

Theme: Jesus calls us to resist the spirit of greed, being content, trusting God's faithfulness rather than money, and generously passing God's blessings on so that the kingdom of God may flourish.

## I. Intro - Martin Shkreli

- A. Brilliant but controversial young man
- B. Has founded and led several mainly pharmaceutical companies
- C. Left Retrophin in 2014 - now sued for \$65 million for insider trading irregularities, etc. To enrich himself
- D. Started Turing Phram. In 2015, bought rights to Daraprim (drug mainly used to treat AIDS and cancer) - and raised price for this 70 year old drug from \$13.50 a pill to \$750 a pill
- E. He is now the face of greed incarnate and "most hated man in America"
- F. But is his greed problem unique - or is it a danger for us?

## II. The Problem: A Spirit of Greed

- A. False teachers: a real problem
  - If anyone **teaches false doctrines** and does not agree to the **sound instruction** of our Lord Jesus Christ and to **godly teaching**, 1 Timothy 6:3
  - 1. Paul is dealing with false teachers & their doctrines
  - 2. Opposite of sound instruction & godly doctrine
  - 3. Word '**teaching**' and '**teaching false doctrines**' built on same Greek word
  - 4. Timothy must confront & correct this false teaching

- 5. This was huge problem in late NT period
  - a. Some form of διδάσκω occurs 51x in Paul
  - b. 28 times in just 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus!
  - c. 15 times in just 1 Timothy
  - d. 2 John is only place more than 1&2 Timothy, Titus

- B. Specific false teaching: prosperity gospel/spirit of greed
  - If anyone **teaches false doctrines** and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, <sup>4</sup> he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions <sup>5</sup> and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and **who think that godliness is a means to financial gain**. 1 Timothy 6:3–5

- 1. Specific false doctrine: godliness makes you money
- 2. This has always been a problem in religion
- 3. Still a problem today - just look at "prosperity gospel" - which is no gospel at all

- C. The lure of the spirit of greed

- 1. This idea that serving God will make us rich is perennially popular because it appeals to one of the most powerful idols we worship: greed.
  - Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and **greed, which is idolatry**. Colossians 3:5
- 2. At its root greed is idolatry - we worship money and possessions and think that they rather than God will fulfill us.

3. The god of money and greed is fundamentally opposed to the life of discipleship

No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money. Matthew 6:24

- a. Greed is not just a desire - it is a rival god!
- b. We can not worship Jesus and greed - they are fundamentally opposed
- c. Because greed is a false God, it destroys our ability to glorify God and thus it robs us of the only true joy.

### III. The Solution: A Proper Attitude To Money & Possessions

- A. We must have an attitude of contentment not greed  
But godliness with **contentment** is great gain. <sup>7</sup> For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. <sup>8</sup> But if we have food and clothing, we will be **content** with that. 1 Timothy 6:6–8
  1. Paul combats greed by contentment - mentioned 2x
  2. Greed is the belief that 'more' will bring us satisfaction and joy, but contentment knows that what we need is God - not more stuff.
  3. Note Paul says food and clothing is enough!
  4. The outcome of idolatrous greed  
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.** <sup>10</sup> 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.** 1 Timothy 6:9–10

- a. Three phrases for **greed** & for **outcome**
- b. Greed leads to temptation, ruin, evil, wandering from faith

5. Why we must be content: to avoid all this pain!
6. We must be content for we were made for God, not things, and therefore a lust for things is a forsaking of our own joy.
7. This is very difficult to do, for few things run more counter to our culture and the American Dream than contentment

- B. We must be not be proud or put our hope in money, but put our hope in God

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 1 Timothy 6:17

1. Riches tempt us to be proud - think much of ourselves and our self-sufficiency
2. Riches tempt us to place our hope in them and what they can provide, rather than God and what He plans for us.
3. Hope in riches is contradictory to trust in God's faithfulness  
Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." Hebrews 13:5
  - a. Contentment rather than love of money
  - b. We can be content, because God is faithful - He will never leave us!

4. Jesus spoke about this often - trust in God  
Then Jesus said to his disciples: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. 23 Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. 24 Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds!"  
Luke 12:22–24

- a. Hope in riches leads to worry; hope in God, rest
- b. Consider the ravens - think about them
- c. At least be like the birds - have that much faith
- d. You are much more valuable to God - He will care for you

5. Whereas contentment deals with my present circumstances, hope deals with my future and security - is it found in God or in money?

C. We have been blessed to be a blessing - not consume it on ourselves

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with **everything for our enjoyment**.

<sup>18</sup>Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 1 Timothy 6:17–18

1. We are given riches to do good, be generous, and share
2. We have been blessed to be a blessing!
3. This does not mean we are ascetics and try to be poor - **everything for our enjoyment**

- a. God blesses us so that we enjoy His blessings
- b. But we do not hoard them - we willingly share them - and find joy in the sharing!

4. Greed hopes in riches rather than God & hoards blessings for itself, but contentment trusts in God & delights to pass blessings on to others.
5. We especially delight to give so that the kingdom may flourish and grow, as others are able to receive the Gospel and come to Christ - here and around the world.

D. To overcome greed, we need an eternal perspective  
In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life. 1 Timothy 6:19

1. Once again we are back at an eternal perspective!
2. Without an eternal perspective it is virtually impossible to resist the greed of our age and live to bless others rather than living for ourselves.
3. But the life built on an eternal perspective lives to glorify God, actively participates in kingdom work, is totally committed to Christ and His cause, is full of faith, and therefore gladly uses the blessings of God to bless others.

#### IV. Applying the Authentic Word

A. Is money an idol in my life?

1. Many things can be idols - not just little statues
2. Money & greed is a perennial stronghold idol
3. This is especially in our culture - we have institutionalized greed

4. Thus we have to be on our guard against money and greed - our culture beckons us to worship this god constantly
5. Which column of the table characterizes my life?

American “Dream”	Kingdom Reality
Whoever dies with the most toys wins!	Life does not consist in the abundance of possessions
Joy consists in the next possession	Joy is found in God - and being content
Our hope and trust for the future are in our bank accounts	Our hope and trust are in God and His promises to take care of us
More money means more stuff now and greater security for the future	More money means a greater chance to bless others now & in the future

**B. Building a life free from greed & worship of money**

1. Recognize the great danger for us in our culture - resisting this idol will require constant vigilance
2. Consistently focus on eternity rather than the present
  - a. An eternal focus undermines the idol of money!
  - b. Meditating on God & eternity is an antibiotic against the infection of greed!
3. Practice thanksgiving and contentment
  - a. Express thanks to God daily for big and small things
  - b. Express contentment & gratitude in conversations
  - c. This Thanksgiving - be content; DON'T SHOP!!!!!!

4. Give sacrificially in faith for God’s Kingdom
  - a. God does not need us to give - WE need to give
  - b. Giving deeply, sacrificially undermines heart of greed
  - c. Giving deeply, sacrificially encourages faith in God and His faithful provision
  - d. This includes regular giving, missions giving, building fund, OCC, etc.
  - e. We have been blessed - let’s be a blessing!!

**The Disciple and Money**

1 Timothy 6:3-10; 17-19

October 18, 2015

Prayer

Psalm 67:1-2

Teaching keywords: money and finances; giving; contentment; anxiety and worry; blessing; gratitude and thanksgiving

1 May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine upon us, <sup>2</sup> that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations. Psalms 67:1–2

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