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DAILY DEVOTION IS DESIRING TO BE RICH WRONG?

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1 TIMOTHY 6:9 NKJ 9 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.

This verse seems to warn against any desire to be rich. Actually, as some other translations say, it is more of a longing to be rich, or a supreme goal to be rich that is being addressed.

This is talking about more than a simple desire -- for every normal human should desire to improve and increase.

It is talking about a driving desire that causes you to be susceptible to temptations to do wrong, because you are willing to do anything to achieve your goal of being rich. It is talking about a person who is obsessed with being rich. Someone who puts every other interest behind the primary goal of being rich, no matter what it requires.

Do you desire to be rich? Let me ask it this way: "Would you rather be rich or poor?" "Would you rather have more than you need so you can share with others, or would you rather have less than you need so others must help you?"

Unless their thinking has been warped by religious teaching, every sane person would admit they desire to be rich, as opposed to the alternative of being poor.

Yet at first glance, this verse in 1 Timothy 6:9 seems to indicate that this normal and healthy human desire is somehow evil and should be avoided.

The New Testament was written in Greek, and achieving a perfect translation from one language to another is never easy. It should be obvious that the word "desire" in 1 Timothy 6:9 is referring to something much stronger than a simple preference for prosperity.

So it is not being rich, or a preference for being rich, that causes all the problems spoken of in 1 Timothy 6:9, but having an uncontrolled, driving desire to be rich at any cost that causes those problems.

Only a few verses later, we read verse 17 which says nothing to condemn those who are rich.

1 TIMOTHY 6:17 NKJ 17 Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.

God has provided richly for us. His intention is that we enjoy what He has created and provided for us. God put within us the desire to grow and improve, to increase and overcome obstacles, and also to enjoy beauty and order. Mankind was created and placed in a garden of pleasure, the Garden of Eden, a paradise. It is not wrong for us to strive to return to that state. God made us that way.

It only becomes wrong when we are willing to mistreat and take advantage of others in our quest to prosper.

It is not wrong for you to have nice things. But it is wrong to have no concern for others, and be willing to mistreat them in order to obtain what you desire for yourself.

PRAYER: It is not wrong to desire increase. I will not cheat others to be rich in life, without regard to the needs and desires of others, so help me God.