



The *Pulpit Exchange*

It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe (1 Corinthians 1:21).

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading (Nehemiah 8:8). Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend (Proverbs 27:17).

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Preparing For Eternity

How many of us believe that we are heading for eternity? How many of us know how close we are? None of us know. Does it matter if we are prepared? God will open a door, and we will step into something that we know nothing about. However, the Word has much to tell us about that. Thus, the question is, are we ready? What does it take to be ready?

Hebrews 10:37 says, "For yet a

little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." This is the Word of God and it is what God says. He is coming. He is coming again. We sometimes sing that song. So what do we need? The next verse says, "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." What is keeping this world from going under, as we use that term, or from coming to a close?

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It is because men still believe God. The question was asked, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8) There will be as there was when the first world went under. Yet, if I would write the question, "What kind of faith do you have?" What would I write? What does it take to be right with God?

In Hebrews 11:6, it says, "Without faith it is impossible to please him." Notice what it says,

"For he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that . . . seek him." It does not say that does it? It says "diligently seek him." This is the difference. I trust that those who have come to the age of accountability and have given their lives to God, believe. Faith is believing in something, but what does it take to please God? When I come to God, am I diligently seeking Him? Or does that continue? I believe it contin-

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ues. If it does not continue, what will take place in our lives? This is what the Word says. It makes a difference.

We need a saving faith. We need to come to that knowledge of that saving faith. We also need that faith to continue, do we not? What is faith? Verse 1 says, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." I cannot see your faith, and you cannot see my faith. We are speaking about something which we cannot see. We can see the results of the faith, can we not? When God made man, he was made in a way that he trusts in something. When we are born, it is not very long before we trust our parents. We are made that way. We have faith in our parents, and on and on goes the list.

We have a faith in something. However, it should not be only something. No, it takes a saving faith in God. To bring us to a saving faith, we must believe the reality that God is. It needs to be a reality in our lives. If it does not stay a reality, we lose out. That is why in Thessalonians we read, the end "shall not come, except there come a falling away first." (2 Thessalonians 2:3). A falling away of what? Somebody somewhere had something, but they fell away from it. The

potential is very real for everyone to fall away. That is what the Bible says. We are all taught that. It says in Hebrews 11:3 we read, "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." We cannot do that. Only God can. God has set in order things that they will not stop till "there should be time no longer." (Revelation 10:6)

Sometimes we hear the question, "Why are children born where they are?" Children cannot help that. God established an order. When the conditions are right, and the connections made, there will be another child. That is God's order. It does not stop. That is how things work. When God starts something, it follows that order. We know that man started trusting in something else. This is why there was the flood. They trusted something other than God. Do we see how necessary it is?

Let us just look at some things that took place by people that had faith. The Scripture says, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." That is what his faith did. "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had

translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.” (verse 5) Is this not wonderful? Again, what would God write down? What kind of faith do we have? God has written down how our standing is before Him.

In Revelation 20:12 we read, “and the books were opened.” One is the “book of life.” I remember as a boy we had a motto on the wall at home. I often looked at that motto. It said, “The book of life, is my name written there?” I did not understand what that meant. Today, I understand. God will be doing the writing. It will be according to our faith, how God will have that written. It says, “By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house.” (verse 6) That is what Noah’s faith did. “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed.” (verse 7) That is what his faith did. It continues by saying, “he sojourned in the land of promise . . . For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” He was looking for something he could not see. It continues by talking about Sarah and then Moses. We could

talk about Joseph, “By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.” Four hundred years later they took his bones back to where his parents and different ones were buried.

It really does not matter where we are buried. That is not what will make the difference when we meet God. It says, “By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.” People who do not have a faith in God, do not fear God. Then we lose the shame (God covered our first parents). We also lose the fear of God. This is what can easily happen in churches. I have asked the question already of quite a few different people, “What is the greatest danger facing or the threat facing the Church in America today?” I do not know what you would say. We can think about it, but I believe the fear of God will rank highly. I am not saying that is all that it is. There is a danger of losing our fear and reverence of God, and our faith goes with that.

In Hebrews 10:23 it says, “Let us hold fast the profession of our

faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)" Do we see that we can trust God? This was Paul's testimony before he departed his life. He had "kept the faith." (2 Timothy 4:7) That is why he said he is ready to meet his Saviour. In 2 Timothy 1:12, Paul, who suffered a lot for the cause of Christ, wrote, "For the which cause I also suffer these

things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Do we understand why I asked, "Are we ready for eternity — to go through that door? What I commit to God is in safe keeping. What I keep I will lose.

Gambling and Slot Machines in Light of Bible Principles — 1 Timothy 6:8–10

My response to this topic being assigned was that I was taken aback. It was a new thought to me. I thought it was something that I would need to get up front and maybe speak for an hour about a subject I have never thought much about, or I never even thought was an issue. One brother said that one of the young people in their church when they saw the topic said, "Whatever is that is scheduled on there for?" Before you resign yourself to the next hour of your life being wasted with something you are never even tempted with, I ask you to please reconsider.

I am sure we do not have any pathological gamblers in our churches. I hope no one has ever darkened the hall of a casino or a gambling hall. I hope no one has ever bought a lottery ticket.

Nevertheless, this is something that is all around us. Every time you go into the gas station the lottery tickets are there. Do you know why we do not gamble and buy lottery tickets? If I were to ask you, I hope and trust that each one of you do. Would our answer sound a little lame? "Well, it is a waste of money. It is bad." Or do we have a clear understanding of God's Word and why we do not?

I trust we can clarify in our minds what God says about this. I do not want to go into great detail about gambling and all the different types of gambling because there are so many different things. People who want to gamble find something to gamble on. There are so many different types. I will not go into detail on what goes on in casino and gam-

bling halls. One reason is I do not know, and I do not want to know.

However, in studying this I found out that the gambling has been around for thousands of years. One little point of interest that I thought was interesting. History has it that as Columbus was looking for America sailors had cards and they were gambling. That is the way they would spend their time. As time went on and on they could not find land, they thought that God was punishing them for their gambling. They threw all their cards overboard. They said that as soon as they saw land they repented because they did not have anything to do. So they took some kind of leaf, it says, and made themselves a new deck of cards. Yet, in their heart they knew something — that God was not pleased with it.

I would like to begin by asking the question, “*Why do people gamble?*” Why do people buy lottery tickets? In 1997 in the United States alone 50 billion was spent on gambling. I realize my statistics are a little stale (ten years ago). Nevertheless, assuming that in the last ten years things have not become better, that is a lot of money. I cannot even comprehend that money — 50 billion dollars. What is the

attraction? Why must people spend that kind of money when the odds are “stacked” against them? I have a quote here, “Gambling is a great way of getting nothing for something.”

One of the main reasons involved in why people gamble is social reasons. Maybe they simply enjoy going to the casinos and halls for the social aspect of it, or for the risk, or the excitement. The dull and routine can be temporarily forgotten in the prospect of winning. If we took all those different other different reasons away what would be the heart issue? What is the root of this gambling/lottery that people are so attracted to? Is it a sickness that people catch?

I was at my father-in-law’s and I picked up a *World News* magazine. There was an article in there. I was preparing for this and so it really caught my interest. The title of this article was *No Easy Cure*. It said, “Drug company comes up short on appeal for the love of money. The long term cure for sin does not come in a bottle, but [an actual] pharmaceutical [company] gave it a good try. A San Diego based drug maker had been trying to find a drug to treat problem gambling. Company executives announced on December 5 that test results have not been encour-

aging. Problem gamblers, those labeled as pathological gamblers, who took a drug . . . did no better in curbing their gambling habit than a control group that took placebos.” The article ended by saying “The senior vice president told the *San Diego Tribune* that it is a disappointment.”

I thought that was interesting. They are trying to invent a drug to cover this problem. Well, it is not a sickness. What I found is that the heart of it is the love of money. Covetousness is at the root of why people gamble and buy lottery tickets. That takes us to our theme verse in 1 Timothy 6:10 which says, “For the love of money is the root of all evil.” It is the love of money, covetousness. If you dig down to the root, what you find is the love of money.

As I thought on this love of money, it is not a unique problem to people in the top 10% tax bracket and have this unique problem. You do not need to be rich to have the love of money. The poorest man in town with nothing on his back and sleeping under a bridge can be possessed with the love of money and a very covetous person.

Proverbs 21:25, 26 says, “The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour. (26) He coveteth greedily all the

day long: but the righteous giveth and spareth not.” What I see in these verses is the slothful man. He will not work to the point that it appears that it will kill him, to his destruction. It says of this poor man that “He coveteth greedily all the day long.” He is a very greedy, covetous person. Proverbs 15:27 says, “He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house.” That could be the man who does not have his priorities straight and spends all of his time working instead of spending his time with his family. It could also be the greedy man that is spending his money on gambling and lottery tickets.

A while back I was in another town at a gas station. While I was there this old “jalopy” car pulled up to the front door with a man and a woman and two little children in the back seat. It took me a minute to realize what was happening but she got out and went into the store. She came out and went to his window. I saw her give him something and I saw him sitting there and scratching it off. He looked at it and he gave her some more money and she went back in and bought another lottery ticket and brought it back out and he sat there and scratched it off. By all appearances it was a very impoverished family spending their money on lottery

tickets. "He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house."

Instead of spending that money on the children in the back seat to get them some shoes or a hamburger his covetousness was driving him — "Just maybe he could win that big jackpot." Why do people want all this money? Why do people want to win? Is it not because they think it will make them happy? We tend to think of money and happiness as synonymous. "If I could only win that million dollars, I could buy what I want, do what I want. Then, I would be happy."

In spite of all the evidence around us to the contrary, we still get our eyes on money and things as the source of happiness. What about the people who have won millions or made millions? Are they happy now? Luke 12:15 says, "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." The things which we have are not who we are. That is not what makes us what we are.

In a book I found some quotes of millionaires. These are some of the richest men in America. I thought it was interesting what they said. John Rockefeller was the richest man of his time. He

said, "I have made millions but they have bought me no happiness." Vanderbilt was a railroad tycoon that had made many millions. He said, "The care of 200 million is enough to kill anyone. There is no pleasure in it." John Jacob Aster said, "I am the most miserable man on the earth." J. Paul Getty made millions of dollars in the oil business. He said, "What can I say. I only know that I am desolate." Henry Ford (we all know him) said, "I was happy when doing a mechanic's job." Andrew Carnegie who had all the steel mills said, "Millionaires seldom smile."

These are men who did not win their money. They earned it. They worked their way up. Were they happy when they got there? Did money buy them happiness? We know it did not. We see that around us. We see the rich and famous and their lives and we do not see contented happy people. Ecclesiastes 5:12, 13 says, "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. (13) There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt." Do we not see that people who their money is to their ruin. "The sleep of a labouring man is sweet." Take a

man who needs to work for his bread. He works all day. He comes home and he is “bone” tired. It does not matter what he eats for supper. He does not need to have a three-course meal, or if he simply has noodles for supper. He goes to sleep and he rests because he has worked.

Our theme verse, 1 Timothy 6:9 says “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.” We have all the evidence that money does not buy happiness. People think that with themselves it will be a little different. You know, “If I get that money I think it will be a little different.”

The other day as I was driving down the interstate I saw this big billboard with power ball lottery advertized and it said it was \$240 million. Six days later I heard that someone had won that and it was already up to \$280 million. People come down the road and they see that sign. It played on their covetousness and they say when it gets that big the tickets start pouring in. They said an eighty-five-year-old man won it — \$280 million. Do we think he will be happy now at eighty-five years old and that he can start living? No, I say it is one of the worse things that could happen to

him.

I would like to relate an account from a few years ago about a couple who won a large amount of money in the lottery. They won millions. It told their story after they had won. They were simple working people and they won these millions of dollars. Did they build a big house and live happily ever after? No, that is not the way the story went. They said the first thing that happened is that they got into such a fight over the money that they got a divorce and split the money in half and she took half and he took half. It was still a lot of money.

She went up on the high river and built herself a large mansion. It says she became a miserable recluse and lived there by herself with a bunch of cats and dogs. She did not get out of bed. She stayed in bed on drugs and in a couple of years was dead.

He, on the other hand, was also a working man. His idea of happiness was to live in the blue grass country around Lexington, KY where there are all those pretty horse farms. In his mind that was happiness on one of those horse farms. Now, he could finally do it. Therefore, he went and bought himself a large horse farm up there somewhere. He became paranoid that people

were trying to get him to get his money. He had security cameras all over his house and farm. He was a very miserable, paranoid man. He began to drink. Of course, he could drink as much as he wanted to because he did not need to sober up to go to work on Monday morning. Therefore, he drank himself to death in a couple of years. The article related that in four years they were both dead. Money did not buy them happiness.

Jeremiah 17:9 says “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” This word “heart” here, we understand that is our thinking, our intellect. “For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7). Their thinking is deceitful. Our thinking can tell us money and things will bring us happiness. “I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings. (11) As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool” (Jeremiah 17:10, 11). I thought of this couple. In the end, could we not say that they were fools — what they thought would bring them happiness —

they were fooled.

Here, at the beginning of verse 11, “As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not.” I am not sure what that meant. One commentator said that “as would sit on idle eggs thinking they were going to hatch and the days went by and the days went by and here they were idle and no good.”

Proverbs 13:11 says, “Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished.” They say that many people who win these large lotteries soon go through it. They “blow it.” They are often left in debt. Ecclesiastes 5:10 says, “He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase.” If that is what our heart is set on, if that is what we love, there will be a never-ending battle. We will never be satisfied.

Proverbs 28:20 says, “A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.” Proverbs 28:22 says, “He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.” If it is our desire to get rich quick. It says here that we should not be innocent. We have an evil eye.

1 Timothy 6:9, “But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many fool-

ish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.” It is the love of excessive gain. It seems to me that it says, “they that will be rich.” That is not necessarily the rich then. It is their desire. They want to be rich.

As we think of covetousness, it would be nice if the love of money and covetousness were the unique problem of gamblers. If we never bought a lottery ticket that means that we are free of covetousness. We know it is not so. *What is the antidote? What is the opposite of this love of money and covetousness? It is contentment.* Hebrews 13:5 says, “Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”

1 Timothy 6:5, 6 says, “Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. (6) But godliness with contentment is great gain.” Then, verse 8 says, “And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.” Money will never buy this contentment. Verse 5 says, “supposing that gain is godliness.” That is a thought that we hear in Christendom in our day that God wants to bless you. God

wants to give you a lot of money. God wants to give you material blessings. We know we do not find that in the Bible that God necessarily wants to or that is how God will bless us — only materially. That is a thought we encounter.

Discontentment is something we all have to work with. As I thought about it, I think it is something that youth struggle with a bit more. I was thinking back when I was younger. It was discontentment. We all face it, but youth struggle with it more so. When you are young, you are starting out. You do not have anything. Everything is kind of avoiding you so to speak, and it is easy to be discontent, and you get anxious. We want some of those things now.

I hope each one of us, as young people, can learn contentment when we are young and not wait until we are thirty or forty, and realizing that we have been expecting some thing, some milestone, some relationship to bring contentment when we could have had it all along. It is not out there. Contentment is not waiting around the next bend in the road.

Last summer we went out to Iowa and we were driving on a road that we were unfamiliar with. We passed a gas station

assuming there would be a better one up the road and there was not. The next thing we knew we were fairly well on empty. We were afraid that any minute we would be stranded. The road had these hills in it and it went up and down. Every time we came over a hill we would be looking for a gas station and there would not be one, and we would go down and over the next hill.

Some people go through life like that. They simply cannot wait to go up the next hill and maybe they will find contentment, maybe they will find happiness. In Philippians 4:11–13 Paul says, “Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. (12) I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. (13) I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Paul, knew the secret of godly contentment. Paul could be in Jerusalem, Corinth, Rome, or on a ship and he was content. The ship could even be a wreck and put him on an island somewhere and he could be content. He had this secret of godly contentment.

Young people, you can have

godly contentment now. It is not something you must wait on. You can learn godly contentment now. We hear about marriage or singlehood. Either way you can have godly contentment. Maybe you are a young man and you are kind of restless, and not really content. You are maybe looking down the road and you think “When I get my own car I think that will really make a difference.” You can picture it. You know what model you want. You know what year you want. You know what kind of tires you will put on it. You can almost “smell” it. “That will make a big difference.”

Maybe you are driving your parent’s fifteen passenger van to work. That is not ideal, but I hate to disappoint you, that will not bring contentment. Maybe it is something else. There are many different circumstances. Maybe you are a young lady and maybe you are helping most of the young mothers in the church as a maid. Some days maybe they pay you \$5 and maybe some days they do not pay anything at all. You struggle with, and have a hard time being content with those circumstances. You can have contentment in that situation.

Maybe you are a young man who is working for your father,

and your weekly paycheque is nothing. You may think, “When I get my age, and when I get my own paycheque that will make a difference. No, it will not. You can have godly contentment now. Luke 3:14 says, “And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.” Godly contentment is something we can have.

I remember when we were first married. We lived in a two bedroom rented house and I was making \$7 per hour. We did not have much. We could not even afford a washing machine. My wife needed to go to a Laundromat. We were happy. Nevertheless, it was easy to think “When I get this, when I get my own place, when I get my own house, it will make a difference.” No, maybe it is, “When I get my own farm, maybe when I start dating, maybe when I get married, then I will really start living.” No, you can still have godly contentment today.

Maybe you are thinking, “You do not know, you simply do not know what I must endure.” However, you know we “can do all things through Christ” (Philippians 4:13). We can learn godly contentment. We can have

it today.

It was interesting in 1 Timothy 6 about being content. If you look at how that chapter begins it says “Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. (2) And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort” (verses 1, 2). Then, in verse 6 he says, “But godliness with contentment is great gain.” Verse 8 says, “And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.” Paul said if you are a servant with a master, that we need to be content in that situation. Godly contentment is not only something that youth face, and when we get older we finally master this thing. It is real for all of us. We all must work with it.

I had a little experience where I struggled with discontentment. We own six and a half acres. I had the chance to buy the five acres next to me. We bought it and we thought that was nice. A little while later another five acres came up for sale next to it and I did not need it. I did not have the money for it. The next

thing I found was this thing was taking my contentment away from me. I was discontent. I wanted it. My boys said, "We really need to buy that." I told them, "You know if we cannot learn godly contentment right now with only what we have, buying that one will not help anything because there will always be a next place. There will always be something else. It is something that we all need to work on.

1 Timothy 6:8 says, "And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." Why I am talking a lot about contentment when I am supposed to be talking about gambling and lottery? You will have a hard time selling a lottery ticket to a person with godly contentment. He is not interested. Proverbs 30:8 says, "Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me." Riches will not bring you happiness but neither will poverty. The only way you will be truly happy is to receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and by living for him. Only He can give you "joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter 1:8).

Living in poverty would be an awful experience, not knowing where your next meal will come from, if you were a father and

you had children and saw them suffering. We have so much to be thankful for that we do have all these natural blessings. Can we be content with food and raiment? We are enjoying these blessings today. We have our own vehicle to come to this meeting. We did not need to take the bus to get here and we had breakfast where we stayed and we had a good lunch. It is cold outside. We have this very nice building to meet in. All these are natural blessings. We have them to enjoy, but we do not look to them for our contentment.

As we talked about contentment with food and raiment we are supposed to be content. We are not supposed to be out hasting to be rich, or trying to be rich. What should we be doing? We get up in the morning. We get dressed. We have food and raiment. Do we go sit on the porch and watch the world go by? What do we do? The Bible tells us what to do and how to do it.

I would like to read something from the *World Book Encyclopedia*. It says "Why People Gamble. Many persons believe that gambling is a quick way to make the money without the effort and discipline involved in working. . . Most people oppose gambling for moral reasons. They argue that gamblers

win primarily by chance. Therefore, gambling ridicules society's belief that money should come only as a result of hard work, reason and thrift. These persons say that society cannot permit rewards by chance without regard for individual worth." I read that. I thought that was interesting. Where did people get an idea like that from, I wonder? Well, it is right out of God's Word.

Deuteronomy 30:16 says, "Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work." 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12 says, "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. (7) For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; (8) Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: (9) Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us. (10) For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. (11) For we hear that there are some which walk

among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. (12) Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread."

What was this tradition that we were supposed to receive of him? It was the example to work. They were supposed to supply their own needs. If any man would not work, neither should he eat. We know hunger is a great motivator. We are supposed to be busy. Here it says, "Six days thou shalt labour." 1 Thessalonians 4:11, 12 says, "And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; (12) That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing."

Ephesians 4:28 says, "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." "By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honour, and life" (Proverbs 22:4). "Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labour shall increase" (Proverbs 13:11).

"Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh

in his ways. (2) For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee” (Psalm 128:1, 2). I see a man here that has the fear of God. He is eating the labour of his hands and he is happy. God means for us to be busy. He means for us to be working. We earn our money by work not by chance. Proverbs 10:4 says, “He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.”

Proverbs 14:23 says, “In all labour there is profit: but the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury.” As Christians we should not have the mentality in our work that we work as little as possible for as much as possible. That is not how we should look at it. We should see work as not simply something we do so we can get paid. Rather, it is actually an end in itself not merely a means to an end. We are supposed to be busy. It says, “In all labour there is profit.” Even if it does not pay in big dividends in money there is still profit in it.

The something-for-nothing mentality. I will quote from a book entitled *Gambling, Who Really Wins?* “One reason why people are gambling more, some experts say is that there is a general breakdown in our national

morals. Our society is so concerned with money that it matters less and less how it is acquired. The person who works hard gets less respect than the person who ‘hits’ the jackpot gambling. More people than ever before want something for nothing.”

As Christians, should that be our mentality — out looking for something for nothing? In 2 Thessalonians 3:8 Paul said, “Neither did we eat any man’s bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you.” Paul was not out looking for something-for-nothing. It is all around us. If you want to get-rich-quick, you need to appeal to people’s covetousness. That is why they get rich quick. Part of that is in offering something-for-nothing.

Sometimes we go into the store, and they have the potato chips there. They will have a different colour across the top which says “Twenty percent more for free.” We receive the flyers in the paper, “Buy one pizza get the next one free.” Is there anything for free? Can we go into the store and take a pair of scissors and cut the top off and try to take the “free” part? Can we go to the pizza parlour and tell them we want to pick up that free pizza they are talking about?

No, there is nothing for free. You will find that every time you go to get some of those “free” things, you are taking your wallet out and paying for it. Free? No, it is not free. It simply appeals to our covetousness. We want something-for-nothing.

I do replacement windows for a living. Some of these window companies will tell that if you buy five windows they will give you three windows free. I thought about it. Are they some kind of nonprofit organization helping everyone to get some energy efficient windows? Will they give us some to help us cut our energy bills some more? No, it is a lie. That is all it is. Tack it on the other ones. They are not giving anything for free. Nevertheless, people fall for it again and again. It is obviously an effective way to sell something, to promise something for free.

You can go to a fast food restaurant and order a meal. Then, you quickly peel that little sticker off to see if you have won a free hamburger or something. Quick run back up there because you won something — a free fries or a free burger. We should not even be doing that. Personally, we are not out looking for something for free. We want to work with our hands. We

do not want to be charged with any.

Many other areas are out there where they offer you something for free. Let us get that out of our heads right away. There is nothing out there for free. Those big companies are not making their profits because they are giving away something for free. They are looking out for themselves.

1 Thessalonians 4:11, 12 says, “And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; (12) That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.” In business, we should be careful that we do not tell people that we will give them something for free and really we are not. We have it figured in somewhere else. We need to be careful about that. We will tell them that we will give them this for free but we are picking up profit somewhere else. Is it honest?

Another thing I would like to look at is get-rich-quick schemes. We may not be buying lottery tickets. However, there are some other areas that come a little closer to home that we should look at. Proverbs 12:11 says, “He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread: but he that followeth vain persons is

void of understanding.” If you will be satisfied with bread, till your land. Go to work. Do not try and get caught up in some get-rich-quick scheme. You probably will not get rich, but it also violates God’s principles.

I know people who are attracted to these marketing schemes. They are always caught up in one of them. A couple of years ago they came by wanting to sell me some of these air fresheners that you plug in. There is one air freshener that you can put in your house, shop, barn, or wherever they freshen the air up. He did not only want to sell them to me, he wanted to set me up so I could sell them too. So, he gave me this brochure. I was reading it. On the back of it was an account of a man who entered into this business of selling air fresheners. He had made millions. It showed him standing next to his new white Mercedes. We read that and think “What are we waiting for? Forget doing mini barns let’s sell air fresheners.”

What is that doing? It is appealing to my covetousness. Personally, I am leery of any product that it is such a wonderful product that they cannot sell it in stores and there is more emphasis put on the whole selling technique and the whole marketing scheme than the product

itself. Personally, I do not go for those things. Anything, whatever it is, if it promises quick and easy money, that you do not need to work, and that you can make a lot of money. We should pass it by. It is not for us. There are many. We get faxes or letters from someone who supposedly has a lot of money in Africa which they want to transfer over here. They say that they will give you a portion of it (like a million dollars) if you help them. [These are known issues of fraud]. They ask you for \$10,000 to help them to transfer this money out.

I thought this was interesting, so I called someone at TBI [Tennessee Bureau of Investigation] about it. They said that it is a scam. There is nothing they can do about it since it is international. It cannot be traced. He said that people call them up all the time because they fall for that scheme. They sent them the \$5,000 and they lost their money. Now, they are all upset about it. It appeals to our covetousness. Have nothing to do with it.

I want to read a little account from this book on gambling. I thought it was interesting. This is a true account of a man who started to gamble and how it can become so addictive. I thought it was so interesting. “In 1963 a

twenty-six-year-old exchange student from Germany came to the United States. He happened to go to Yonkers raceway in New York and won on a horse that was a 42:1 longshot. It was the kind of a big win that has hooked many people into gambling compulsively. During the next eleven years the man managed to earn two college degrees, and work at a cancer research centre where he published many important scientific papers. He did an excellent job with a chemical company in New York, but all the while he was gambling as if his life depended upon it.

“All his spare time was spent at race tracks where he would get so tense at moments that he rush to the grandstand bathroom, flush the commode and try to drown out the announcer’s voice. Then, at night he dreamed of shooting horses.” He seemed to have managed to not get deeply into debt but his personal life suffered. His wife divorced him because he did not control his urge to gamble.

“In 1974 he returned to Germany to head the West German branch of the chemical company for which he worked. One of his reasons for going home was his feeling that if he could get away from the race-tracks in New York he might not

gamble so much. But in West Germany there were casinos and he soon became hooked on dice games. As head of his company the man quadrupled profits in three years. But when it came to his own life he was a miserable manager. His embezzling started when he took a \$2500 advance for a business trip to Hungary. His flight was cancelled and he went to a casino and lost the whole \$2500 at the dice tables. Telling himself he wanted a stake so he could win the money back, he took more money from the company. Soon, he was taking an average of \$2,000 a day and once he took as much as \$20,000.

“The company’s accountant soon discovered what he was doing. But because he had done so much for the company he was told that if he could stop gambling he would not be prosecuted. He could not stop. Even when he won big and could have paid back most of the money, he could not stop gambling. He would lose and need to borrow from the company all over again. His second marriage was in trouble. He knew full well that he would not only lose his job but he would be prosecuted. He continued to gamble. He could not stop.

He was prosecuted, but the judge in the case did not send

him to jail. Instead he had given him a suspended sentence and put him on parole. He was ordered to go to a psychiatrist and to pay back the \$474,000 he had stolen, even if it took him the rest of his life” (and it probably will). “He was also barred from all West German casinos at his own request.”

I read that account. I could hardly grasp that someone could be that addicted to something like that. I thought that was interesting. You maybe have gone fishing with only a hook and a “bobber” [float]. You take

your hook and you put your bait on it and put it out in the water and you have your “bobber” up about 18 inches or less. You can see the bait down there and you can see a big fish come along and you anticipate it biting. However, it goes right by. You think, “Oh, I must have the wrong bait.”

As Christians whether it the lottery, something-for-nothing, a get-rich-quick scheme, or whatever it is, anything that appeals to our covetousness should be the wrong bait.

Scripture References

Deuteronomy	17:10, 11	138	6:8	139, 142
30:16			6:9	137
Psalms	12:15	136	6:10	135
128:1, 2	18:8	130	2 Timothy	
Proverbs			1:12	133
12:11	4:28	143	4:7	133
13:11	Philippians		Hebrews	
14:23	4:11–13	140	10:23	132
15:27	4:13	141	10:37	129
21:25, 26	1 Thessalonians		11:3	131
22:4	4:11, 12	143, 145	11:5	132
23:7	2 Thessalonians		11:6	130
28:20	2:3	131	11:6, 7	132
28:22	3:6–12	143	13:5	139
Ecclesiastes	3:8	144	1 Peter	
5:10	1 Timothy		1:8	142
5:12, 13	4:11, 12	145	Revelation	
Jeremiah	6:1, 2	141	10:6	131
17:9	6:5, 6	139	20:12	132

From the Previous Issue:

Pentecost Past and Present

From a message by LaRay Martin

Sunday, June 04, 2006

Culbertson Mennonite Church

Book Reprint *(continued)*

The Seven Laws of Teaching

CHAPTER VI *(continued)*

THE LAW OF THE TEACHING PROCESS

Knowledge Necessary to Thought

14. The action of the mind is limited practically to the field of its acquired knowledge. The individual who knows nothing cannot think, for he has nothing to think about. In comparing, imagining, judging, and reasoning, and in applying knowledge to plan, criticize, or execute one's own thoughts, the mind must necessarily work upon the material in its possession. Hence the power of any object or fact as a mental stimulus depends in each case upon the number of related objects or facts which the individual already knows. A botanist will be aroused to the keenest interest by the discovery of a hitherto unknown plant, but will perhaps care little or nothing for a new stone or a new star. The physician eagerly studies new diseases, the lawyer recent decisions, the farmer new crops, and

the mechanic new machines.

15. The infant knows little, and his interest is brief and slight; the man knows many things, and his interests are deeper, wider, and more persistent. Thoughtfulness deepens and grows more intense with the increase of knowledge. The student of mathematics who has worked long and diligently in his field never finds it dry or tiresome; the wisest student of the Bible finds in its pages the greatest delight. All these illustrations show the principles which underlie our law and prove its value.

16. The two chief springs of interest through which the mind can be aroused are the love of knowledge for its own sake, that is, its cultural value, and the desire for knowledge to be used as a tool in solving problems or obtaining other knowledge. In the former are mingled the satisfaction of the native

curiosity which craves to know the real nature and causes of the phenomena around us, the solution of the questionings which often trouble the mind, the relief from apprehensions which ignorance feels in the presence of nature's mysteries, the sense of power and liberty which knowledge often brings, the feeling of elevation which each new increment of knowledge gives, and the "rejoicing in the truth" because of its own beauty and sublimity, or its moral charm and sweetness, its appeals to our taste for wit and humor, and for the wonderful. All these enter separately or together into the intellectual appetite to which the various forms of knowledge appeal, and which give to reading and study their greatest attraction. Each affords an avenue through which the mind can be reached and roused by the skilful teacher.

17. It is evident that this manifold mental appetite must vary in character and intensity with the tastes and attainments of the pupils. Some love nature and her sciences of observation and experiment; others love mathematics and delight in its problems; still others prefer the languages and literature, and others history and the sciences which deal with the powers, deeds, and destinies of man. Each special

preference grows by being fostered, and becomes absorbing as its acquisitions become great. The great masteries and achievements in arts, literature, and science have come from these innate tastes, and in all these "the child is father of the man."

In each pupil lies the germ of such tastes — the springs of such powers — awaiting the art of the teacher to water the germs and set the springs in motion.

18. The respect for knowledge because of its value as a tool includes the desire for education as a means of livelihood or as a source of better social standing; the felt or anticipated need of some special skill or ability as an artist, lawyer, writer, or some other brain worker; as well as study for the purpose of winning rewards or avoiding punishments. This indirect desire for learning varies with the character and aims of the pupils, but does not increase with attainment unless it ripens, as it may, into the true love of knowledge above described. Its strength depends upon the nature and magnitude of the need which impels the study. The activities aroused for such study go to a self-imposed task and are not very likely to continue their work after the task is done. The rewards and punishments used in

school to promote the studying of lessons have just this force and no more. They inspire no generous activity which works for the love of the work and which does not pause when the assigned lesson has been covered. Witness the spirit that pervades every school so taught and so managed. On the other hand, if the true uses of knowledge are constantly pointed out by the teacher and recognized by the child, the time may well come when respect for knowledge because it is useful becomes a real love of knowledge for its own sake.

Knowledge and the Feelings

19. Our discussion thus far has taken for granted the intimate and indissoluble connection between the intellect and the feelings, the inseparable union of thought and feeling. To think without feeling would be thinking with a total indifference to the object of thought, which would be absurd; and to feel without thinking would be almost impossible. As most of the objects of thought are objects also of desire or dislike, and therefore objects of choice, it follows that all important action of the intellect has a moral side. This, again, is an assumption that

we have made throughout our discussion. The love of knowledge for itself or for its uses is in reality moral, as it implies moral affections and purposes of good or evil. All motives of study have a moral character or connection, in their early steps; hence no education or teaching can be absolutely divorced from morals. The affections come to school with the intellect.

20. This moral consciousness finds its fuller sphere in the recognized domain of duty — the higher realm of the affections and the other moral qualities. From these come the highest and strongest incentives to study and also the clearest understanding. The teacher should constantly address the moral nature and stimulate moral sentiments, if he wishes to achieve the greatest measure of success.

21. This moral teaching was the chief merit of the work of Pestalozzi, and it is the leading characteristic of the work of all great teachers. Love of country, love of one's fellows, aspirations for a noble and useful life, love for truth, — these are all motives to which appeal should be made. If these motives are lacking in pupils, the teacher must build them up.

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