**The First Baptist Church of Columbus**

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**Sermon Notes Outline for video posted August 15, 2021**

**T I T L E: The Woes of the Wealthy**

**T E X T: James 5:1-6**

**I. GENERAL AND BIBLICAL OBSERVATIONS REGARDING RICHES**

**A. There is a sense, from a biblical perspective, that the wealthy cannot claim in an absolute sense that their wealth was or is self-made.**

**Deuteronomy 8:18** ---- “But you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day.

**Proverbs 10:22** ---- It is the blessing of the LORD that makes rich, And He adds no sorrow to it.

**Reason to Consider regarding the blessings of the Lord upon the wealthy....**

**Roman 2:4** ---- Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?

**B. There is also a sense in which wealth is accompanied with a spiritual caveat, i.e. the temptation to cast the Lord to the periphery of our lives making wealth the center piece of our dependence.**

**Matthew 6:24** ---- “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

**C. There is also a possibility that wealth will create within us a sense of arrogance inflating our sense of self-importance simply because of our wealth.**

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**D. The scriptures do not condemn the possession of wealth, nor do they condemn the wealthy for being rich however, the scriptures do condemn the abuse or misuse of riches.**

**E. The Lord does not assess our relationship with money by how much we give but by how much we have left after we give.**

**Mark 12:42–43** ---- **42**  A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which amount to a cent. **43**  Calling His disciples to Him, He said to them, “Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury;

**F. The Lord does not assess our relationship with money by the size of our bank account but by the manner of life reflected in our possession of material things.**

**Hebrews 13:5 -**--- Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, “I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,”

**II. A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE PITFALLS TO BE AVOIDED BY THE WEALTHY.**

**James 5:1-6**

A. **Hoarding**  James 5:2-3

Bertha Adams was seventy-one years old. She died alone in West Palm Beach, Florida on Easter Sunday, 1976. The coroner’s report read: “Cause of death ... malnutrition.” After wasting away to fifty pounds she could no longer stay alive. When the state authorities made their preliminary investigation of her place, they found a veritable “pigpen ... the biggest mess you can imagine.” One seasoned inspector declared he’d never seen a dwelling in greater disarray. The pitiable woman had begged food from neighbors and gotten what clothes she had from the Salvation Army. From all appearances she was a penniless recluse—a pitiful and forgotten widow. But such was not the case.

Amid the jumble of her unclean, disheveled belongings, two keys were found which led officials to safe-deposit boxes at two different local banks. The discovery was absolutely unbelievable. The first box contained over 700 AT&T stock certificates, plus hundreds of other valuable certificates, bonds and solid financial securities, not to mention a stack of cash amounting to nearly $200,000. The second box had no certificates, only more currency $600,000 to be exact. Adding the net worth of both boxes, the woman had well over a million dollars.

Hoarding is sinful, especially when it is done without regard to God’s will in the matter of our wealth.

Hoarding is foolish, especially when it is done without regard to the Lord’s impending judgment.

Hoarding is temporally focused especially when done without regard to eternity.

**B**. **Fraud** — James 5: 4 — Instead of giving a fair wage to those who worked their fields, the rich cheated them. One sign of the selfish rich is their reluctance to pay their bills. During the financial crisis that began in 2008, the world witnessed numerous super-rich reward themselves with bonuses while their employees lost their jobs. It’s an amazing reality that some of the greediest people are also some of the wealthiest— and some of the most generous people will give away their last dime!

**C.** **Self-Indulgence** – James 5:5 — Motyer — The more we surround ourselves with possessions which only minister to creature comfort, the less we are likely to cultivate the spiritual trimness of physique which keeps us fit in the battle for holiness. Furthermore, when we allow such wealth as we possess to focus attention on ourselves and our satisfactions, we are ministering to that spirit of pleasure, desire and wanting for self which is the root of all unholiness and unfaithfulness to God (4:1-4).

Calvin quaintly says: Not for nothing does the Lord by His prophets throw sharp words at those who sleep on ivory couches, who pour on precious unguents, who entrance their palates with sweetness to the notes of the zither, to all intents like fat cattle in rich pastures. All this is said to make us keep a perspective in all our creature comforts; self-indulgence wins no favor with God.

**D. Judicial Murder — 5:6 — taking away the means of making a living.**

Reminds me of Jezebel and Naboth’s vineyard.

**Conclusion:** 1 Timothy 6:17–19 ---- 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. 18 Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, 19 storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.