

# THEMATIC STUDY

## Choose a theme

Thou Shall Not Covet

## List of references (Pulled from NIV Exhaustive Concordance)

### Covet

Exodus 20:17	Exodus 34:24	Deuteronomy 5:21
Deuteronomy 7:25	Micah 2:2	Romans 7:7
Romans 3:9	James 4:2	

### Coveted

Joshua 7:21	Acts 20:33
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**Coveting** - Romans 7:7

**Covetous** - Romans 7:8

### Envy

Job 5:2	Psalms 68:16	Proverbs 3:31
Proverbs 14:30	Proverbs 23:17	Proverbs 24:1
Ecclesiastes 4:4	Ezekiel 31:9	Matthew 27:18
Mark 7:22	Mark 15:10	Romans 1:29
Romans 11:14	1Corinthians 13:4	Galatians 5:21
Philippians 1:15	1 Timothy 6:4	Titus 3:3
James 3:14	James 3:16	1 Peter 2:1

### Envied

Genesis 26:14	Psalms 73:3
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**Envies** - James 4:5

### Envious

Deuteronomy 32:21	Psalms 37:1	Psalms 106:16
Proverbs 24:19	Matthew 20:15	Romans 10:9
Romans 11:11		

**Envy** - Galatians 5:26

## **Greed**

Isaiah 57:17	Ezekiel 16:28	Matthew 23:25
Mark 7:22	Luke 11:39	Luke 12:15
Romans 1:29	Ephesians 5:3	Colossians 3:5
1 Thessalonians 2:5	2 Peter 2:3	2 Peter 2:14

## **Greedy**

Psalms 10:3	Proverbs 15:27	Proverbs 28:25
Proverbs 29:4	Jeremiah 6:13	Jeremiah 8:10
Ezekiel 33:31	Habakkuk 2:5	1 Corinthians 5:10
1 Corinthians 5:11	1 Corinthians 6:10	Ephesians 5:5
1 Peter 5:2		

## **Coveting leads to other sins...** (From NIV Topical Study Bible) – 1 Timothy 6:10, 1 John 2:15-16

- To deceit (Jacob) – Genesis 27:18-26
- To adultery (David) – 2 Samuel 11:1-5
- To disobedience to God (Achan) – Joshua 7:20-21
- To hypocritical worship (Saul) 1 Samuel 15:9-23
- To murder (Ahab) – 1 Kings 21:1-14
- To theft (Gehazi) – 2 Kings 5:20-24
- To family disharmony – Proverbs 15:27
- To lying (Ananias and Sapphira) – Acts 5:1-10

## **Contentment as the answer to coveting** (From NIV Topical Study Bible)

Luke 3:14	1 Timothy 6:8	Hebrews 13:5
Philippians 4:11-12		

## **Covetousness** (from Nave's Topical Bible)

Exodus 18:21	Exodus 20:17	Nehemiah 5:7
Job 20:15	Job 31:24-28	Psalms 10:3
Psalms 119:36	Proverbs 1:19	Proverbs 11:24-26
Proverbs 15:27	Proverbs 21:25-26	Proverbs 22:16
Proverbs 23:4-5	Proverbs 30:8-9	Ecclesiastes 1:8
Ecclesiastes 4:8	Ecclesiastes 5:10-11	Isaiah 1:23
Isaiah 5:8	Isaiah 56:11	Isaiah 57:17
Jeremiah 6:13	Jeremiah 8:10	Jeremiah 17:11
Jeremiah 22:17	Jeremiah 51:13	Ezekiel 22:12
Ezekiel 33:31	Hosea 4:18	Hosea 10: 1
Micah 2:2	Micah 3:11	Micah 7:3
Habakkuk 1:15-16	Habakkuk 2:5-9	Haggai 1:6
Malachi 1:10	Matthew 6:19-32	Matthew 13:22 (Mark 4:19, Luke 7:14)
Matthew 16:26	Matthew 19:24 (Luke 18:24,25)	Matthew 22:5
Mark 7:21-23	Luke 12:15, 16-21, 33-34	Luke 4:18

John 6:26-27  
1 Corinthians 5:11  
Philippians 3:18  
1 Timothy 6:5-17  
Hebrews 13:5  
2 Peter 2:3, 14-16

Romans 1:29  
Ephesians 5:3-5 (1 Corinthians 6:10)  
1 Thessalonians 2:5  
2 Timothy 3:2  
James 4:2, 13-17  
1 John 2:15-17

Romans 13:9  
Colossians 3:2-6  
1 Timothy 3:3  
Titus 1:7  
1 Peter 5:2  
Jude 11

**Instances of Covetousness (Nave's Topical Bible):**

- Eve, in desiring the forbidden fruit (Genesis 3:6)
- Lot, in choosing the plain of the Jordan (Genesis 13:10-13)
- Laban, in giving Rebekah to be Isaac's wife (Genesis 24:29-51)
- Laban, in deceiving Jacob when he served him seven years for Rachel (Genesis 29:15-30)
- Laban, in deceiving Jacob for his wages (Genesis 31:7,15,41,42)
- Jacob, in defrauding Esau of his father's blessing (Genesis 27:6-29)
- Jacob, in defrauding Laban of his flocks and herds (Genesis 30:35-43)
- Jacob, in defrauding Esau of his birthright (Genesis 25:31)
- Balaam, in loving the wages of unrighteousness (2 Peter 2:15 with Numbers 22)
- Achan, in taking and hiding treasure for Jericho (Joshua 7:21)
- Eli's sons, in taking the portion of the sacrifice reserved for God (1 Samuel 2:13-17)
- Samuel's sons, in taking bribes (1 Samuel 8:3)
- Saul, in sparing Agag and the booty (1 Samuel 15:8,9)
- David, in desiring Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11:2-5)
- Ahab, in desiring Naboth's vineyard (1 Kings 21:2-16)
- Gehazi, in taking a gift from Naaman (2 Kings 5:20-27)
- Israel, in exacting usury of their brethren (Nehemiah 5:1-11)
- Israel, in keeping back the portion of the Levites (Nehemiah 13:10)
- Israel, in building fine house while the temple lay in ruins (Haggai 1:4-9)
- Israel, for following Jesus because he fed them (John 6:26)
- Money Changers in the temple (Matthew 21:12,13; Luke 19:45,46; John 2:14-16)
- The Rich Young Ruler (Luke 12:15-21)
- Judas, in betraying Christ (Matthew 26:15,16; Mark 14:10-11; Luke 22:3-6; John 12:6)
- The Unjust steward (Luke 16:1-8)
- The Pharisees (Luke 16:14)
- Simon Magus, in trying to buy the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:18-23)
- The sorcerers, in filing a complaint against Paul and Silas (Acts 16:19)
- Demetrius, in raising a riot against Paul and Silas (Acts 19:24,27)
- Felix, in hoping for a bribe from Paul (Acts 24:26)
- Demas, in forsaking Paul for the love of the world (2 Timothy 4:10)

### Questions to be asked

- a. What is covetousness and what is not covetousness? Where is the line drawn between healthy and unhealthy desires?
- b. What are the consequences of coveting?
- c. How does one overcome covetousness?

### Answers to Questions

**Scripture Reference: 1 Corinthians 5:9-11** – “I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people— <sup>10</sup>not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. <sup>11</sup>But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.”

- a. N/A
- b. N/A
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: 1 Corinthians 6:9-11** – “Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders <sup>10</sup>nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>11</sup>And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. “

- a. N/A
- b. Will not inherit the kingdom of God.
- c. Those who were washed and sanctified are no longer greedy

**Scripture Reference: 1 Peter 2:1-3** – “<sup>1</sup>Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. <sup>2</sup>Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, <sup>3</sup>now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.”

- a. N/A
- b. N/A
- c. Understanding that the glory of man is temporary (1 Peter 1:24) but the word of God is eternal, we need to crave the

word of the Lord.

**Scripture Reference: 1 Peter 5:2** – “<sup>2</sup>Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve;”

- a. When in positions of power, it is easy to start using that for personal gain.
- b. N/A
- c. Eagerness to serve seems to combat the craving after wealth.

**Scripture Reference: 1 Thessalonians 2:4 -6** – “We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts. <sup>5</sup>You know we never used flattery, nor did we put on a mask to cover up greed—God is our witness. <sup>6</sup>We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else.”

- a. Knowing who are trying to please is a way to know whether a want is turning into greed. If we “put on a mask” (i.e., act a way that is contrary to our heart) then we have a warning flag. If we seeking the praises of men or are trying to impress people, then our focus is in the wrong place.
- b. We may get the praise of men, but not the praise of God
- c. Try to please God with what you do and who you are.

**Scripture Reference: 1 Timothy 3:2-3** – “Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, <sup>3</sup>not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.”

- a. The Love of Money is covetousness.
- b. Would be exempt from being a Shepherd
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: 1 Timothy 6:3-19** – “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.

<sup>6</sup>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. <sup>9</sup>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.

<sup>11</sup>But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

12Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you 14to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

17Command 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. 18Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19In 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.”

- a. There are a couple of things here that cause covetousness or for which one can covet. First, there is coveting a special place or spiritual designation. Secondly, there is a love of money that causes one to “wander” from the faith. It is a slow journey where the craving for God is replaced with the craving more wealth.

Having food and clothes is not coveting.

- b. Conceit and misunderstanding. Malicious talk, evil suspicions and constant friction. Wandering from the faith.
- c. Godliness with contentment. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. If you have wealth, then don't be arrogant or put your hope in it. Put your hope in God. Serve and Sacrifice.

**Scripture Reference: 1 Corinthians 13:4** – “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.”

- a. Love does not envy because it sees the best in people. Envy comes from a feeling that a person does not deserve what they have because they got it unjustly. Love assumes that a person who has stuff has been entrusted with that by God and is happy for the person.
- b. If you covet/envy then you don't have love.
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: 2 Peter 2:3,14-16** – “<sup>3</sup>In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.... <sup>14</sup>With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed—an accursed brood!<sup>15</sup>They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness.<sup>16</sup>But he was rebuked for his wrongdoing by a donkey—a beast without speech—who spoke with a man's voice and restrained the prophet's madness.”

- a. Loving money and power and exploiting the powerless are all signs of the greedy
- b. The powerless will be exploited. The greedy will be condemned. They will be rebuked.

c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: 2 Timothy 3:1-5** – “<sup>1</sup>But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. <sup>2</sup>People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, <sup>3</sup>without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, <sup>4</sup>treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— <sup>5</sup>having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.”

- a. Lovers of money is greedy and covetousness
- b. These people have a form of godliness (i.e., something that looks like godliness) but are not really godliness because they don't have the power that comes from true godliness.
- c. Have nothing to do with those who are like this

**Scripture Reference: Acts 20:33** – “<sup>33</sup>I have not coveted anyone's silver or gold or clothing. <sup>34</sup>You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. <sup>35</sup>In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'”

- a. It is not right to covet anyone's money or clothing. Supplying your own needs is not coveting.
- b. N/A
- c. Helping the weak helps prevent coveting

**Scripture Reference: Colossians 3:2-6** – “<sup>2</sup>Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. <sup>3</sup>For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup>When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

<sup>5</sup>Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. <sup>6</sup>Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.”

- a. Evil desires and greed are a form of idolatry (i.e., they break the Second Commandment).
- b. The wrath of God is coming
- c. Set your mind on things above.

**Scripture Reference: Deuteronomy 5:21** – “You shall not covet your neighbor's wife. You shall not set your desire on your neighbor's house or land, his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

- a. Don't covet your neighbor's wife, his house or land, his servants, his ox or donkey or anything else that belongs to him. (See Devotional Method for this passage for more insight)
- b. N/A
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Deuteronomy 7:25** – “The images of their gods you are to burn in the fire. Do not covet the silver and

gold on them, and do not take it for yourselves, or you will be ensnared by it, for it is detestable to the LORD your God.”

- a. The silver and gold on the idols.
- b. You will be ensnared by it
- c. NA (however, from Achan’s sin we see how God reacts when this instruction is not followed through)

**Scripture Reference: Ecclesiastes 4:4- 8** – “<sup>4</sup>And I saw that all labor and all achievement spring from man's envy of his neighbor. This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

<sup>5</sup> The fool folds his hands  
and ruins himself.

<sup>6</sup> Better one handful with tranquility  
than two handfuls with toil  
and chasing after the wind.

<sup>7</sup> Again I saw something meaningless under the sun:

<sup>8</sup> There was a man all alone;  
he had neither son nor brother.  
There was no end to his toil,  
yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.  
"For whom am I toiling," he asked,  
"and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"  
This too is meaningless—  
a miserable business!"

- a. Envy of neighbor
- b. Envy and greed cause one to work too hard and not have relationships so you end up dying alone.
- c. Be content with what God provisions for you, but don’t be like the fool who does nothing. There is a difference between self-induced poverty and only being given a meager measure from God.

**Scripture Reference: Ecclesiastes 5:8-20** – “<sup>8</sup> If you see the poor oppressed in a district, and justice and rights denied, do not be surprised at such things; for one official is eyed by a higher one, and over them both are others higher still. <sup>9</sup> The increase from the land is taken by all; the king himself profits from the fields.

<sup>10</sup> Whoever loves money never has money enough;  
whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income.  
This too is meaningless.

<sup>11</sup> As goods increase,  
so do those who consume them.  
And what benefit are they to the owner  
except to feast his eyes on them?

<sup>12</sup> The sleep of a laborer is sweet,  
whether he eats little or much,  
but the abundance of a rich man  
permits him no sleep.

<sup>13</sup> I have seen a grievous evil under the sun:  
wealth hoarded to the harm of its owner,

<sup>14</sup> or wealth lost through some misfortune,  
so that when he has a son  
there is nothing left for him.

<sup>15</sup> Naked a man comes from his mother's womb,  
and as he comes, so he departs.  
He takes nothing from his labor  
that he can carry in his hand.

<sup>16</sup> This too is a grievous evil:  
As a man comes, so he departs,  
and what does he gain,  
since he toils for the wind?

<sup>17</sup> All his days he eats in darkness,  
with great frustration, affliction and anger.

<sup>18</sup> Then I realized that it is good and proper for a man to eat and drink, and to find satisfaction in his toilsome labor under the sun during the few days of life God has given him—for this is his lot. <sup>19</sup> Moreover, when God gives any man wealth and possessions, and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work—this is a gift of God. <sup>20</sup> He seldom reflects on the days of his life, because God keeps him occupied with gladness of heart.”

- a. Love of money is covetousness. Love of wealth. Hoarding of wealth.
- b. The result is a meaningless of life. Loss of sleep (i.e., rest) for the rich.
- c. An eternal view of the value of property (i.e., you can't take it with you) leads to contentment. Note that sometimes God does give wealth...

**Scripture Reference: Ephesians 5:3-5** – “But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. <sup>4</sup>Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. <sup>5</sup>For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.”

- a. N/A
- b. Greed leads to idolatry and loss of any inheritance in the Kingdom
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Exodus 18:21** – “But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men

who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens.”

- a. Dishonest gain is coveting. Note: by inference honest gain is not coveting
- b. When one is not covetousness, then he is a man of good character who can be entrusted in a leadership position.  
By inference, the consequence of coveting is going to be not being able to be a leader.
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Exodus 20:17** - "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

- a. Don't covet your neighbor's house, his wife, servants, ox or donkey, etc... (See Devotional Method for this passage for more insight)
- b. N/A
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Exodus 34:24** – “ I will drive out nations before you and enlarge your territory, and no one will covet your land when you go up three times each year to appear before the LORD your God.”

- a. Covet of land/property
- b. N/A
- c. When you are faithful in your worship to God, He will protect your stuff by preventing others from wanting it.

**Scripture Reference: Ezekiel 22:12-13** – “In you men accept bribes to shed blood; you take usury and excessive interest and make unjust gain from your neighbors by extortion. And you have forgotten me, declares the Sovereign LORD. <sup>13</sup>I will surely strike my hands together at the unjust gain you have made and at the blood you have shed in your midst.”

- a. Excessive interest, unjust gain, and taking usury are all forms of coveting.
- b. God will strike Jerusalem for their greed
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Ezekiel 31:9** – “I made it beautiful

with abundant branches,  
the envy of all the trees of Eden  
in the garden of God.”

- a. N/A
- b. N/A

c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Ezekiel 33:30-32** “ 'Come and hear the message that has come from the LORD.' <sup>31</sup> My people come to you, as they usually do, and sit before you to listen to your words, but they do not put them into practice. With their mouths they express devotion, but their hearts are greedy for unjust gain. <sup>32</sup> Indeed, to them you are nothing more than one who sings love songs with a beautiful voice and plays an instrument well, for they hear your words but do not put them into practice.”

a. Unjust gain

b. N/A

c. Put what you hear on Sunday mornings into practice. Don't just show up to be entertained.

**Scripture Reference: Galatians 5:16-26** – “<sup>16</sup>So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. <sup>17</sup>For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. <sup>18</sup>But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

<sup>19</sup>The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; <sup>20</sup>idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions <sup>21</sup>and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

<sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup>Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup>Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. <sup>26</sup>Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.”

a. Envy is one of the acts of the sinful nature

b. Do not inherit the kingdom of God

c. Live by the Spirit and display the fruit of the Spirit.

**Scripture Reference: Genesis 26:12-15** – “<sup>12</sup> Isaac planted crops in that land and the same year reaped a hundredfold, because the LORD blessed him. <sup>13</sup> The man became rich, and his wealth continued to grow until he became very wealthy. <sup>14</sup> He had so many flocks and herds and servants that the Philistines envied him. <sup>15</sup> So all the wells that his father's servants had dug in the time of his father Abraham, the Philistines stopped up, filling them with earth.”

a. Wealth envy

b. Leads to trying to prevent others from acquiring wealth

c. Note that it was the LORD that blessed Isaac so he would become wealthy. Realizing that wealth comes from God will help us stay content in our circumstances.

**Scripture Reference: Habakkuk 2:4-9** – “ "See, he is puffed up; his desires are not upright—

but the righteous will live by his faith -

<sup>5</sup> indeed, wine betrays him;  
he is arrogant and never at rest.  
Because he is as greedy as the grave  
and like death is never satisfied,  
he gathers to himself all the nations  
and takes captive all the peoples.

<sup>6</sup> "Will not all of them taunt him with ridicule and scorn, saying,  
" 'Woe to him who piles up stolen goods  
and makes himself wealthy by extortion!  
How long must this go on?'

<sup>7</sup> Will not your debtors suddenly arise?  
Will they not wake up and make you tremble?  
Then you will become their victim.

<sup>8</sup> Because you have plundered many nations,  
the peoples who are left will plunder you.  
For you have shed man's blood;  
you have destroyed lands and cities and everyone in them.

<sup>9</sup> "Woe to him who builds his realm by unjust gain  
to set his nest on high,  
to escape the clutches of ruin!"

- a. If you are stealing or using extortion, your gain is unjust and sign of greed.
- b. He will become puffed up and conceited. He never gets any rest. He has to be wary of the people rising up against him.
- c. Woe (i.e., judgment) will be upon those who get unjust wealth

**Scripture Reference: Haggai 1:4-6** – "Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?"

<sup>5</sup> Now this is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. <sup>6</sup> You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it."

- a. It is greedy to put our needs before what God desires.
- b. The result is that you are never satisfied. No matter how much you have, its not enough.
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Hebrews 13:5** – "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."

- a. Love of money
- b. N/A
- c. Be content, trusting in the promises of God.

**Scripture Reference: Hosea 10:1-2-** " Israel was a spreading vine;

he brought forth fruit for himself.

As his fruit increased,

he built more altars;

as his land prospered,

he adorned his sacred stones.

<sup>2</sup> Their heart is deceitful,

and now they must bear their guilt.

The LORD will demolish their altars

and destroy their sacred stones.

- a. N/A
- b. As wealth increases, so did the idolatry of Israel.
- c. God will demolish the idols.

**Scripture Reference: 1 John 2:15-17** – "Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup>For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. <sup>17</sup>The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever."

- a. The love of the world leads to the cravings of sinful man and the lust of the eyes
- b. The love of the Father is not in a person who is greedy and envious
- c. Do the will of God.

**Scripture Reference: Isaiah 1:23** – "Your rulers are rebels,

companions of thieves;

they all love bribes

and chase after gifts.

They do not defend the cause of the fatherless;

the widow's case does not come before them."

- a. Loving bribes and chasing after special favors is a sign of covetousness.
- b. When one become this way, he starts to ignore the plight of the orphan and widows, the powerless.
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Isaiah 5:8** – “Woe to you who add house to house

and join field to field  
till no space is left  
and you live alone in the land.”

- a. Just keep building and building, gaining and gaining until you consume all there is to consume is greedy
- b. You end up alone with a bunch of stuff
- c. Woe to you.

**Scripture Reference: Isaiah 56:11** – “They are dogs with mighty appetites;

they never have enough.  
They are shepherds who lack understanding;  
they all turn to their own way,  
each seeks his own gain”

- a. Seeking own gain
- b. Never being satisfied.
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Isaiah 57:17** – “ I was enraged by his sinful greed;

I punished him, and hid my face in anger,  
yet he kept on in his willful ways.”

- a. N/A
- b. Punishment from God, enraging God
- c. While not mentioned right here, in context, this verse is about having a contrite heart. So, seeking to be contrite will help keep one from becoming greedy.

**Scripture Reference: James 3:13-18** – <sup>13</sup>Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. <sup>14</sup>But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. <sup>15</sup>Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. <sup>16</sup>For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

<sup>17</sup>But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and

good fruit, impartial and sincere. <sup>18</sup>Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.”

- a. N/A – Doesn’t specifically say what to covet/not covet...just talks about it.
- b. Disorder and every evil practice. Coveting is the root of other sins.
- c. Doing good deeds with humility. Being peace-loving, considerate, submissive, merciful, impartial and sincere.

**Scripture Reference: James 4:1-3** – “<sup>1</sup>What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? <sup>2</sup>You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. <sup>3</sup>When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.”

- a. Spending what you get on your pleasures
- b. Envy and covetousness cause fighting and quarrelling.
- c. By inference, if spending what you get on your pleasures is coveting, then the spending what you get on others would help battle envy.

**Scripture Reference: James 4:4-6** - You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. <sup>5</sup>Or do you think Scripture says without reason that the spirit he caused to live in us envies intensely? <sup>6</sup>But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says:

"God opposes the proud

but gives grace to the humble."

- a. God is a jealous God, so the Spirit of God inside us envies for our full attention. God covets. This shows that coveting in it of itself is not sinful. It is only in context of what is being coveted that we can determine if coveting is sinful or not.
- b. N/A
- c. God will give you grace if you are humble.

**Scripture Reference: James 4:13-17** – “<sup>13</sup>Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." <sup>14</sup>Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. <sup>15</sup>Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." <sup>16</sup>As it is, you boast and brag. All such boasting is evil. <sup>17</sup>Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.”

- a. Making plans based on our own will and power is covetousness
- b. N/A

- c. Realization of the temporal nature of this life brings humility. Doing good.

**Scripture Reference: Jeremiah 17:11** – “Like a partridge that hatches eggs it did not lay

is the man who gains riches by unjust means.

When his life is half gone, they will desert him,

and in the end he will prove to be a fool.”

- a. Gains riches by unjust means (i.e., force or fraud)
- b. The riches do not last and he will be shown to be a fool in the end.
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Jeremiah 22:11-17** – “For this is what the LORD says about Shallum son of Josiah, who succeeded his father as king of Judah but has gone from this place: "He will never return.<sup>12</sup> He will die in the place where they have led him captive; he will not see this land again."

<sup>13</sup> "Woe to him who builds his palace by unrighteousness,  
his upper rooms by injustice,  
making his countrymen work for nothing,  
not paying them for their labor.

<sup>14</sup> He says, 'I will build myself a great palace  
with spacious upper rooms.'  
So he makes large windows in it,  
panels it with cedar  
and decorates it in red.

<sup>15</sup> "Does it make you a king  
to have more and more cedar?  
Did not your father have food and drink?  
He did what was right and just,  
so all went well with him.

<sup>16</sup> He defended the cause of the poor and needy,  
and so all went well.  
Is that not what it means to know me?"  
declares the LORD.

<sup>17</sup> "But your eyes and your heart  
are set only on dishonest gain,  
on shedding innocent blood  
and on oppression and extortion."

- a. Taking advantage of people. Keeping on building and building. Adding expensive accompaniments to the basics.
- b. Shallum was prevented from returning to Israel because of his greed.
- c. Be like Josiah and defend the cause of the poor and needy.

**Scripture Reference: Jeremiah 6:13** – “From the least to the greatest,

all are greedy for gain;  
prophets and priests alike,  
all practice deceit.”

- a. Practicing deceit is a sign of coveting. What is interesting is you can't judge a person's predilection to coveting by whether they are rich or not. Poor and rich people can be greedy for gain. Also, even the supposed righteous can be greedy. Just because they have a ministry, does not mean the money is going to God.
- b. N/A
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Jeremiah 8:10** – “Therefore I will give their wives to other men

and their fields to new owners.  
From the least to the greatest,  
all are greedy for gain;  
prophets and priests alike,  
all practice deceit.”

- a. Practicing deceit is a sign of coveting. This is the same as Jer. 6:13
- b. God will send the Israelites into captivity and let other men take over the land (i.e., judgment).
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Job 31:24-28** – <sup>24</sup>“If I have put my trust in gold  
or said to pure gold, 'You are my security,'

<sup>25</sup> if I have rejoiced over my great wealth,  
the fortune my hands had gained,

<sup>26</sup> if I have regarded the sun in its radiance  
or the moon moving in splendor,

<sup>27</sup> so that my heart was secretly enticed  
and my hand offered them a kiss of homage,

<sup>28</sup> then these also would be sins to be judged,  
for I would have been unfaithful to God on high.”

- a. Putting trust and security in money. Boasting about how wealthy one is.
- b. Job is saying that if he did this, then he could understand his affliction as a judgment from God.

- c. The previous verses (16-21) talks about how Job was a defender of the weak and powerless.

**Scripture Reference: John 6:26-27** – “Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. <sup>27</sup>Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."

- a. Looking for satisfaction in the things of this world
- b. N/A
- c. If you seek “food that endures” then you get eternal life. By inference, if you seek the pleasures of this life, then you will not get eternal life.

**Scripture Reference: Joshua 7:21** – “When I saw in the plunder a beautiful robe from Babylonia, two hundred shekels of silver and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. They are hidden in the ground inside my tent, with the silver underneath."

- a. Achan takes what God has said was to be burned. Other cities were allowed to be plundered, but the first city destroyed belonged to God and all plunder was to be sacrificed to Him.
- b. The whole community was targeted for Achan’s sin and lost 36 men at Ai. Achan’s whole family came under the community’s judgment.
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Jude 11** - <sup>11</sup>Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into Balaam's error; they have been destroyed in Korah's rebellion.

- a. Cain coveted the acceptance of Abel and killed him. Balaam cursed the Israelites for money, even though God told him not to. Korah coveted the power of the priesthood.
- b. Cain – exiled, Balaam – rebuked by a donkey, Korah – swallowed by the ground
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Luke 12:13-34** – <sup>13</sup>Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

<sup>14</sup>Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?" <sup>15</sup>Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

<sup>16</sup>And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. <sup>17</sup>He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'

<sup>18</sup>"Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. <sup>19</sup>And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." ' "

<sup>20</sup>"But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'

<sup>21</sup>"This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."

<sup>22</sup>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. <sup>23</sup>Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. <sup>24</sup>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! <sup>25</sup>Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? <sup>26</sup>Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?"

<sup>27</sup>"Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. <sup>28</sup>If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! <sup>29</sup>And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. <sup>30</sup>For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. <sup>31</sup>But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

<sup>32</sup>"Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. <sup>33</sup>Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. <sup>34</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

- a. Covet money (the man in the crowd), Covet possessions, covet satisfaction (the rich man)
- b. Coveting leads to broken relationships. Coveting leads to condemnation by God.
- c. Do not worry. Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Store up treasure in heaven.

**Scripture Reference: Luke 3:10-14** – <sup>10</sup>"What should we do then?" the crowd asked.

<sup>11</sup>John answered, "The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same."

<sup>12</sup>Tax collectors also came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?"

<sup>13</sup>"Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told

them. <sup>14</sup>Then some soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?"

He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely—be content with your pay."

- a. When you have and do not share with those in need, that is coveting. Collecting more than you ought or using your position for personal gain is coveting.
- b. N/A
- c. Share.

**Scripture Reference: Mark 15:10 (Matthew 27:18)** – <sup>10</sup>"Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate, <sup>10</sup>knowing it was out of envy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. <sup>11</sup>But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas instead."

- a. Envy over Jesus' popularity. They wanted to hold on to their power.
- b. Their envy led them falsely accusing an innocent man and releasing a murderer.
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Mark 7:20-23** “<sup>20</sup>He went on: "What comes out of a man is what makes him 'unclean.' <sup>21</sup>For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, <sup>22</sup>greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. <sup>23</sup>All these evils come from inside and make a man 'unclean.' ”

- a. N/A
- b. Shows that a man has an unclean heart.
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Matthew 13:22 (Mark 4:19, Luke 7:14)** – “The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful.”

- a. Wealth is deceitful
- b. Envy and Greed choke out the word of God.
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Mathew 16:24-26** – “<sup>24</sup>Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. <sup>25</sup>For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. <sup>26</sup>What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?”

- a. N/A
- b. Lose one's soul.
- c. Deny self.

**Scripture Reference: Matthew 19:16-26 (Luke 18:18:27)** – “<sup>16</sup>Now a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?"

<sup>17</sup>"Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments."

<sup>18</sup>"Which ones?" the man inquired.

Jesus replied, " 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, <sup>19</sup>honor your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbor as yourself.'"

<sup>20</sup>"All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?"

<sup>21</sup>Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

<sup>22</sup>When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

<sup>23</sup>Then Jesus said to his disciples, "I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>24</sup>Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

<sup>25</sup>When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and asked, "Who then can be saved?"

<sup>26</sup>Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

- a. N/A
- b. Hard to enter the kingdom of Heaven
- c. Sell possessions, give to the poor, follow Jesus

**Scripture Reference: Matthew 20:1-15-** <sup>1</sup>"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire men to work in his vineyard. <sup>2</sup>He agreed to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard.

<sup>3</sup>"About the third hour he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. <sup>4</sup>He told them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' <sup>5</sup>So they went.

"He went out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour and did the same thing. <sup>6</sup>About the eleventh hour he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, 'Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?'

<sup>7</sup>" 'Because no one has hired us,' they answered.  
"He said to them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard.'

<sup>8</sup>"When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.'

<sup>9</sup>"The workers who were hired about the eleventh hour came and each received a denarius. <sup>10</sup>So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. <sup>11</sup>When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. <sup>12</sup>'These men who were hired last worked only one hour,' they said, 'and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.'

<sup>13</sup>"But he answered one of them, 'Friend, I am not being unfair to you. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius?' <sup>14</sup>'Take your pay and go. I want to give the man who was hired last the same as I gave you. <sup>15</sup>Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?'"

- a. The envious here is not the wealthy man, as he was treating everyone equitably. It is the poor man/day laborer who is envious because he thinks he is being treated unfairly.
- b. Grumble against the boss. Loss of satisfaction in the job and work done.
- c. Keep your eyes on yourself. If each man had remembered what he agreed to, he would know he had no right to complain for being compensated for what he had agreed to.

**Scripture Reference: Matthew 6:19-32** – “<sup>19</sup>Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup>But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

<sup>22</sup>“The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. <sup>23</sup>But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

<sup>24</sup>“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.

<sup>25</sup>“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? <sup>26</sup>Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? <sup>27</sup>Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

<sup>28</sup>“And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. <sup>29</sup>Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. <sup>30</sup>If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? <sup>31</sup>So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' <sup>32</sup>For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. <sup>33</sup>But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. <sup>34</sup>Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

- a. Serving money.
- b. N/A
- c. Do not worry. Trust in God to provide.

**Scripture Reference: Micah 2:2** – “They covet fields and seize them,  
and houses, and take them.  
They defraud a man of his home,  
a fellowman of his inheritance.”

- a. Property, houses, take away a man's inheritance
- b. N/A
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Micah 3:11** – “Her leaders judge for a bribe,  
her priests teach for a price,  
and her prophets tell fortunes for money.  
Yet they lean upon the LORD and say,  
"Is not the LORD among us?

No disaster will come upon us."

- a. Money
- b. The powerful can be bribed. The "righteous" will tell you what you want to hear. Disaster will come.
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Micah 7:3** – "Both hands are skilled in doing evil;

the ruler demands gifts,  
the judge accepts bribes,  
the powerful dictate what they desire—  
they all conspire together."

- a. Demanding gifts, accepting bribes, dictating what you want
- b. The people get oppressed.
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Nehemiah 5:1-13** – "<sup>1</sup> Now the men and their wives raised a great outcry against their Jewish brothers. <sup>2</sup> Some were saying, "We and our sons and daughters are numerous; in order for us to eat and stay alive, we must get grain."

<sup>3</sup> Others were saying, "We are mortgaging our fields, our vineyards and our homes to get grain during the famine."

<sup>4</sup> Still others were saying, "We have had to borrow money to pay the king's tax on our fields and vineyards. <sup>5</sup> Although we are of the same flesh and blood as our countrymen and though our sons are as good as theirs, yet we have to subject our sons and daughters to slavery. Some of our daughters have already been enslaved, but we are powerless, because our fields and our vineyards belong to others."

<sup>6</sup> When I heard their outcry and these charges, I was very angry. <sup>7</sup> I pondered them in my mind and then accused the nobles and officials. I told them, "You are exacting usury from your own countrymen!" So I called together a large meeting to deal with them <sup>8</sup> and said: "As far as possible, we have bought back our Jewish brothers who were sold to the Gentiles. Now you are selling your brothers, only for them to be sold back to us!" They kept quiet, because they could find nothing to say.

<sup>9</sup> So I continued, "What you are doing is not right. Shouldn't you walk in the fear of our God to avoid the reproach of our Gentile enemies? <sup>10</sup> I and my brothers and my men are also lending the people money and grain. But let the exacting of usury stop! <sup>11</sup> Give back to them immediately their fields, vineyards, olive groves and houses, and also the usury you are charging them—the hundredth part of the money, grain, new wine and oil."

<sup>12</sup> "We will give it back," they said. "And we will not demand anything more from them. We will do as you say."

Then I summoned the priests and made the nobles and officials take an oath to do what they had promised. <sup>13</sup> I also shook out the folds of my robe and said, "In this way may God shake out of his house and possessions every man who does not keep this promise. So may such a man be shaken out and emptied!"

At this the whole assembly said, "Amen," and praised the LORD. And the people did as they had promised"

- a. Usury

- b. The greed of the nobles was causing hardship on the people. They were selling their sons and daughters as slaves, giving up their land (i.e., couldn't produce).
- c. A powerful leader who calls the others on the carpet can be a deterrent.

**Scripture Reference: Philippians 1:15** – “It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill.”

- a. Even preaching can be done out of envy and rivalry
- b. The gospel still gets preached (v. 18)
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Philippians 3:17-19** – “Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. <sup>18</sup>For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. <sup>19</sup>Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things.”

- a. We can covet the physical pleasures of this world
- b. Destruction and shame
- c. Follow the pattern of Paul.

**Scripture Reference: Philippians 4:11-13** – “<sup>11</sup>I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. <sup>12</sup>I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. <sup>13</sup>I can do everything through him who gives me strength.”

- a. N/A
- b. N/A
- c. Contentment is learned. We can do anything through the strength of Jesus.

**Scripture Reference: Proverbs 1:18- 19** – “<sup>18</sup> These men lie in wait for their own blood; they waylay only themselves!

<sup>19</sup> Such is the end of all who go after ill-gotten gain; it takes away the lives of those who get it.

- a. Ill-gotten gain that they got from robbing and stealing.
- b. They will end up dead
- c. Listen to the wisdom of your father and mother (v.8)

**Scripture Reference: Proverbs 11:24-26** – “One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.

<sup>25</sup> A generous man will prosper;  
he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.

<sup>26</sup> People curse the man who hoards grain,  
but blessing crowns him who is willing to sell.”

- a. This is kind of counterintuitive to other verses where you see the greedy becoming powerful in the eyes of the world. I think what we are supposed to see here is that if a man produces, but does not engage in commerce he will come to ruin. God blessed a man with grain. Kind of reminisce of the Parable of Rich Fool....
- b. Poverty and cursing
- c. Being generous brings prosperity and prestige

**Scripture Reference: Proverbs 14:30** – “A heart at peace gives life to the body,  
but envy rots the bones.”

- a. N/A
- b. Rots the bones
- c. Being content is good for your health.

**Scripture Reference: Proverbs 15:27** – “A greedy man brings trouble to his family,  
but he who hates bribes will live.”

- a. Covet money
- b. Destroys a family. At first wealth seems like it would make everything better, but then it destroys the relationships with in the family. How many times have we seen this of a movie star?
- c. Hate bribes and live.

**Scripture Reference: Proverbs 21:25-26** – “<sup>25</sup> The sluggard's craving will be the death of him,  
because his hands refuse to work.

<sup>26</sup> All day long he craves for more,  
but the righteous give without sparing.”

- a. A lazy man wants but won't do the work to satisfy himself. This will lead to envy of others.
- b. Death, dissatisfaction
- c. Give to those in need.

**Scripture Reference: Proverbs 22:16** – “He who oppresses the poor to increase his wealth

and he who gives gifts to the rich—both come to poverty.”

- a. Covet money. Give gifts to the rich is somebody who covets their favor or companionship
- b. Come to poverty
- c. By inference, do oppress the poor and don't try to curry favor with those more powerful than you.

**Scripture Reference: Proverbs 23:17** – “Do not let your heart envy sinners,  
but always be zealous for the fear of the LORD.”

- a. Sometimes the righteous can start to think that the evil get all the breaks and all the wealth and just want to throw in the towel.
- b. N/A
- c. Persevere in zeal for the Lord

**Scripture Reference: Proverbs 23:4-5** – “ Do not wear yourself out to get rich;  
have the wisdom to show restraint.

<sup>5</sup> Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone,  
for they will surely sprout wings  
and fly off to the sky like an eagle.”

- a. N/A
- b. Greed leads to over working.
- c. Keep the perspective that wealth is temporary.

**Scripture Reference: Proverbs 24:1** – “Do not envy wicked men,  
do not desire their company;”

- a. Don't be fooled by the seeming comfort of the wicked
- b. N/A
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Proverbs 28:25** – “A greedy man stirs up dissension,  
but he who trusts in the LORD will prosper.”

- a. N/A
- b. Dissension. When you think you are getting short changed or being treated unfairly and you fight for it, it just causes trouble. Think about how many family fights have started because somebody felt they were being mistreated in regards to an inheritance.
- c. Trust in the Lord

**Scripture Reference: Proverbs 29:4-** “By justice a king gives a country stability,  
but one who is greedy for bribes tears it down.”

- a. Bribes
- b. Tears the kingdom down
- c. Seek justice.

**Scripture Reference: Proverbs 30:8-9** – “<sup>8</sup> Keep falsehood and lies far from me;  
give me neither poverty nor riches,  
but give me only my daily bread.

<sup>9</sup> Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you  
and say, 'Who is the LORD ?'  
Or I may become poor and steal,  
and so dishonor the name of my God.”

- a. Want only your daily allotment from the Lord
- b. If I have too much, I disown God and too little I am tempted to steal
- c. Moderation in all things is the key to contentment and happiness

**Scripture Reference: Psalm 10:3** – “He boasts of the cravings of his heart;  
he blesses the greedy and reviles the LORD.”

- a. N/A
- b. N/A
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Psalm 106:16** – “In the camp they grew envious of Moses  
and of Aaron, who was consecrated to the LORD.”

- a. Coveting the position that God had granted Moses and Aaron as leaders
- b. While not mentioned in this verse, we know that those people end up being swallowed by the earth (v. 17 & Numbers 16)
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Psalm 119:36** – “Turn my heart toward your statutes  
and not toward selfish gain.”

- a. Money , property wealth,
- b. N/A

- c. Focusing on God's Word prevents covetousness

**Scripture Reference: Psalm 73:3** – “For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.”

- a. Do not envy those who have a lot. It leads to danger. It appears as if they have it all together and their lives are great. But don't be fooled.
- b. In the end, they lose it all (v. 17-19)
- c. Worship (v. 17) and Walk within the counsel of God (v. 23-28)

**Scripture Reference: Psalm 68:16** – “ Why gaze in envy, O rugged mountains, at the mountain where God chooses to reign, where the LORD himself will dwell forever?”

- a. Coveting where God has placed himself.
- b. N/A
- c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Romans 1:28-32**- <sup>28</sup>Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. <sup>29</sup>They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, <sup>30</sup>slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and <sup>30</sup>boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; <sup>31</sup>they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. <sup>32</sup>Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.”

- a. N/A
- b. Deserve death
- c. By inference we must retain the knowledge of God to prevent ourselves from being turned over to these depravities

**Scripture Reference: Romans 11:11-14** – <sup>11</sup>Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. <sup>12</sup>But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their fullness bring!

<sup>13</sup>I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I make much of my ministry <sup>14</sup>in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them.”

- a. Israel is envious of salvation being made available to the Gentiles. This is not good. However, Paul wants them to be envious if that will spur them into working toward salvation.
- b. In this instance, being envious spurns one to finding salvation

c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Romans 13:9** – “The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

a. N/A

b. N/A

c. Love your neighbor as yourself

**Scripture Reference: Romans 7:7-8** – “What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "Do not covet."<sup>[a]</sup> But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead.”

a. N/A

b. N/A

c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Titus 1:7** – “Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain.”

a. Pursuing wealth through dishonest means

b. Not be able to be an overseer

c. N/A

**Scripture Reference: Titus 3:3** – “At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.”

a. Enslaved by passions and pleasures

b. N/A

c. N/A

## **Conclusions**

- a. What is covetousness and what is not covetousness? Where is the line drawn between healthy and unhealthy desires?
- b. What are the consequences of coveting?
- c. How does one overcome covetousness?

## **Application**

