

The Proper Attitude Toward Things

Text : **I Tim. 6: 3-18**

INTRODUCTION :

A. We live in a bountiful land.

1. It has been more than 60 yrs. since this nation has seen really hard times.
2. America's poor are rich by world standards. (**Must keep people out**)
3. People in the U.S. have come to feel entitled to the good life.

B. We have come to take God's blessings for granted ... as if God owes us.

1. **ILL. :** A man was blessed by another for years. He owed all to him. He lost his feeling of gratitude and sold his benefactor out to a competitor. When the benefactor reminded him of all he had done for him, the man replied, "Yes, but what have you done for me lately?"
2. **Application :** We treat God just like this guy treated his benefactor. God has taken such good care of us for so long, we've come to take Him for granted.

C. Many have come to view themselves as the source of their blessings.

1. Of course I'm healthy; I eat right; and work out regularly.
2. I deserve this promotion. I was in the top 1/3 of my class in college and I haven't missed a day of work since I hired in here. (**God didn't give it, I earned it.**)

D. The sin of ingratitude is as the sin of rebellion.

1. The truth remains true no matter who denies it. (**Deny God as the source.**)
2. There is no blessing we have or achieve that did not originate from God.

I Cor. 4: 7- For who regards you as superior?

What do you have that you did not receive?

And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

3. It is God who controls what we have, what we get, and what we can achieve.

TRANSITION :

One's attitude toward things, most often reflects his attitude toward God.

Therefore, we must ever be mindful to keep a proper attitude toward "things."

I. We must never evaluate people on the basis of the *things* they possess.

A. In most of the world there is a very clear prejudice against poor people.

1. The poor are often held in low esteem by those who have prospered more.
 - * **We look down on the Pharisees for things wealth is a sign of God's favor, but inwardly allow that same thinking to corrupt our hearts.**
 - a. Poor people are viewed as having lower morals and lesser values.
 - b. Some view them as being of lesser intelligence , lazy , etc.
 - c. Because they have less, they are considered of lesser value.
2. Even many churches have prejudices against the poor.
 - a. Few congregations have a significant outreach to the poor.
 - b. Those who reach out to the poor often segregate their own children from the poor kids.
 - c. I have known congregations who geared their outreach to people of substance hoping to gain financially from their conversion.

ILL. : Elders built mission church building in a wealthy town when their members were in a neighboring poor town. They hope to convert rich people to support their mission.

Application : The gospel is specifically for the poor.
God wants souls, not money.

B. Jesus was anointed of God to preach the gospel to the poor.

1. **Read ... Luke 4: 16- 21**
2. **Luke 7: 20 ..** Jesus sited the gospel being preached to the poor as proof He is Christ.
3. **Luke 14: 13- When you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the ...**

C. James instructed Christians to NOT give favor to the rich. ... James 2: 1-7

D. Judging by possessions is a foolish standard. (It calls God into question.)

1. One has nothing that he has not been given. (**I Cor. 4: 7**)
2. Jesus Himself taught that possessions are not the measure of a person.
 - Luke 12: 15- Then He said to them, "Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions."**
3. Those who are most attuned to the spiritual are least attuned to the physical so they will be less prosperous.
 - * **Jesus was so poor He had no place to sleep.**

II. To desire wealth is to desire an obstacle to one's salvation. (*To be earthbound*)

A. Given a choice, few would choose to be poor.

1. Many are impoverished because of bad choices they made, but don't want to be poor.
2. It's easier to resist the temptation to desire wealth when one has no potential to escape.
3. It is more difficult in the U.S. because anyone can be rich who is willing to

ILL. : An immigrant left everything behind when he escaped communism. Worked obsessively, but became rich. (*His children grew up like weeds.*)

B. Managing wealth on the earth makes it hard for a person to go to Heaven.

1. **Read ... Luke 18: 18- 25**
2. Satan uses the desire for wealth to ensnare and enslave people.
 - Read ... I Tim. 6: 6-10**
 - a. The devil lies and deceives promising things he cannot deliver.
 - b. **Vs. 9** ... Being wealthy sounds SO good, but there is a snare hidden in it.
 - c. **Vs. 10** ... Wealth has the potential to lead one away from the faith.

C. We are commanded to be content with what God has given us.

1. **Vs. 8**
 - a. No matter how rich the people of the world get, they want more. (**Bill Gates**)
 - b. God commands us to be humble enough to accept what he has given us, even if the amount is very small. (**Food, clothing and shelter**)
2. The absence of contentment reflects a lack of trust in God.
 - a. He has promised to provide for us if we put Him first. (**Seek first & .. Mt. 6:33**)
 - b. Those with faith trust Him to do so. (**Others pad their bank account**)
3. Every person is forced to make a decision whether to serve God or himself.
 - a. **Luke 16:13- No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.**
 - b. This verse is in the context of the dishonorable, but wise steward who served himself.

D. There is a great temptation for the prosperous to place their trust in their wealth.

1. The poor have no wealth, so they have no wealth in which to trust.
2. The desire to be independent seems to be inherent in the character of man.
 - a. Americans don't want to be dependant upon anyone for anything. (**ill.- car**)

- b. This attitude spills over into our religion.
 - 1) People will not rely on Jesus ... want to work their way to Heaven.
 - 2) When struggling spiritually, they will not reach out for help.
- 3. Preachers are commanded to warn the rich Americans not to trust in money.
 - I Tim. 6: 17- Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.**
- 4. The rich tend to deceive themselves about their spiritual condition.
 - a. **Rev. 16: 17-** ‘Because you say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,” and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,
 - b. **Luke 6: 20-** Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.
24- But woe to you who are rich, for you are receiving your comfort in full.
25a- Woe to you who are well-fed now, for you shall be hungry.

III. Wealth brings both opportunity and responsibility.

- A. Money is not evil, only the love thereof. ... **I Tim. 6: 10**
- B. God places possessions in our hands to use to serve Him, then hold us accountable.
 - 1. Jesus taught this lesson with parables.
 - a. **Luke 16: 1-13** ... The steward used the Master’s goods as his own.
 - b. **Matt. 25: 15-28** ... The parable of the talents.
 - 2. God knows exactly what He has given us and exactly what we are capable of doing.
 - a. We are required to do ALL that we can do (**Luke 17:10**) but no more.
 - b. God demands no more than we can do, but will accept no less.
- C. Those who have greater resources have the opportunity to render greater service.
 - 1. **Read ... I Tim. 6: 17-19**
 - 2. The Christian’s motivation for working is the be able to serve more. **Eph. 4: 28**
 - 3. Being able to give to the needs of the church is a gift from God.
 - Rom. 12: 6-** Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; **7-** if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; **8-** or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. (**III. – Bro. Prince**)

D. God has always used the wealthy to sustain the churches.

1. Women of means supported the ministry of Jesus. **Luke 8: 3**
2. Barnabas sold property to meet the benevolent needs of the church.
3. People with houses used them as meeting places for the church.
 - a. Philemon (Vs. 2) hosted a congregation in His home.
 - b. Romans 16: 3 ... Prisca & Aquila had a church in their house. (tent business)
 - c. Col. 4: 15 ... Ther was a church in the home of Nymphas.

CONCLUSION :**A. One's attitude toward God will be directly reflected in his attitude toward the physical things he controls.**

1. The one whose life is centered around things, will be earthbound in his thinking.
2. The one whose mind has been "set on things above" will think in spiritual terms.
 - a. He will trust in God to provide what he needs.
 - b. He will view those things he controls as belonging to God who entrust them to him.
 - c. He will be grateful for the opportunity to serve God.

B. God is not concerned with what we want, but why we want it.

1. **James 4:3** ... God teaches us that wanting things for ourselves is a wrong motive.
2. **Eph. 4:28** ... He encourages us to work for things to use to serve Him and others.

C. Likewise, God is not concerned with how much we give, but with how much we keep and why.

1. Remember : the widow's two little coins. ... **Luke 21: 1-4**
2. Jesus want for us to have the same attitude as the widow, not the "tithers"

D. As we consider the things God has placed within our hand, let us :

1. Thanks God for the blessings ... **NOT** ... feel entitled.
2. Not view the things as instruments for our own pleasure, but as tools to serve God.
3. View them not just as a responsibility, but also an opportunity to glorify God. **Mt 5:15**

INVITATION :

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.win2pdf.com>.
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.
This page will not be added after purchasing Win2PDF.