

Lesson 2:

**The Deceitfulne\$\$
of Riche\$**



The allure of money holds a particular threat to Christians who desire to do a good work for God. The singular pursuit of wealth will lead a Christian away from the path of righteousness and into a briar patch of trouble.

1 Timothy 6:10

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.



Money itself is simply a tool for future trade. It is neither good nor bad. But ever since the first coin was minted, the love of money has taken people into the shadowy realms of life.



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The pursuit of wealth has turned many Christians from the straight and narrow way. Why is this so?



Matthew 6:24

²⁴ No man can serve two masters:
for either he will hate the one,
and love the other;
or else he will hold to the one,
and despise the other.
Ye cannot serve God and mammon.





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From a Syrian word signifying **riches personified and opposed to God**.



Jesus spoke of *two masters*, God and mammon. The god of mammon demands the same devotion from you as does God. Mammon and God both want to possess your heart, soul, mind, and strength. They both want your trust.

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But *mammon* is a god you can see, a god you can hold in your hand. You experience its power every time you go shopping. That is why it is so hard for people who trust in riches to redirect their faith to the invisible God.

Mark 10:23-25

- ²³ And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!
- ²⁴ And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, **Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!**
- ²⁵ It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

This is what prompted the Lord's observation:

Mark 10:17-22

17 And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is none good but one, that is, God.*

19 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

20 And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.

21 Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

22 And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

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He was keen on the things that cost him nothing.

Why does money get such devotion?
The fact is, mammon promises to do for you the same things God promises. They both promise to take care of you and protect you. They both promise to bring you happiness, love, and honor.

But only God keeps his promises. The god of mammon is a liar. That is why Jesus warned of the deceitfulness of worldly riches.

Matthew 13:22

²² He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, **and the deceitfulness of riches,** choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.



The belief that money will keep you happy and safe is so prevalent in our world that few people can see past the illusion, even when the facts tell a completely different story.

In this lesson we will uncover some of the lies told by the god of mammon.



This seal was designed in the late 18th century by secretary to the Continental Congress Charles Thomson.

The unfinished pyramid was said to represent the strength and longevity of the new nation under the watchful oversight of the Eye of Providence.



Annuit Coeptis means “Providence has favored our undertakings.”

Novus Ordo Seclorum is “a new order of the ages.”



The Deceitfulness of Riches

We are often tempted to believe that people with wealth are always happy with less problems than the rest of us.

Psalm 73:3-5, 7

- 3 For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.
- 4 For *there are* no bands in their death: but their strength *is* firm.
- 5 They *are* not in trouble *as other* men; neither are they plagued like *other* men.
- 7 Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish.



Even when we know better, it is still tempting to think that all our problems would disappear if we only had more money. Since most of us will never experience great wealth, we cannot discover for ourselves if this fantasy is true.



God gave one man the means to test this theory so the rest of us could learn from his experiences. God made Solomon a very wealthy man, and Solomon used his wealth to acquire everything and anything his heart desired.



1 Kings 10:14-15

- ¹⁴ Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred threescore and six talents of gold,
- ¹⁵ Beside *that he had* of the merchantmen, and of the traffick of the spice merchants, and of all the kings of Arabia, and of the governors of the country.



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A “talent” is roughly 75 lbs.
 $666 \times 75 = 25$ tons of gold.



1 Kings 10:18-20

- ¹⁸ Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold.
- ¹⁹ The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne *was* round behind: and *there were* stays on either side on the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays.
- ²⁰ And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps: there was not the like made in any kingdom.



Here is King Solomon's testimony:

Ecclesiastes 2:4-8, 10

4 I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards:

5 I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all *kind* of fruits:

6 I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees:

7 I got *me* servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me:

8 I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces:

I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, *as* musical instruments, and that of all sorts.

10 And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour.

And what was his conclusion?

Ecclesiastes 2:11

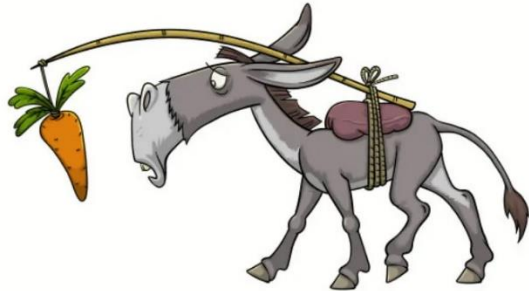
¹¹ Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, *all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.*

Solomon discovered that earthly treasures provide brief amusement but no lasting satisfaction. They start to lose their luster as soon as they come into our possession. The thrill of acquisition turns into the burden of ownership. This is the deceitfulness of riches.



The Deceitfulness of Riches

The man who loves money will never be rich enough to satisfy himself. Like a donkey following a carrot on a stick, he is in endless pursuit of something he cannot reach.



Ecclesiastes 5:10

¹⁰ He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this *is* also vanity.



Instead of adding happiness to our lives, worldly riches add more worry. The more you have, the more you can lose. Closed doors become locked doors; locked doors become doors with silent alarms. Soon you are living behind gated walls with armed security guards... just like prisoners.





Is it just a strange coincidence that money marketers deal in **stocks** and **bonds**?

The Deceitfulness of Riches

Locusts do not visit a barren field.



Ecclesiastes 5:11

¹¹ When goods increase,
they are increased that eat them:
and what good *is there* to the
owners thereof,
saving the beholding of *them*
with their eyes?



The Deceitfulness of Riches

A poor man is accustomed to dealing with life one day at a time. As bad as things are, he knows his fortune can only improve. A rich man is hounded by premonitions of a destitute tomorrow. He knows everything he was acquired could easily be taken away.

Ecclesiastes 5:12-13

¹² The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.



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- ¹³ There is a sore evil *which* I have seen under the sun, *namely*, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.



The Deceitfulness of Riches

One of the greatest challenges of living in our modern society is that parents can afford to lavish their children with almost anything they desire. But the idea of getting something for nothing sets a bad precedent for later years.

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riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.



The Deceitfulness of Riches

Money pretends to be our friend but it twitches and squirms in our pocket like a cat that refuses to be held.

No matter how we try to hang on, our money flies away.

Proverbs 23:4-5



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Proverbs 23:4-5

- 4 Labour not to be rich:
cease from thine own wisdom.
- 5 Wilt thou set thine eyes upon
that which is not?
for riches certainly make
themselves wings;
they fly away as an eagle toward
heaven.



Those who pay their tithe to the god of mammon (by pocketing it for themselves) discover their purses are riddled with holes.

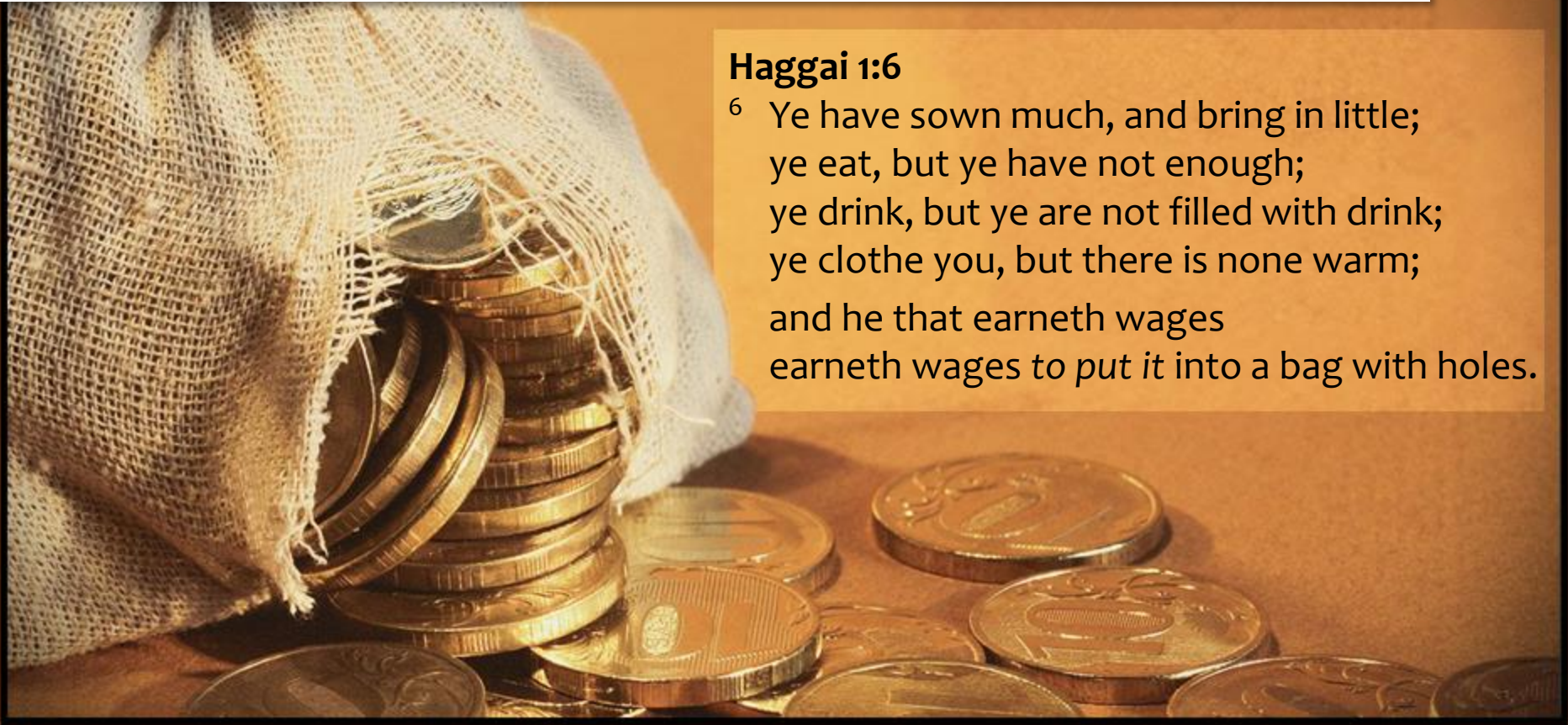
Haggai 1:6



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Haggai 1:6

⁶ Ye have sown much, and bring in little;
ye eat, but ye have not enough;
ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink;
ye clothe you, but there is none warm;
and he that earneth wages
earneth wages *to put it into a bag with holes.*



The Deceitfulness of Riches

The god of mammon promises you many friends. But when the money runs dry, they seek new company.



Proverbs 19:4



The Deceitfulness of Riches

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Proverbs 19:4

4 Wealth maketh many friends;
but the poor is separated from
his neighbour.



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Proverbs 14:20



The Deceitfulness of Riches

The god of mammon promises you many friends. But when the money runs dry, they seek new company.



Proverbs 14:20

²⁰ The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but the rich *hath* many friends.



Most people who serve the god of mammon are not looking only for happiness. People serve mammon because it promises to protect them in their day of trouble. They believe that with enough money they can buy their way out of any problem. This too is the deceitfulness of riches. When trouble comes, money forgets its VOWS.

Proverbs 11:28



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Proverbs 11:28

²⁸ He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.



The God of heaven is a strong wall of defense who will never abandon you. But the god of mammon will only shelter you until your money runs out. After that, you are on your own.

Proverbs 18:10-11



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Proverbs 18:10-11

- ¹⁰ The name of the LORD *is* a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.
- ¹¹ The rich man's wealth *is* his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit.



Trusting in money robs your soul of peace. Trusting in God enlivens you.

Ecclesiastes 7:11-12



Trusting in money robs your soul of peace. Trusting in God enlivens you.

Ecclesiastes 7:11-12

- ¹¹ Wisdom *is* good with an inheritance: and *by it there is* profit to them that see the sun.
- ¹² For wisdom *is* a defence, and money *is* a defence: but the excellency of knowledge *is*, *that* wisdom giveth life to them that have it.



And most important, all the wealth
in the world cannot buy a ticket out
of eternal damnation.

Proverbs 11:4



And most important, all the wealth in the world cannot buy a ticket out of eternal damnation.

Proverbs 11:4

4 Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.



On the day when God judges sinful man, the righteous will laugh at the fools who thought their money would save them.

Psalm 52:6-7



On the day when God judges sinful man, the righteous will laugh at the fools who thought their money would save them.

Psalm 52:6-7

- 6 The righteous also shall see, and fear, and shall laugh at him:
- 7 Lo, *this is the man that* made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, *and* strengthened himself in his wickedness.



Money has no conscience. You don't need faith or good character to acquire it. In fact, these things can stand in the way of the acquisition of wealth. The quickest ways to get rich are often illegal or immoral, or both.



There are many evil ways to obtain wealth, but they all bite back.

Job 4:8



There are many evil ways to obtain wealth, but they all bite back.

Job 4:8

⁸ Even as I have seen,
they that plow iniquity, and sow
wickedness, reap the same.



Countless people have risen to power
on the backs of the poor.



**THE PARADISE OF
THE RICH IS MADE
OUT OF THE HELL
OF THE POOR.**

-VICTOR HUGO-

Some increase their wealth by lending money to the needy at an exorbitant rate of interest. But they will not hold on to their wealth.

Proverbs 28:8



Some increase their wealth by lending money to the needy at an exorbitant rate of interest. But they will not hold on to their wealth.

Proverbs 28:8

⁸ He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.



Whether it comes by enslaving the poor or selling out to the rich, unjust gain will not stand the test of time.

Proverbs 22:16



Whether it comes by enslaving the poor or selling out to the rich, unjust gain will not stand the test of time.

Proverbs 22:16

¹⁶ He that oppresseth the poor to increase his *riches*,
and he that giveth to the rich,
shall surely come to want.



The Destructive Effects of Greed

So powerful is the evil spread by the love of money that just the *desire* for wealth is enough to corrupt a man. 1 Timothy 6:9 does not warn of the dangers of *being* rich; it warns of the dangers of *wanting* to be rich. You can be penniless and still be captured by its snare!

1 Timothy 6:9



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1 Timothy 6:9

- 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.



The Destructive Effects of Greed

Greed invites trouble into your home. It breeds discontent.

Proverbs 15:27



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Proverbs 15:27

²⁷ He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts [bribes] shall live.



The Destructive Effects of Greed

Greed captures its victims in an invisible snare.

Proverbs 1:17 and 19



The Destructive Effects of Greed

Greed captures its victims in an invisible snare.

Proverbs 1:17 and 19

- ¹⁷ Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird.
- ¹⁹ So *are* the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; *which* taketh away the life of the owners thereof.



The Destructive Effects of Greed

Greed drives a man to do things he thought he would never do.

Proverbs 28:20



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Greed drives a man to do things he thought he would never do.

Proverbs 28:20

²⁰ A faithful man shall abound with blessings:
but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.



The Destructive Effects of Greed

Greed gives a man an evil eye.
Every one he sees is a potential
stepping-stone to his desired end.

Proverbs 28:22



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Proverbs 28:22

²² He that hasteth to be rich *hath*
an evil eye, and considereth not
that poverty shall come upon
him.



The Destructive Effects of Greed

Monetary gain that comes through compromise is “filthy lucre.” How important it is for church elders to heed Peter’s exhortation:

1 Peter 5:2



The Destructive Effects of Greed

Monetary gain that comes through compromise is “filthy lucre.” How important it is for church elders to heed Peter’s exhortation:

1 Peter 5:2

- ² Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;



This is the deceitfulness of riches. They promise you happiness and security, but then forsake you at the first opportunity. They corrupt your heart, leading you to abandon your faith and to inflict yourself with many sorrows.

Every treasure you pursue will cost you something, if nothing more than the time it takes to collect it. What is the cost of devoting your life to worldly riches? Only your soul!

Matthew 16:26



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²⁶ For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?



We live in a time of unprecedented wealth even among everyday people. We have all experienced the power of money, and we understand the lure to put our faith in the god of mammon. But mammon is a liar and a deceit. Only God is worthy of our trust. Let our trust be in God, and not in the “uncertain riches” of the world.

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¹⁷ Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;





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