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Theme: "Stuff"

Scripture: 1 John 2:16 (ESV)

*"For all that is in the world - the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions is not from the Father but is from the world."*

**A Thought:** What is wrong with me lately? I hate stuff! I'm bored when I hear or see people talking about the purchase and the wanting of stuff e.g., a new expensive car, expensive wine, popular attire labels, expensive vacations, the latest electronics, billboard ads, commercials, gigantic TV screens and expensive live entertainment events. The list goes on. Buy! Buy! Buy! Just plain too much stuff! The other day on my way to meet a friend for lunch at a local mall I trudged through a ritzy store and stopped to look at shoes...on the low end a pair was 80 bucks on sale! On the high end...four Benjamin Franklins plus! I guess you can buy one shoe today and lay away the other for the following year. Belts were no where to be found under twenty-five dollars. I still have two belts that I have had for the past twenty years. I just keep poking holes! Am I against having money? No! Without consumerism people will be out of work and our society would come to a halt. Is having money evil? No of course not. In the scripture 1 Timothy 6:10 (NIV) Paul is mentoring Timothy with the following words *"For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people eager for money, have wandered from the faith and placed themselves with many griefs."* Note - It's The "love" for money that is the root of all evil...not the money itself. Listen to Paul's exhortation in Colossians 3:2 (N(V) *"Set your mind on things above, not on earthly things."* The lesson before us is to be aware of that faceless demon "materialism." It will control your eyes, your taste buds and your pocket book.

Now....what are your thoughts? Write them down.

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### Talk to yourself:

- Are your eyes and pocketbook locked in sync? Take a breath and try blinking before you make a financial decision. What is the Lord receiving?
- Have you prepared a short and long term financial plan?
- What is the difference between cheap and prudent? What are you?
- Are you a big time spender? Do you have a tendency to buy a product on account it is new on the market?

### Scriptures to read:

- Genesis 3:19; Deuteronomy 6:5; Ecclesiastes 5:10; Isaiah 1:1-31; 40:6-8;
- Hebrew 13:5; Luke 12:15, 16:19-31; Matthew 6:19-21, 24, 33; Mark 4:18-19;
- 1 John 3:17, 2:15-17; Romans 12:2; Colossians 3:2

**Quote:** Mark Twain, Author...www.Famous-quotes.com

*“Any so-called material thing that you want is merely a symbol: You want it not for Itself, but because it will content your spirit for the moment.”*

Henry Jacobsen, Norwegian Politician: *“The essence of worldliness is the exclusion of God.”*

**Bottom Line:** Our society has a preoccupation with the acquisition of stuff. It doesn't matter if you are buying merchandise off the counter, on the internet and or the 99 Cent Store....we can't help it. For many of us it is like munching on potato chips...there is never and end to it. Self control is not a virtue for us mortals. Remember... Adam and Eve? All they wanted was a “taste” of the fruit - forbidden or not! Notice that in the second part of 1 Timothy 6:10 and listen to Paul's clarion call to those of us who have a tendency for stuff...*“Some people eager for money; have wandered from the faith and placed themselves with many griefs.”* Replace the word “money” with the word “materialism.” The two words can be mutually incompatible. It is the intention and attitude that is important in this conversation. Money can be used not just for the gathering of stuff but to help the poor, charitable causes, a family emergency and tithing. If we do not put money and stuff into perspective “they” will become the altars that we serve. Matthew tells in so many words *“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”* Take heed gents....**NOW.....THAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE.**

Spiritual Dabbler, Your bro, Ray

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