10** – A Christian is commanded to be content.
            1. The life of a Christian is a new life that desires spiritual things (**cf. Matthew 6:19-21**).
            2. We can’t take anything from earth with us. ***(cf. “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption” – 1 Corinthians 15:50***).
            3. We should be content with the simplest necessities!
            4. ***Covetousness seeks opportunity to attain even if by sinful means. Thus, the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil.***

*It may be that the opportunity never arises. Covetousness begins in the heart* ***(cf. Mark 7:21-23).***

* + - 1. Discontentment with what God has given shows lack of perspective 🡪

1. Contentment realizes where the true value is.
2. Instruction to those already rich. (Those who desire to be rich should take note.)
   1. **1 Timothy 6:17-19** – Trust in God, not riches.
      1. Contrast between ***“uncertain riches”*** and ***“the living God.”***
         1. When we trust in riches we become idolatrous – Idols have no power or promise.
         2. Trusting in the LIVING God provides care – He is the giver of every gift **(Cf. James 1:17**).
            1. The Living God gives true security **(cf. Hebrews 13:5-6).**
   2. Laying up treasures for eternal life (*Covetousness seeks to establish on earth, which is folly*.)🡪
3. This world is not our home.
   1. **Hebrews 11:13-16** – Abraham and family.
      1. They held spiritual promises at the forefront of their minds.
      2. This caused them to realize they were sojourners, not permanent settlers.
      3. They look for something better! (Not more of something perishable.)
   2. **2 Peter 3:10-13** – These things will perish!
      1. Emphasis on **v. 11** – Everything physical will be destroyed. Even our bodies will not last, but will be transformed or raised spiritual.
         1. Because of this we should dwell on the spiritual!
         2. **V. 13** – the man who looks for the spiritual heavens and earth will not be moved to covet.
4. Heavenly treasures are far greater.
   1. **Ecclesiastes 2:4-11** – Solomon was seeking contentment. Seeking substantive living.
      1. The things acquired ***“excelled more than all who were before [him] in Jerusalem.”***
      2. Yet, as much as he had, it was like nothing, for it was all vanity.
      3. ***“grasping for the wind”*** – nothing is there. It is not truly substantive.
   2. **John 14:1-2** – Jesus told the truth. Treasures in heaven are awaiting those who lay them up during their lives. The mansions are prepared!
      1. **1 Peter 1:4** – These riches do not fade!

**Conclusion**

1. **Ephesians 5:5** – No covetous person can inherit the kingdom.
   1. How can he if he values earthly things more?
   2. Christians are spiritual creatures created for a spiritual land. Act that way!
2. ***“But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints” (Ephesians 5:3)***.
   1. Covetousness is not fitting for saints.
   2. It completely contradicts our mission, and values.
3. What do you desire most?