

Stewardship: Motives of the Heart
Lesson #2 I See, I Want, I Take

Memory Verse **Get Scriptures to read**

Matthew 13:22, (NKJV) “ Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful ”.

The Prosperity Gospel

Corinthians 8:1–7 (NKJV) Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: ² that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. ³ For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, ⁴ imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. ⁵ And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God. ⁶ So we urged Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also complete this grace in you as well. ⁷ But as you abound in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us—see that you abound in this grace also.

- Charles Spurgeon said, “I believe that it is anti-Christian and unholy for any Christian to live with the object of accumulating wealth. You will say, ‘Are we not to strive all we can to get all the money we can?’ You may do so. I cannot doubt but what, in so doing, you may do service to the cause of God. But what I said was that to live *with the object* of accumulating wealth is anti-Christian.”

1. The Abrahamic covenant is a means to material entitlement.

The prosperity gospel teaches that the primary purpose of the Abrahamic covenant was for God to bless Abraham materially. Kenneth Copeland wrote in his 1974 book *The Laws of Prosperity*, “Since God’s covenant has been established and prosperity is a provision of this covenant, you need to realize that prosperity belongs to you now!”

2. Jesus’s atonement extends to the “sin” of material poverty.

“the basic principle of the Christian life is to know that God put our sin, sickness, disease, sorrow, grief, and poverty on Jesus at Calvary.”

***2 Corinthians 8:9** “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that you through his poverty might become rich.”

3. Christians give in order to gain material compensation from God.

Luke 6:38 Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”

According to American Mythos, a national survey showed that 82% of Americans thought they were materialistic and 77% said they are self-indulgent.

Mark 10:29–30 (NKJV) So Jesus answered and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel’s, ³⁰ who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life.

4. Faith is a self-generated spiritual force that leads to prosperity.

5. Prayer is a tool to force God to grant prosperity.

***James 4:3** (NKJV) You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.

As Creflo Dollar writes, “When we pray, believing that we have already received what we are praying, God has no choice but to make our prayers come to pass. . . . It is a key to getting results as a Christian.”

Blurred Spiritual Eyesight

“Some love this world so much that it swallows up their love for the truth. As their treasures here increase, their interest in the heavenly treasure decreases. The more they possess of this world, the more closely do they hug it to them, as if fearful their coveted treasure would be taken from them. The more they possess, the less do they have to bestow upon others, for the more they have, the poorer they feel. O, the deceitfulness of riches! They will not see and feel the wants of the cause of God.”—Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, p. 267.

Matthew 13:3–9 (NKJV) Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: “Behold, a sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. ⁵ Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. ⁶ But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. ⁷ And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. ⁸ But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

Matthew 13:22 (NKJV) *Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.*

The Steps of Covetousness

Genesis 3:1–6 (NKJV) *Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’”² And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden;³ but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’”⁴ Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die.⁵ For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.*

1 Kings 21:4–6 (NKJV)⁴ *So Ahab went into his house sullen and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, “I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers.” And he lay down on his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no food.⁵ But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said to him, “Why is your spirit so sullen that you eat no food?”⁶ He said to her, “Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite, and said to him, ‘Give me your vineyard for money; or else, if it pleases you, I will give you another vineyard for it.’ And he answered, ‘I will not give you my vineyard.’”*

Greed—Having Things Your Way

Isaiah 56:11 (NKJV) *Yes, they are greedy dogs Which never have enough. And they are shepherds Who cannot understand; They all look to their own way, Every one for his own gain, From his own territory.*

Matthew 26:14–16 (NKJV) *Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests¹⁵ and said, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?” And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver.*

¹⁶ *So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.*

“How tenderly the Saviour dealt with him who was to be His betrayer! In His teaching, Jesus dwelt upon principles of benevolence that struck at the very root of covetousness. He presented before Judas the heinous character of greed, and many a time the disciple realized that his character had been portrayed, and his sin pointed out; but he would not confess and forsake his unrighteousness.”—E.G. White, *Desire of Ages*, p. 295.

James 4:1–2 (NKJV) *Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?² You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.*

***1 Timothy 6:10** (NKJV) *For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

Self-Control

Acts 24:24–26 (NKJV) *And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.²⁵ Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, “Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you.”²⁶ Meanwhile he also hoped that money would be given him by Paul, that he might release him. Therefore he sent for him more often and conversed with him.*

Galatians 5:22–25 (NKJV) *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.²⁴ And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.²⁵ If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*

Joshua 7:21 (NKJV) *When I saw among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. And there they are, hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent, with the silver under it.”*

Job 1:20–21 (NKJV)²⁰ *Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped.²¹ And he said: “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, And naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord.”*

Ecclesiastes 5:14–15 *But those riches perish through misfortune; When he begets a son, there is nothing in his hand.¹⁵ As he came from his mother’s womb, naked shall he return, To go as he came; And he shall take nothing from his labor Which he may carry away in his hand.*

Galatians 2:20 (NKJV) *I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*