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THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

1 Timothy 6:1-8
Lesson #15
The Have-lots
01/22/2023

The Way of the Cross

is a call to BOTH the
“have-nots” and the “have-lots” to
Take Their Baptism Seriously.

“have-nots”

model the image of God through peace, power, and joy in the context of their poverty

“have-lots”

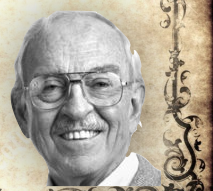
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1

“When we want to effect change, we almost always contact people with influence, prestige, and power.

When God wanted to save the world, he selected slaves, prostitutes, and sundry other disadvantaged folk.”



Ronald Sider

2

The Way of the Cross

is a call to BOTH the
“have-nots” and the “have-lots” to
Take Their Baptism Seriously.

“have-nots”

model the image of God through peace, power, and joy in the context of their poverty

“have-lots”

model the image of God through sacrificial service by laying aside their wealth

3

Social ethics in Scripture

- Social ethics are a **major issue** in the Bible.
- The attention is on the dynamics **within the covenant (faith) community, not outside it.**

Jesus casts the **money changers** out of the JEWISH TEMPLE, not the gladiators out of the ROMAN ARENA.

Peter commands Christian slaves to **submit to “perverse” masters** (1 Pet.2:18), not to demand their freedom.

The Epistles **address the church** not the state.

4

- The Old Covenant has a **different emphasis** from the New.
 - The O.C. unites church and state.
 - The O.C. defines “wealth” in material terms.
 - The O.C. defines “hope” in temporal terms.
- Social Justice **activists tend to ground their message** in the O.C. Scriptures.
- N.C. social justice **calls for a renewed Christian community** that mocks this world’s false hope, while **modeling** sensitivity to the dignity of humanity.

5

As a blessing from God **be thankful & enjoy.**

As an opportunity for ministry **be a responsible steward.**



What does the N.T. teach us about Worldly Wealth



As a dangerous deception **don't let it be our security or identity.**

As a desensitizer to God and people, **don't let it keep us from hearing and seeing.**

6

The Have-lots



1 Timothy 6

“17 Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. 18 Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, 19 storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.”

7

1 Timothy 6

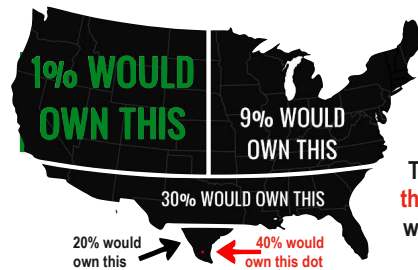
“17 Instruct **those who are rich in this present world . . .**”

Concern #1.

The Shame of a Wealth Gap
- A large gap between the “have-nots” and “have-lots” should shame a healthy society.

8

If U.S. land were divided like U.S. wealth



Like Jesus we need to hear the cry of the poor.

The problem with **the 40% in the red dot** is that their lack of wealth is too often linked to a lack of dignity, access to goods / services, influence, and opportunity.

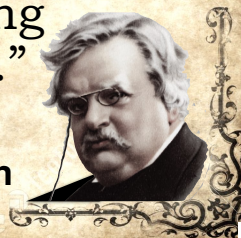
The challenge for a “free society” is to produce a **just distribution** of goods & services without **penalizing freedom and productivity.**

The biggest worry with **concentration of wealth** is that **the 1%** will buy themselves favors from government.

9

“The poor have sometimes objected to being governed badly; the rich have always objected to being governed at all.”

G.K. Chesterton



10

Walk where Jesus walked.

1. **Get the facts** - wealth distribution.
2. **Step outside your comfort zone** - Durham Rescue Mission, Soup Kitchen, etc.
3. **Grow antenna** - listening to those who feel left out, passed over, etc.
4. **Listen** - to the “have-nots” in your social circle.

11

1 Timothy 6

“17 Instruct those who are rich in this present world **not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.**”

Concern #2.

The Power of Prosperity

- **Wealth can edify those who need it, but also corrupt those who hold it.**

12

God richly supplies **us** with all things to enjoy.

“US”?

- The “have-lots”

- The “body of Christ” - “All who God loves”

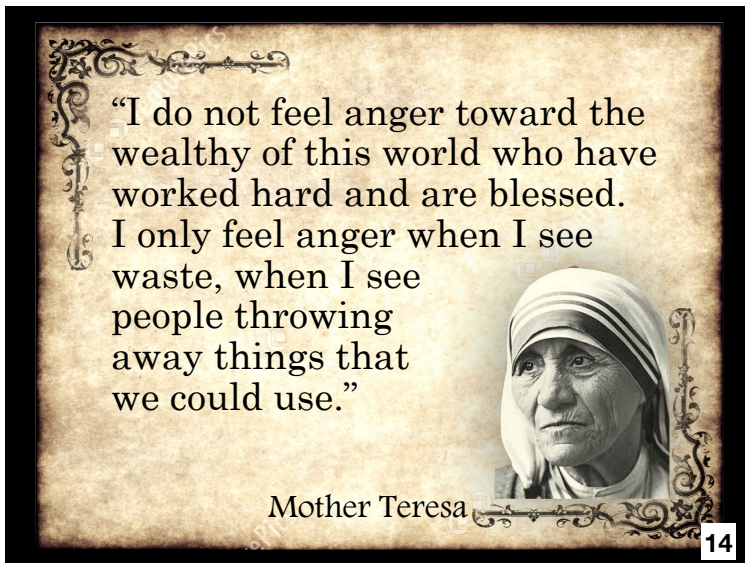
Galatians 6:10

“So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to **all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.**”

1 Corinthians 12

“25 . . . the **members should have the same care for one another.** 26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.”

13



“I do not feel anger toward the wealthy of this world who have worked hard and are blessed. I only feel anger when I see waste, when I see people throwing away things that we could use.”

Mother Teresa

14

Is it **shameful** to be prosperous?

Philippians 4

“11 Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. 12 I know how to get along with humble means, and **I also know how to live in prosperity**; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of **being filled and going hungry**, both of **having abundance and suffering need.** 13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”

Only if you do not know
“how to handle it”.

15

Can material wealth be a **sign** of my faith and obedience?

MAYBE,
but only if I
am content
with or
without it.

1 Timothy 6

“5 . . . men of **depraved mind and deprived of the truth**, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. 6 **But godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment.** 7 For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. 8 And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.”

16

Did not Jesus’ miracles change people’s **material circumstances** for the better?

Miracles are SIGNS not solutions.

Matthew 9:6

“But in order **that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins**” — then He said to the paralytic — “Rise, take up your bed, and go home.”

17



Materialism is being **preoccupied** with material goods and circumstances as “the **root of**” and “the **solution to**” the human dilemma.

Marxism, Buddhism, Capitalism

18

The needs of the “**have-nots**” are complex.

Material deprivation
- not able to access key basic goods and services.



Social isolation
- not connected to a supportive community.

Political marginalization
- excluded from positions of public dignity, power, and respect.

Natural misfortune
- difficult circumstances beyond our control.

Family disintegration
- not supported by a healthy family foundation.

The Root Issue

Spiritual disorientation
- not empowered from within to know personal dignity, power, and hope.

19

“Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man’s character, give him power and wealth or take it from him”.



Abraham Lincoln

20

Matthew 6

“19 Do not store up for yourselves **treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.** 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal.”



“Gain all you can, save all you can, and give all you can.”

John Wesley

21

1 Timothy 6

“18 **Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share,**”

Concern #3.

Stewardship Trust

- We should view blessings as expressions of God’s heart to us for distribution to others.

22

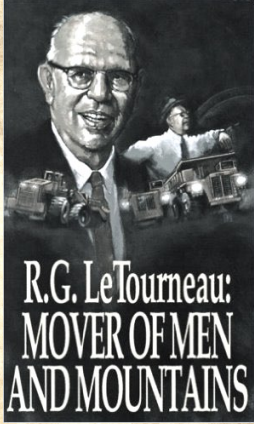
2 Corinthians 8

“12 For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable according to what a man has, not according to what he does not have. 13 For **this is not for the ease of others and for your affliction, but by way of equality** — 14 at this present time your abundance being a supply for their want, that their abundance also may become a supply for your want, that there may be equality; 15 as it is written, “*He who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little had no lack.*”

23

“It’s not about how much of my money I give to God, but how much of His money I keep for myself, that bothers me.”

R.G. LeTourneau



R.G. LeTourneau:
MOVER OF MEN
AND MOUNTAINS

24

John 14:12

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and **greater works than these shall he do**; because I go to the Father.”

Acts 4

“32 And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and **not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own; but all things were common property to them.** 33 And with great power the apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all. 34 For **there was not a needy person among them,**”

25

Build a kingdom wealth portfolio.

1. **Assess resources** - financial, time, talents, etc.
2. **Identify opportunities** - family, church, work, community, etc.
3. **Start a journal** - to hold yourself accountable.
4. **Pray daily** - to be God’s answer to someone’s prayer.

26

1 Timothy 6

“19 **storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.**”

Concern #4.
Kingdom Priorities
- Use things to show God’s love for people, not vice versa.

27

Philippians 2

“5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who although He existed in the form of God, **did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,** 7 **but emptied Himself,** taking the form of a bond servant, and being made in the likeness of men 8. . . **He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.**”

The WAY OF THE CROSS!

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A Berean’s look at ...



Next lesson
John 12:1-8

Judas,
Martha,
and
Mary

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