

Sojourners and Exiles

Threats to North Collin, 2024

*Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the
passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.*

1 Peter 2:11

MATERIALISM

1. Define "Materialism"
2. What does God say about materialism?
3. How is materialism affecting us here at North Collin?
4. How can we overcome materialism in our lives?

MATERIALISM

What is it?

One key to truly understanding and dealing with materialism is to realize that being “obsessed with possessions” is only one of many symptoms of the disease.

There are many other symptoms that we often overlook (intentionally and unintentionally), and we frequently try to work through materialism by treating the symptoms.

We need to learn to recognize the symptoms and then use them to identify the disease.

Sidebar #1:

Learning to distinguish symptoms from root causes and then working to deal with the root causes is effective and Godly (*think about Jesus’ teachings in the Sermon on the Mount!*)

MATERIALISM

What is it?

M A T E R I A L I S M

A philosophical position that holds that matter is the fundamental substance in nature, and that all things - including mental states and even consciousness - are results of the material reactions between material things.

“For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

Luke 6:43-45

MATERIALISM

What is it?

Sidebar #2:

Whether you practice materialism on purpose or thoughtlessly,
you are still not living the way God wants you to live.

Thinking deeply about things like materialism is important.

Do I really love God, or do I just love the system of Christianity?

Am I pleasing Him?

What could I be doing to be more like Jesus?

Being sober-minded about Godliness is important.

MATERIALISM

What is it?

“Deep Thinkers” agree:

People who are materialistic believe - whether intentionally or unintentionally - that material things matter most (*did you see what I did there?*).

MATERIALISM

What is it?

Sidebar #3: Epicurus (341-270 B.C)

- Philosophy should help people live **HAPPY**, tranquil lives, free of fear and pain.
 - "The gods" are real but almost totally unconcerned with mankind.
 - When you die, it is the end of your body and soul, so there is nothing to fear.
- Was a hedonist in the true sense: what is pleasurable is morally good; what is painful is morally evil; excess typically results in pain, which makes it evil. He was not a "party animal."
- Teachings were very popular until Christianity took hold in Rome. Resurgence in the 1600's.
- Ideas were a significant basis for **modern science** (new religion), **Nietzsche** (Nihilism), **Marx** (Marxism)...

...and **Thomas Jefferson**

"...I, too, am an Epicurean. I consider the genuine (not the imputed) doctrines of Epicurus as containing everything rational in moral philosophy which Greece and Rome have left us..."

MATERIALISM

What is it?

To summarize, my aim for this lesson was to lay out my goals for our discussion of this topic and comprehensively define materialism.

1. Being obsessed with possessions is just a symptom of materialism.
2. Materialism is really the belief that material things matter most, which is ungodly.
3. Some people are materialistic on purpose, and some are thoughtless, but in either case, their faith is not in God but in the things of this world.
4. Thinking deeply about materialism is important so that we can master it.

MATERIALISM

Materialism is a way of living in which
a person focuses on material things:

- Earthly Life
- The Physical Body
- Worldly Achievements
- Earthly Wealth

Christianity is a way of being in which
a person focuses on spiritual things:

- Eternal Life
- The Soul
- Spiritual Fruit
- Treasures in Heaven

What does God have to say about all of this?

MATERIALISM

1. While He acknowledges that we are currently living in a material world in physical bodies, **God demands** that we choose: either be focused on this life or the one to come, but we cannot do both - He will not be our "Plan B."
2. **God warns** us specifically about the pursuit of and love for material things.
3. **God instructs** us as to how we should properly identify, value, and utilize the material resources He has given us (*our bodies/health, our time, our talents, our wealth, etc.*). This instruction also includes general information that we can use to be clear about the subject.

MATERIALISM

**God wants us to be focused on Him and eternal life with Him in Heaven.
He demands that we deny self and be devoted to Him at all costs.**

Matthew 22:34-40 (*Deut. 6:5*): ³⁴ But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. ³⁵ And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶ "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" ³⁷ And he said to him, "**You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.** ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.

Matthew 16:24-27: ²⁴ Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, **let him deny himself** and take up his cross and follow me. ²⁵ For whoever would save his life^{ἑαυτοῦ} will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. ²⁶ **For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?** Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? ²⁷ For **the Son of Man** is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he **will repay each person according to what he has done.**

Matthew 4:1-4: Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." ⁴ But he answered, "It is written, '**Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.**'"

Matthew 6:24: ²⁴ **No one can serve two masters,** for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. **You cannot serve God and money.**

MATERIALISM

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Luke 14:25-27, 33: ²⁵ Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them, ²⁶ "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. ²⁷ **Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple...** ...³³ So therefore, **any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.**

1 John 2:15-17; Genesis 3:6: ¹⁵ **Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.** ¹⁶ For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life^[a]—is not from the Father but is from the world. ¹⁷ And **the world is passing away** along with its desires, but **whoever does the will of God abides forever...** ...⁶ So when the woman saw that **the tree was good for food**, and that it was **a delight to the eyes**, and that the tree was **to be desired to make one wise**,^[b] she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18: ¹⁶ So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self^[a] is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, ¹⁸ as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For **the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.**

MATERIALISM

James 4:4-10: ⁴You adulterous people!^[c] **Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?** Therefore **whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.** ⁵Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, “He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us”? ⁶But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” ⁷**Submit yourselves therefore to God.** Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸**Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.** Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰**Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.**

Hebrews 10:26-31: ²⁶For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. ²⁸Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. ²⁹How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? ³⁰For we know him who said, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay.” And again, “The Lord will judge his people.” ³¹**It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.**

Hebrews 12:22-29:²² But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, ²³and to the assembly^[a] of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, ²⁴and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.²⁵ **See that you do not refuse him who is speaking.** For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven. ²⁶At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.” ²⁷This phrase, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. ²⁸Therefore **let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe,** ²⁹**for our God is a consuming fire.**

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Galatians 5:16-25: ¹⁶ But I say, **walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.** ¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for **these are opposed to each other**, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹ envy,^[d] drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do^[e] such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ And **those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.** ²⁵ **If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.** ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Romans 6:16-18: ¹⁶ Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves,^[d] **you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?** ¹⁷ But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, ¹⁸ and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.

MATERIALISM

God warns us specifically about the pursuit of and love for material things.

Matthew 4:1-11 (esp. 8-10): ⁸Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." ¹⁰Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, **"You shall worship the Lord, your God, and him only shall you serve."**

Matthew 6:19-34: ¹⁹ **"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth**, where moth and rust^[e] destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰ **but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven**, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ **For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.** ²² "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, ²³ but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! ²⁴ **"No one can serve two masters**, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. **You cannot serve God and money.** ²⁵ "Therefore I tell you, **do not be anxious about your life**, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?^[e] ²⁸ And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹ yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? ³¹ Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³² For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and **your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.** ³³ But **seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.** ³⁴ "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

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Matthew 13:22: ²²As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but **the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.**

Luke 12:13-15, 22-34: ¹³Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." ¹⁴But he said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?" ¹⁵And he said to them, "**Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.**" ...²²And he said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, **do not be anxious about your life**, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. ²³For **life is more than food, and the body more than clothing.** ²⁴Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! ²⁵And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?²⁶ ²⁶If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, why are you anxious about the rest? ²⁷Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin,²⁸ yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ²⁸But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! ²⁹And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. ³⁰For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and **your Father knows that you need them.** ³¹Instead, **seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you.** ³²"Fear not, little flock, for **it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.** ³³**Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail,** where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. ³⁴**For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.**

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Luke 18:18-30: ¹⁸And a ruler asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" ¹⁹And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. ²⁰You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.'" ²¹And he said, "All these I have kept from my youth." ²²When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "**One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.**" ²³But when he heard these things, **he became very sad, for he was extremely rich.** ²⁴Jesus, seeing that he had become sad, said, "**How difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.**" ²⁶Those who heard it said, "Then who can be saved?" ²⁷But he said, "What is impossible with man is possible with God." ²⁸And Peter said, "See, we have left our homes and followed you." ²⁹And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers^b or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, ³⁰who will not receive many times more in this time, and in the age to come eternal life."

1 Timothy 6:6-10; Hebrews 13:5-6: ⁶But **godliness with contentment is great gain,** ⁷for **we brought nothing into the world, and^d we cannot take anything out of the world.** ⁸But **if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.** ⁹But **those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.** ¹⁰For **the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils.** It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs...
... ⁵**Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have,** for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." ⁶**So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"**

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James 4:1-3: What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions^[a] are at war within you?^[b] ²You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. **You do not have, because you do not ask.** ³**You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.**

Revelation 3:14-22: ¹⁴“And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: ‘The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation. ¹⁵“‘I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! ¹⁶So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. ¹⁷For **you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.** ¹⁸**I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see.** ¹⁹Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so **be zealous and repent.** ²⁰Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. ²¹The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. ²²He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’”

MATERIALISM

God instructs us as to how we should properly identify, value, and utilize the material resources He has given us and provides additional general guidance for clarity.

Matthew 25:14-30: ¹⁴ “For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants^[d] and entrusted to them his property. ¹⁵ To one he gave five talents^[d], to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶ He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. ¹⁷ So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. ¹⁸ But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹ Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.’ ²¹ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant.^[e] **You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.**’ ²² And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.’ ²³ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. **You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.**’ ²⁴ He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, ²⁵ so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.’ ²⁶ But his master answered him, ‘**You wicked and slothful servant!** You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? ²⁷ Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming **I should have received what was my own with interest.** ²⁸ So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. ²⁹ For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. ³⁰ And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

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Deuteronomy 8:17-18: ¹⁷ Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.' ¹⁸ You shall **remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth**, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day.

Luke 12:16-21: ¹⁶ And he told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man produced plentifully, ¹⁷ and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' ¹⁸ And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.'" ²⁰ **But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?'** ²¹ **So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."**

Ephesians 5:15-16; Colossians 4:5: ¹⁵ Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ **making the best use of the time**, because the days are evil... ⁵ Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, **making the best use of the time**.

1 Timothy 2:9-10: ⁹ likewise also that **women should adorn themselves** in respectable apparel, **with modesty and self-control**, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, ¹⁰ but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—**with good works**.

Ephesians 4:28: ²⁸ Let the thief no longer steal, but rather **let him labor**, doing honest work with his own hands, **so that he may have something to share with anyone in need**.

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Acts 2:44-47: ⁴⁴ And all who believed were together and had all things in common. ⁴⁵ And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Matthew 25:33-40: ³³ And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, '**Lord, when did we see you** hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸ And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹ And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' ⁴⁰ And the King will answer them, '**Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.**'

1 John 3:16-18: By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. ¹⁷ But **if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?** ¹⁸ Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

James 2:14-17: ¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, **what good is that?** ¹⁷ So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

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Luke 3:9-11: ⁹Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." ¹⁰And the crowds asked him, "What then shall we do?" ¹¹And he answered them, "Whoever has two tunics^[b] is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise."

James 1:27: ²⁷Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to **visit orphans and widows in their affliction**, and to **keep oneself unstained from the world**.

1 Timothy 5:8, 6:17-20: ⁸But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever... .. ¹⁷As for the rich in this present age, **charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.** ¹⁸They are to **do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share,** ¹⁹thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may **take hold of that which is truly life.** ²⁰O Timothy, **guard the deposit entrusted to you...**

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God instructs us as to how we should properly identify, value, and utilize the material resources He has given us and provides additional general guidance for clarity.

Proverbs 30:8-9: Remove far from me falsehood and lying; **give me neither poverty nor riches;** feed me with the food that is needful for me, **lest I be full and deny you** and say, "Who is the Lord?" **or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God.**

Ecclesiastes 5:10-20: ¹⁰**He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity.** ¹¹When goods increase, they increase who eat them, and what advantage has their owner but to see them with his eyes? ¹²Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little or much, but the full stomach of the rich will not let him sleep. ¹³There is a grievous evil that I have seen under the sun: riches were kept by their owner to his hurt, ¹⁴and those riches were lost in a bad venture. And he is father of a son, but he has nothing in his hand. ¹⁵**As he came from his mother's womb he shall go again, naked as he came, and shall take nothing for his toil that he may carry away in his hand.** ¹⁶This also is a grievous evil: just as he came, so shall he go, and **what gain is there to him who toils for the wind?** ¹⁷Moreover, all his days he eats in darkness in much vexation and sickness and anger. ¹⁸Behold, **what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment^(b) in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him,** for this is his lot. ¹⁹**Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God.** ²⁰For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart.

MATERIALISM

Philippians 3 - 4:1: Finally, my brothers,^[a] rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you. ²Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. ³For **we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God^[b] and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh**— ⁴though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law,^[c] blameless. ⁷But **whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him,** not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— ¹⁰**that I may know him** and the power of his resurrection, **and may share his sufferings,** becoming like him in his death, ¹¹**that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.**

¹²Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but **I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.** ¹³Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But **one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead,** ¹⁴**I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.** ¹⁵**Let those of us who are mature think this way,** and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. ¹⁶Only let us hold true to what we have attained.

¹⁷Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹Their end is destruction, **their god is their belly,** and **they glory in their shame,** with **minds set on earthly things.** ²⁰**But our citizenship is in heaven,** and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

Therefore, my brothers,^[a] whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, **stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.**