

The Ten: Spirit-filled Kingdom Over Fleshly Craving

Dr. John Carmichael

[Exo 20:1-2, 17 NASB95] 1 Then God spoke all these words, saying, 2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ... 17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

- The Spirit-filled message has been hi-jacked and maligned. The Spirit-filled message has been dismissed due to its association with the so-called "prosperity gospel."
- Kenneth Hagin, father of the modern Spirit-filled faith message, dealt with this in his book, *The Midas Touch*. Here are some quotes from the book:
 - "God is not against His children being rich. He is against their being covetous."
 - "Prosperity is not a sign of spirituality. It's just one part of the total blessing of God."
 - "God wants to bless you—but not to feed your greed. He blesses you to make you a blessing."
 - "Let's not forget that Paul said, 'Having food and raiment, let us be there with content.' (1 Tim 6:8)"
 - "Some people have gone off the deep end on the subject of prosperity. They teach things the Bible doesn't say."
- What are things we are forbidden to covet? Age, looks, intellect, talent, marriage, singleness, children, spiritual attainments, position in the ministry of the church or anything at all. "It's that little twinge of disappointment whenever someone else gets that promotion." Ryken, *Written in Stone*.
- The Holy Spirit helps deal with the greed/covetousness that we wrestle with.

How does the Holy Spirit help with dealing with the covetousness.

Here are seven Spirit-filled truths about dealing the covetousness.

I. Covetousness is a Matter of the Heart

- a. Unlike the other commandments that deal with outward actions, this one deals with inward desires. God cares about what's happening in your heart.
- b. Jesus teaches that sin begins within. [Mar 7:21-22 NASB95] 21 "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, 22 deeds of coveting [and] wickedness, [as well as] deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride [and] foolishness.
- c. The Spirit wants to purify your desires, not just your actions.

II. Covetousness is Idolatry

- a. Coveting is more than just wanting something—it's placing desire above God. It replaces trust in God with self-centered longing.
- b. Paul directly links coveting with idol worship. [Col 3:5 NASB95] 5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.
- c. The fire of the Holy Ghost must burn out every idol—whether it's money, status, relationships, or recognition.

III. Covetousness Breeds Discontent and Division

- a. When you covet, you are not only dissatisfied with what God gave you—you begin to resent others. It poisons community and unity.
- b. Covetousness leads to strife, war, and spiritual dryness. [Jas 4:1-2 NASB95] 1 What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? 2 You lust and do not have; [so] you commit murder. You

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are envious and cannot obtain; [so] you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask.

- c. A Spirit-led church is a content and unified church. We must war against envy with worship.

IV. True Contentment Comes from Christ

- a. Freedom from coveting doesn't come from denial—it comes from delight in Jesus. Christ is enough.
- b. The presence of Christ satisfies the longing heart. [Heb 13:5 NASB95] 5 [Make sure that] your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,"
- c. Contentment is not passive—it's active, Spirit-filled, rooted in abiding in Jesus.

V. The Spirit Empowers Us to Desire Rightly

- a. We can't fix our hearts on our own. But the Holy Spirit reshapes our longings, rewires our affections, and makes us hunger for righteousness.
- b. Hagin: "A renewed mind is just as important to financial success as faith is."
- c. The Spirit gives us power to live above carnal desires. [Gal 5:16 NASB95] 16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.
- d. When the fire of Pentecost falls, it doesn't just give us tongues—it gives us transformed desires.

VI. Seeking the Kingdom First Aligns Our Desires

- a. Covetousness makes us chase things; the Kingdom calls us to chase God. But when we seek God first, He provides what we need. It's not a denial of needs—it's a reordering of priorities.
- b. Jesus doesn't ignore our need for things—He just tells us where to start. [Mat 6:33 NASB95] 33 "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.
- c. When we prioritize the presence of God, the provision of God follows. The Holy Ghost shifts our eyes from what we lack to who we have.
- d. Balance Reminder:
 - i. It's not wrong to own things, but it's wrong when things own you.
 - ii. It's not unspiritual to desire provision—but make God your pursuit, not the goods.
- e. You might share stories (biblical or personal) of how someone sought the Lord wholeheartedly, and provision followed without striving. For example, Solomon asked for wisdom (not riches)—but God gave him both (cf. 1 Kings 3:11–13).

VII. God Desires Our Trust—Not Our Worry

- a. At the root of covetousness is a lack of trust—a fear that God won't come through. But the Gospel declares: He already gave His best, so we can trust Him for the rest.
- b. Hagin:
 - i. "It's not wrong to have things. It's wrong when things have you."
 - ii. "Stay with the Word. Stay with love. Stay with integrity. Prosperity will follow."
- c. If God gave Jesus, the most precious gift, would not He will give us everything we need? [Rom 8:32 NASB95] 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?
- d. God's supply is not just sufficient— it eliminates need not according to your need but according to His riches and glory! [Phl 4:19 NASB95] 19 And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.
- e. Covetousness says, "I have to get it myself." Faith says, "My Father knows what I need—and He's faithful to provide."

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- f. When the Spirit fills us, He fills us with trust, not just tongues!
 - g. Invite people to lay down anxiety, fear, and striving at the altar. Call them to rest in the character of a giving God.
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- **By the Holy Spirit, we can overcome being covetous and learn to live by Kingdom principles of contentment and divine provision as we celebrate others when they are blessed.**
 - **Are you wrestling with envy, comparison, or discontent? The altar is open. Jesus not only forgives coveting—He frees us from it. The Holy Ghost will fill your heart with heavenly desire, so you long only for Him.**