

# Discover the Principle to Becoming Wealthy

A story is told about a man who was asleep one night in his bedroom. Sometime in the night, he was awakened by a noise and asked,

“Who’s there?” A voice from the shadows replied, “A burglar.”

“What are you looking for?” asked the man, and the voice replied,

“Money.” The man said, “Wait, I’ll get up and help you!”<sup>1</sup>

This humorous story illustrates the truth that some people steal to get money and others just want all the money they can get their hands on. We have lived long enough upon this earth to understand that money buys nice, pleasant things. Everything we own, eat, and the clothing we wear requires money. We have become accustomed to working every week to earn more money because we need it. It is a necessity of life. Without realizing it, we have gradually become accustomed to striving for money in order to live comfortably.

We understand the message of Proverbs 10:15 which says,

**The rich man’s wealth is his fortress,**

**The ruin of the poor is their poverty.**

**Proverbs 10:15 (NASB)**

Here the rich man is compared to the poor man. We are told that poverty ruins the poor, but wealth is like a strong city.

That is, wealth is a great advantage in this life because it provides some financial security and it provides important things in life. But Proverbs 18:11 warns us that money is deceptive.

**A rich man’s wealth is his strong city,**

**And like a high wall in his own imagination.**

**Proverbs 18:11 (NASB)**

It is like a high wall, but only in his imagination. It is not real protection. The patriarch Job discovered that truth. The book of Job tells us that God allowed Satan to destroy all that Job owned. 1 Samuel 2:7 tells us that God can take away the money that He has given to you,



**The LORD makes poor and rich;**

**He brings low, He also exalts.**

**1 Samuel 2:7**

**(NASB)**

God owns everything He gives us, and He can take it away. Job 1:21 says the LORD gives and He takes away. That is, we do not actually own

the money God has given to us. He is the owner and we are simply stewards. This is an important application and principle that we must not forget. Money is simply a tool and we are to use it for His glory. So, Scripture tells us that we work hard all our lives for things that we cannot take with us. What a waste!

**GODLINESS PLUS CONTENTMENT GIVES GREAT GAIN.** This bring us to our study about money. It is from 1

1. Roy B. Zuck. The Speaker’s Quote Book. Kregel. Publication. 1997. p. 260.

Timothy 6:6-10. It can be divided into five points or five principles. The first principle is given to us in verse 6. It says,

**But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. 1 Timothy 6:6 (NASB)**

This is an amazing verse because the Holy Spirit does not tell us to acquire as much money as we can so we can build a fortress. Instead, He tells us to pursue godliness and to be content. He does not say that godliness and contentment produce wealth or riches. Instead, He says “it produces great gain.” The meaning of the Greek words for “great gain” does not refer to money, but just simply to great profit. That is, godliness and contentment result in great profit. But what kind of profit?

In order to understand what the Spirit means by profit, we need to understand the meaning of godliness. So, what is godliness? The best definition is given to us in 1 Timothy 3:16. In that verse, Jesus Christ is an illustration of the word. It says that Jesus Christ is the mystery of godliness. That is, as we become more and more like Christ, we are becoming more and more godly. Godliness is increasing. In our study of 1 Timothy 4:1-6, we discovered that godliness increases as we exercise self-control, study the Word of God, and avoid ungodly teachings. Also, we must regularly confess our sins so that are walking in the Spirit.

Now what about the word contentment? In Philippians 4:11, the apostle Paul said that he had finally learned to be content. This means that contentment is something that a believer must learn. We will learn the definition of contentment in verse 8. So, we will wait until we get there to learn its meaning. When we come to that verse, remember that contentment is something that we must learn.

So, when godliness is combined with contentment, we store up great gain or great treasure in heaven. The Greek word for “great” is *meegas*. From that word we get the English word mega. In recent times, we have heard the expression “mega millions.” But the verse does not say mega millions. It says mega profit. So, godliness and contentment result in mega profit.

Now what does the Holy Spirit mean by mega profit? Is He referring to money here on earth? No! He is not referring to treasure in our very short life on planet earth. God has a dif-

ferent view of life than we do. He knows that our life on this earth is just the beginning. It lasts only for a moment in time. It is like a speck of dust in the vast universe. There is a great gospel song that reminds us the life we are living on this earth is temporary. The name of the song is, *This World is Not My Home*. The first and last stanzas say,

This world is not my home I'm just a passing through.  
My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue.  
The angels beckon me from Heaven's open door,  
And I can't feel at home in this world anymore.

Just up in Glory Land we'll live eternally.  
The saints on every hand are shouting victory.  
Their song of sweetest praise drifts back from Heaven's shore,  
And I can't feel at home in this world anymore.

The point is that this earth is only a train station. For believers, this is not our real home. We are waiting to climb onto the train that will take us home. Our final stop is eternity in heaven. Yet, some of us are striving to be wealthy at this train stop called earth. But our train will soon leave. When it does, we will leave all of our money behind.

That is why Jesus urges us to store up treasure in heaven in Matthew 6:19-21, 24. He urged us to be totally devoted to Christ and not to the wealth of this world. 1 John 2:15-16 says,

**Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever. 1 John 2:15-17 (NASB)**

Notice that verse 17 says the world and everything in it that we lust after is passing away. That is, all that we have been working for is going to vanish. Someone else will spend it, sell it, or do something with it after we die.

The mega profit the Holy Spirit is talking about is treasure in heaven. So, use self-control, study the Word of God, avoid ungodly teachings, and confess our sins. That results in godli-

ness. Then mix in contentment, and you get mega profit. That is the first principle.

**THE WORLD CANNOT MAKE YOU RICH.** The second principle is that the world cannot make you rich. That principle is given in verse 7. It says,

*For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. 1 Timothy 6:7 (NASB)*

In the Greek text, the word “nothing” is placed first in the verse to emphasize the word. That is, “nothing” was brought into this world when we were born, and “nothing” will be taken with us when we die.

Job 1:21 says it this way,

*Naked I came from my mother’s womb.*

*And naked I shall return there.*

*Job 1:21 (NASB)*

John Stott said,

*So, our life on earth is a brief pilgrimage between two moments of nakedness. We brought nothing with us, and can take nothing with us.<sup>2</sup>*

I have performed a number of memorial services during my ministry. At some memorial services, the families wanted a viewing where the family members can walk by and look at the dead body of their dear, departed family member for the last time before the burial occurs. After the service, the body is usually placed in the grave. I have usually stopped by the coffin and looked inside and paid my respects. When I looked inside the coffins, the bodies were always dressed nicely. But I have noticed something very important. None of them have their houses with them in their coffin. Their car is not inside the coffin. None of them have their money, credit cards, stock certificates, bedroom furniture, clothes, or any of their possessions in that coffin. They did not take anything with them! Verse 7 says, “For we have brought nothing into the world, so

we cannot take anything out of it either.”

Proverbs 27:24 captures this truth with,

*For riches are not forever.*

*Proverbs 27:24 (NASB)*

The message is that earthly riches are of value only on this earth! You cannot spend your money in heaven. It does not work there. Yet, we work so hard to put money in our earthly bank, and fail to think of our bank in heaven.

So, the first two principles teach us that the only way we can store up mega profit in heaven is to pursue godliness and to be content in this life. Second, we cannot take anything with us when we die.

**TRUE CONTENTMENT DEFINED.** Verse 8 now defines contentment. It says,

*If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. 1*

*Timothy 6:8 (NASB)*

The Greek word for “content” in this verse and for “contentment” in verse 6 both mean “sufficiency.” Since the Greek word in verse 8 for “covering” may include clothes and housing, we are being told to be content with the basics of life. We are content only when we are happy with what God has given to us, when the basics are sufficient or enough. Why? In Ecclesiastes 1:2 we are told that this world is empty. The verse says,

*Vanity of vanities! All is vanity.*

*Ecclesiastes 1:2 (NASB)*

The Hebrew word for vanity means empty. Life is like a “puff of smoke.”

Verse 8 teaches us that we are never really satisfied with anything. It says,

*All things are wearisome;*

*Man is not able to tell it.*

*The eye is not satisfied with seeing,*

*Nor is the ear filled with hearing.*

*Ecclesiastes 1:8 (NASB)*

2. John Stott. The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus. The Bible Speaks Today. InterVarsity-Press. 1996. p. 150.

for they shall be satisfied. Matthew 5:6 (NASB)

That is, we will never be content with the things in this life. We will always want more and that will motivate us to want more money. The Wall Street Journal many years ago captured this thought. The paper said,

Money is an article which may be used as a universal passport everywhere except heaven and is a universal provider for everything except happiness.<sup>3</sup>

There is a Roman proverb that says we always want more! Here it is,

Money is like sea water. The more you drink, the thirstier you get.

So when 1 Timothy 6:8 says, “If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content,” we are being told to be content with what God has given us.

Let me give you five steps to being content with the basics of life.

1. First, we must remember that God has promised to meet our basic needs in Matthew 6:28-33. If He gives you above and beyond your basic needs, rejoice in God’s gifts.
2. Second, we must remember that God is the owner of everything. Psalm 50:10 says,

For every beast of the forest is Mine,  
The cattle on a thousand hills.  
Psalm 50:10 (NASB)

This means we are stewards of what He has given to us.

3. The second step leads to the third step, which is that money is a tool. He has given it to us to help us in this life and to use it for His glory.
4. Fourth, we should remember Matthew 5:6. It says,

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,

This verse tells us how to be satisfied or content. Ecclesiastes has already reminded us that we are constantly seeking happiness in the things of this world. It told us that the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor is the ear filled with hearing. We always want more. But this verse tells us how to be satisfied. We must long to be righteous. We must hunger and thirst to be righteous. That will result in godliness. Then we will be satisfied or content.

5. Fifth, we must always thank God for the little and the much He gives to us. 1 Thessalonians 5:18 says that we are to give thanks in everything.

So, the third principle is that we are to be content with whatever God has given us. We must remember that He has promised to meet our basic needs.

**THE DANGER OF WANTING TO GET RICH NOW.** The fourth principle of becoming wealthy is that if you hunger and thirst after money, you will be ruined or destroyed in this earthly life. Verse 9 warns,

But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. 1 Timothy 6:9 (NASB)

The Greek word for “want” is *boulomai*. The word is a present participle, which means we are being told this person constantly wants more wealth. This person is not content. As a result, they fall. The Greek word for “fall” is *emipto*. It is a very interesting word. A good illustration of this word would be a lion that is walking along a jungle path and suddenly falls into a trap. The lion did not expect that to happen and neither does the person who is chasing mega profit. That is, this person is repeatedly falling into temptation and a snare. The snare means he is constantly yielding to his sin. He is in a cycle.

We are also told what other things happen to him. This type of person is plagued with many foolish and harmful desires. This may mean the person longs for other things that he or she

3. Ibid. p. 258.

could not afford before. As a result the person is ruined, which eventually results in his destruction if the process continues.

One extreme illustration of this verse is a man I knew many years ago. He worked for a company that allowed him to ask for reimbursement for some of his travel expenses. At some point, he devised a plan to use his expense account to gain more wealth. According to his plan, he claimed more travel expenses than he actually incurred. He lied, claiming that he had spent more on travel than he actually spent. After the company reimbursed him, he made a profit. But the company soon expected he was guilty of fraud and started to monitor his activities and expenses. Eventually, they fired him for fraud. He was a senior employee in the company. This man fell into the temptation of wanting to get richer. He yielded to the temptation. His desires motivated him to do more. In this situation, he at least lost a good, well paying job. I do not know if he was able to get another job. Maybe he was destroyed. Proverbs 28:22 describes what happened to him,

*A man with an evil eye hastens after wealth  
And does not know that what will come upon him.  
Proverbs 28:22 (NASB)*

Some believers reveal they love money when they do not give to the Lord. For 2 Corinthians 9:6-9 tells us that we are to give to God. We must remember that when we give to a Bible believing and teaching church, God says we are giving to Him. Also, in Luke 16:9 Jesus tells us that we are wise if we use our money to spread the gospel. So, rather than hoarding our money at this train stop, we should be storing up great profit in heaven by spreading the gospel. Later in 1 Timothy 6:17-19 we are told to help the poor.

**ROOT PROBLEM OF WANTING TO GET RICH NOW.** Then the Holy Spirit gives us the fifth principle. While verse 9 describes the consequences of life in this world, verse 10 describes what happens to the person spiritually. Verse 10 says,

*For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. 1 Timothy 6:10 (NASB)*

We often hear that the money is the root of all evil. But notice that is not what this verse says. It says, “the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil.” The love of money is the root problem. Then we are given the worst possible thing that can happen to a person who loves money. They fall away from the faith, or turn apostate. They also become very miserable people.

The parable of the sower of the seed helps us understand verse 10. The parable teaches us that some people respond to the gospel with great joy. They are so happy, that other believers think they are Christians. But later money pulls them away from Christ. Sadly, money also pulls believers away from Christ and to the world.

**CONCLUSION.** This passage of Scripture is urging us to look beyond this very short train stop, and think about heaven. We are urged to hunger and thirst after godliness and contentment, and not the world’s money. The result is great profit in heaven because that is where we will spend eternity. We must use the money God has given us as tool for His glory. Jesus has urged us to use His money to spread the gospel. Later in the chapter, we are told to help the poor.