



1867



1899



1905



1950



1974



2009

"The Evolution of Our Church Buildings"

First Baptist church

Established 1826

TOWNSEND-SMITH SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

A CARING CLASS

JANUARY STUDY THEME: **Wrestling With Life's Mysteries**

January 24, 2010 Lesson: **"Wrestling With Stuff"**

Scripture Passage: **Ecclesiastes 2:4-8; 5:10-16**

AS HE CAME FROM HIS MOTHER'S WOMB, SO HE WILL GO AGAIN, NAKED AS HE CAME; HE WILL TAKE NOTHING FOR HIS EFFORTS THAT HE CAN CARRY IN HIS HANDS. {Eccl. 5:15-16}

The Apostle Paul warned, "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and by craving it, some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains" {1 Tim. 6:10}. [HCSB]

For most people who are, by the world's standards, materially wealthy, the sad part is that many of them **are not aware** that their focus in life is **not where it should be** because they have allowed their wealth, acquired by various means, to **blind them to the real meaning of life.**

Most of us have friends and acquaintances that are **very wealthy**, but physically disabled in some way, but they would be willing to **give it all away** if it would buy them freedom from pain, and physical disability. When ever your focus is on the gift and not the Giver of good gifts [James 1:17]. His material gifts no longer satisfy. More will be necessary for happiness, **but more never seems to be enough.** God questioned Israel along these very lines, "Why do you spend your money on what is not food, and your wages on what does not satisfy? [Isaiah 55:2].

They were spending their effort and energy on false gods in an effort to **fill a void in their hearts only God can fill.** Rather than love money and what it will buy, Israel needed to love God [Deut. 6:5] and live in His love for them. They would be able to enjoy their possessions as gifts from God. **The Bible does not tell us that having material possessions is evil or wrong. It's our attitude about them, our focus on them, and use of them.**

Be careful that possessions do not distract you from the God who gives them to you. **Love of material possessions can keep a person from coming to Jesus** like it did the rich young ruler [Matt. 19:21-22]. It can corrupt your character like it did Judas Iscariot [John 12:6]. Greed can destroy you and your family like it did Achan [Josh. 7:11-26]. The writer of Hebrews said, **"Your life should be free from the love of money."** Be satisfied with what you have, for He himself has said, I will never leave you or forsake you" [Heb. 13:5]. You should learn to enjoy what you have [Prov. 12:27]. Tough times like we are having today demand this all the more. From the events of recent days, we have discovered that the people of Haiti live on less than \$1.00 a day.

When all you have left is Jesus, that's when you find that He is all you need!

Some material copied from Lifeway Advanced Bible Study

A Life of God-Worship

¹⁹ "Don't hoard treasure down here where it gets eaten by moths and corroded by rust or—worse!—stolen by burglars. ²⁰ Stockpile treasure in heaven, where it's safe from moth and rust and burglars. ²¹ It's obvious, isn't it? **The place where your treasure is is the place you will most want to be, and end up being.** Matt 6:19-21 {The message} The connection between our treasure and our heart is one that cannot be ignored. Jesus said not to accumulate material treasures here on earth. Eugene Peterson's (The Message) rewording of the Sermon on the Mount tells us, "Don't hoard treasure down here where it gets eaten by moths and corroded by rust or—worse!—stolen by burglars. Stockpile treasure in heaven, where it's safe from moth and rust and burglars. It's obvious, isn't it? The place you will want to be, and end up being." Today's television and newspaper headlines are frightening at best. But when our focus is on God and Heaven, no natural disaster, no man made disaster, no newspaper headline, no stock market collapse, no housing bubble bursting, **can taint the tiniest drop of the peace, joy, and love we have in Christ.** Invest yourself in the things that matter most to Him. Soon you will understand that the events of this earthly life are firmly in His loving hands. {Copied from Dr. David Jeremiah's book entitled, "Living With Confidence in a Chaotic World."}

I HAVE LOTS OF STUFF [Eccl. 2:4-8]

⁴ I increased my achievements. I built houses and planted vineyards for myself. ⁵ I made gardens and parks for myself and planted every kind of fruit tree in them. ⁶ I constructed reservoirs of water for myself from which to irrigate a grove of flourishing trees. ⁷ I acquired male and female servants and had slaves who were born in my house. I also owned many herds of cattle and flocks, more than all who were before me in Jerusalem. ⁸ I also amassed silver and gold for myself, and the treasure of kings and provinces. I gathered male and female singers for myself, and many concubines, the delights of men.

I WANT MORE STUFF [Eccl. 5:10-14]

¹⁰ The one who loves money is never satisfied with money, and whoever loves wealth [is] never [satisfied] with income. This too is futile. ¹¹ When good things increase, the ones who consume them multiply; what, then, is the profit to the owner, except to gaze at them with his eyes? ¹² The sleep of the worker is sweet, whether he eats little or much; but the abundance of the rich permits him no sleep. ¹³ There is a sickening tragedy I have seen under the sun: wealth kept by its owner to his harm. ¹⁴ That wealth was lost in a bad venture, so when he fathered a son, he was empty-handed.

I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE MY STUFF [Eccl. 5:15-16]

¹⁵ As he came from his mother's womb, so he will go again, naked as he came; he will take nothing for his efforts that he can carry in his hands. ¹⁶ This too is a sickening tragedy: exactly as he comes, so he will go. What does he gain who struggles for the wind? ¹⁷ What is more, he eats in

The story is told of a man who was promised possession of all the land he could run around in one day. He started early and ran hard. He did not allow himself time for rest or refreshment. He pushed himself to get back to the starting point by the end of the day. As he neared the end of his race, having encompassed many acres of land, he collapsed and died. He was buried in a small grave—all the land he really had to have.