

Wrong Resources for Money

Stealing

“6 But godliness with contentment is great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. 8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. 9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” (1 Timothy 6:6-10 KJV)

Money is only one of the blessings that God has given to man so that he can use it to meet his daily needs. God has richly provided us with everything we need for our enjoyment. Nevertheless, Jesus also warned us about greed. *“15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” (Luke 12:15 KJV)* He also told us that our focus to have treasures in Heaven: *“19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Matthew 6:19-21 KJV)* God wants our heart fixed on loving Him rather than money. The previous chapter outlines the right ways to receive money and material blessings. We should also be aware that there are wrong ways to collect and to receive money and we should avoid them.

Given below are some of the devilish ways employed to take money from wrong sources and this can pave the way for our destruction.

I. Stealing: *“19 Neither shalt thou steal.” (Deuteronomy 5:19 KJV)* Stealing is taking things that don't belong to us without permission. Stealing is unacceptable, and many condemn it; yet we still find some practicing it. We will study a few Scripture verses from the Bible that talk about stealing.

A. The bad effects of stealing on the person who practices it:

1. *“30 Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry; 31 But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house.” (Proverbs 6:30-31 KJV)* According to what we have read, the thief needs to pay back seven times for what he has stolen, and this may cost him all his wealth.

2. *“1 If a man shall steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it; he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep.” (Exodus 22:1 KJV)* According to what we have read, the thief needs to pay back five times what he has stolen.

3. *“2 If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him.” (Exodus 22:2 KJV)* According to what we have read, the thief may lose his life on the spot.

4. *“3 If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him; for he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.” (Exodus 22:3 KJV)* According to what we have read, the thief might be sold to make restitution.

5. *“4 If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep; he shall restore double.” (Exodus 22:4 KJV)* According to what we have read, the thief needs to pay back double the amount he has stolen.

6. *“4 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. 5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: 6 And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.” (2 Samuel 12:4-6 KJV)* According to what we have read, the thief may need to pay back four times what he has stolen.

So, what we conclude from the Scriptures above is that the penalty to be paid by the thief will certainly be more than what he has stolen. Stealing will not be of any use to him, but will be a burden and will cost him more than he would have gained. This is what the Word of God tells us. *“17 Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. 18 But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell.” (Proverbs 9:17-18 KJV)* Stealing destroys the homes of those who steal. *“3 Then said he unto me, This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth: for every one that stealeth shall be cut off as on this side according to it; and every one that sweareth shall be cut off as on that side according to it. 4 I will bring it forth, saith the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name: and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof.” (Zechariah 5:3-4 KJV)* God will curse the house of the person who steals.

Therefore, we need to pay heed to the bad effects of stealing as mentioned in the Scriptures and never do it. Stealing will bring a curse and will rob us of God's blessing.

B. The different forms of stealing are laid out in the following Scriptures:

1. **Stealing from parents:** *“24 Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, It is no transgression; the same is the companion of a destroyer.” (Proverbs 28:24 KJV)* Many take advantage of their parents and try to abuse them or make them spend more on them. They claim that what their parents have is rightfully theirs. That is not correct. What our parents have belongs to God and they are stewards of what the Lord has given them. Therefore, we cannot grab anything from them on the grounds that we are their children. This is nothing but stealing.

2. **Stealing land:** *“14 Thou shalt not remove thy neighbor's landmark, which they of old time have set in thine inheritance, which thou shalt inherit in the land that the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it.” (Deuteronomy 19:14 KJV)* In the past, people used stones to erect a boundary between one person's land and another's. So, those who intended to steal would move the boundary stone toward their neighbor to increase their land and their territory. This is stealing and will bring a curse on those who do this as we can read, *“17 Cursed be he that*

removeth his neighbour's landmark. And all the people shall say, Amen." (Deuteronomy 27:17 KJV) Therefore, "28 Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set." (Proverbs 22:28 KJV)

3. Taking advantage of orphans and widows: "10 Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless: 11 For their redeemer is mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee." (Proverbs 23:10-11 KJV) There are people who take advantage of widows and orphans because they are weak. They think they have no one to lean on, forgetting that the Lord is there, watching the affairs of their lives and that He will be the one to support them and defend them.

4. Stealing flocks: "2 Some remove the landmarks; they violently take away flocks, and feed thereof. 3 They drive away the ass of the fatherless, they take the widow's ox for a pledge." (Job 24:2-3 KJV) Another form of stealing is taking sheep and flocks and taking advantage of widows and orphans. Today, there are people who steal ministries and lead people the wrong way. But God will not excuse those who use lies and deceit to steal flocks and even those who steal ministries: "23 Though it be given him to be in safety, whereon he resteth; yet his eyes are upon their ways. 24 They are exalted for a little while, but are gone and brought low; they are taken out of the way as all other, and cut off as the tops of the ears of corn. 25 And if it be not so now, who will make me a liar, and make my speech nothing worth?" (Job 24:23-25 KJV)

5. Taking advantage of others: "28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." (Ephesians 4:28 KJV) There are people who do not want to work but prefer to live like parasites, feeding on others. This is stealing. The Scriptures warn us against this: "6 That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified." (1 Thessalonians 4:6 KJV) There are workers who claim to serve the Lord but are actually taking advantage of the church members or using them for their own purpose. They use their brothers and sisters in Christ to give them service without remuneration. We are warned not to do that. "13 Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning." (Leviticus 19:13 KJV) "13 Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work." (Jeremiah 22:13 KJV) When we utilize the services of our brothers and sisters for our personal needs, we need to pay them. Samuel was free from this sin. He served God without taking advantage of the people. "3 Behold, here I am: witness against me before the LORD, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you. 4 And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand." (1 Samuel 12:3-4 KJV) Likewise, Apostle Paul did not defraud the brethren of the churches that he was the overseer of. "2 Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man." (2 Corinthians 7:2 KJV) Neither did Titus, Paul's co-worker, take advantage of the brethren. "18 I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same steps?" (2 Corinthians 12:18 KJV) We too must walk in the steps of Samuel, Paul, and Titus while serving the Lord.

6. Stealing from the masters and from the government: "9 Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; 10 Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." (Titus 2:9-10 KJV) * There are people who steal from their masters and from their workplaces. Some justify their actions by saying that their masters are rich and so there is no problem if they take something from the abundant supply of their masters' goods. But this is stealing, and it will affect not only the masters but also the thieves because it is sin and will bring a curse upon their life. * Some say that stealing from the government is right because the government is rich and is exploiting the people by levying heavy taxes. However, this is also stealing and will bring trouble to those who do it.

7. Not paying taxes and government fees: "20 And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor. 21 And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly: 22 Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no? 23 But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me? 24 Shew me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Caesar's. 25 And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's." (Luke 20:20-25 KJV) We ought to be honest with the government to show that we are honest with God. What is due to the government in the form of taxes or fees must be paid. "6 For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. 7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour." (Romans 13:6-7 KJV)

8. Borrowing and not returning: "21 The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth." (Psalm 37:21 KJV) Another form of stealing is when people borrow something (usually money) but never return it. Sometimes, people lend money to another person only to find that the borrower has suddenly disappeared with the money. All the people who had lent him money previously will then complain and regret ever giving him anything. There are people who join churches to borrow money and then run away. In the churches that I oversee, I have instructed the leaders and members not to lend without the knowledge of the church to avoid such kind of trouble.

There is another way of borrowing and not paying back. This is by taking a large loan from a bank and then leaving the country without paying it back. Some think that this is not sin because they are not stealing from people but from a bank. This is not right. It is still a sin. In certain countries, some loans were given on the principle of canceling the debt after seven years had passed. "1 At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release. 2 And this is the manner of the release: Every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbour shall release it; he shall not exact it of his neighbour, or of his brother; because it is called the LORD's release. 3 Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it again: but that which is thine with thy brother thine hand shall release." (Deuteronomy 15:1-3 KJV) Some will make use of privileges like medical services or educational services but won't pay back until their debts are canceled at the end of the seven years. That is also wickedness and God will judge them for that.

9. Not paying the workers their wages: Even delayed payment is a sin because a person's life is dependent on their income. "13 Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning." (Leviticus 19:13 KJV) "1 Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. 2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. 3 Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. 4 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth." (James 5:1-4 KJV) When people fail to give the workers whom they have hired their wages, they are stealing from them. Some rich people take advantage of their workers and deprive them of their rights because they think that they don't have the power to fight for their rights. They may deny them insurance, medical support, leaves, or other privileges. "22 Rob not the poor, because he is poor: neither oppress the afflicted in the gate: 23 For the LORD will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them." (Proverbs 22:22-23 KJV) God's Word warns us from doing such evil things against people who are poor and weak.

10. Not paying tithes in full and failing to bring offerings and the firstfruits: "8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. 9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." (Malachi 3:8-9 KJV) "25 And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's." (Luke 20:25 KJV) Failing to bring our tithes and offerings and our firstfruits to the Lord's storehouse is another kind of stealing. We are literally robbing God. "29 Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors: the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me." (Exodus 22:29 KJV)

11. Taking money from the treasury: "6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein." (John 12:6 KJV) Judas Iscariot had been taking money out of the treasury without permission. Taking money out of the treasury of the church without the knowledge and approval of the church is another form of stealing. Many church leaders take people's tithes and offerings and put them directly into their pockets without maintaining a proper record of the money collected in the church. They consider the treasury money as their personal pocket money. This is another form of stealing and will bring a curse on those who indulge in it. This what Paul spoke about those who do this, "21 Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? 22 Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? 23 Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? 24 For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written." (Romans 2:21-24 KJV) These kinds of pastors, who covet money, are keen to minister to the rich and influential and do their best to make them join their ministry in order to benefit from them financially. They are like Balaam who was enticed to go with Balak's men for a reward, "and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward." (Jude 1:11 KJV) Such pastors who are looking for financial gain have no credibility and do not stand on God's principles. They are greedy and dangerous. They are like Ishmael the son of Nethaniah. "4 And it came to pass the second day after he had slain Gedaliah, and no man knew it, 5 That there

came certain from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria, even fourscore men, having their beards shaven, and their clothes rent, and having cut themselves, with offerings and incense in their hand, to bring them to the house of the LORD. 6 And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah went forth from Mizpah to meet them, weeping all along as he went: and it came to pass, as he met them, he said unto them, Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam. 7 And it was so, when they came into the midst of the city, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah slew them, and cast them into the midst of the pit, he, and the men that were with him. 8 But ten men were found among them that said unto Ishmael, Slay us not: for we have treasures in the field, of wheat, and of barley, and of oil, and of honey. So he forbore, and slew them not among their brethren." (Jeremiah 41:4-8 KJV) Ishmael the son of Nethaniah slew the men who were coming to the house of God and took from them the offerings they had brought. However, he spared ten men from among them, not out of mercy but out of covetousness, when they told him that they "have treasures in the field, of wheat, and of barley, and of oil, and of honey." (Jeremiah 41:8 KJV) He spared them to get hold of all the provisions that they had hidden in the field.

My dear and beloved: "9 Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein." (Hosea 14:9 KJV) The stolen money will finally waste away and cause trouble to those who have it. Stolen money and resources obtained from cheating in the work spot, intentionally selling defective products, cheating workers of their wages, and not paying bills will end up being a curse to those who seek to gain them. Let us pray ...

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word and the teaching that I received in this message. Lord thank you for all the corrections the rebukes and the admonishments that I received and the explanation about stealing, its forms and its bad effects.

Repent and renounce all your sins. Renounce your stealing, stealing from your parents, abusing the poor, the needy, the orphans and the widows. Repent of stealing from your master and the place that you are working. Repent of not paying your tax and the bills of the government. Repent of borrowing and not returning. Repent of not giving your tithes offerings and firstfruits to God. Repent of taking advantage of others and your non willingness to work to meet your needs. Repent of using people and not paying them their wages. Repent of your greed and not being satisfied with what God gives to you. Repent of your lack of fear in God. Repent of your non willingness to suffer for Christ and to serve Him. Confess your non willingness to go along the rules that God placed before you in His Word to follow in your life. Lord I repent and renounce the following sins _____.

Lord thank you for all the resources that you had placed in my hand. Lord I commit myself to use all these resources to work and to live honestly according to your Word and according to the laws of the government that you had placed in the place that I am living. Lord I commit myself to be a good testimony to others and to start to serve you and do your will and your plan in my life. Lord continue to provide for me so I will continue to live in the fear of you.

Lord, thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who repented of their sins and decided to live a honest and Godly life in the fear of you. Lord protect their sources of income and give them the

good health and the strength. Lord watch over them and protect them from the evil one so they will continue to serve you and do your will.

Lord bless us as your church and help us to continue to teach your Word and your will to your people. Lord thank you for all the resources that you had placed for your church and for all the brethren. Lord use all these resources for your glory. Lord help us to continue to correct and admonish those who are in sin to bring them back to you and to your will. Lord refill us with the Holy Spirit and give us the Spiritual gifts that we need in our lives to go on and evangelize, and make new disciples and train new workers to go and plant new Bible studies and congregations for the church. Lord we pray for more people to be water Baptized and receive the Holy Spirit Baptism. Lord prepare us for your coming to go with you when you come. Lord take the message and spread it to bring the fruit that you desire to see in the life of your church and your people. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, 'Multiplication in peace with implementing the whole will of God.' Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

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