

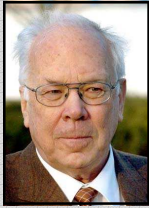
One Thing Thou Lackest...

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German billionaire Adolf Merckle recently committed suicide, another casualty of the global economic crisis that already has claimed the lives of executives in Europe and the United States.



Leaving his wife and four children, 74-year-old Merckle, whose estimated \$9.2 billion fortune put him 94th on Forbes' list of the world's richest people, jumped in front of a train in the town of Blaubeuren in southwestern Germany.

In September, millionaire Kirk Stephenson, a 47-year-old husband and father of a young son, also stepped in front of a high-speed train at a rail station west of London. And, two days before Christmas, in New York, Rene-Thierry Magon de la Villehuchet was found dead at his desk, after he lost \$1.4 billion invested with defrauder Bernard Madoff.

If Satan can persuade you to end your life for whatever the reason, he has accomplished his goal in keeping you from believing the Word of God. Satan knows that the longer you live, the greater the chances of you putting your trust in God.

"For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion" - King Solomon (Eccles. 9:4).

"Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" is one the most famous phrases in the Declaration of Independence, and are listed among the "inalienable rights" of man. Unfortunately, the pursuit of happiness has also led to much covetousness as men pursue riches at any cost. Yet, God warns:

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matthew 6:24).

"Serve" means "to be a slave to" while the word "mammon" means "wealth." Millions of people

become so consumed and preoccupied with "prosperity" that they forget God. In time, prosperity becomes their "master," their god.

A certain rich man which came running and kneeling before Jesus, asked him, "GOOD Master, what GOOD THING shall I DO, to inherit eternal LIFE?" Jesus asked him, "Why callest thou me GOOD? There is NONE "good" but ONE, that is, God!"

Then Jesus told him, "If thou wilt enter into LIFE, keep the commandments." Was Jesus correct? Certainly he was.

The Old Testament law was given for ONE PURPOSE: to show us that we cannot keep the laws of God perfectly because of our sinful nature. God sent His only begotten Son to do what we couldn't do: to be obedient to the law perfectly. His name is Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

So, concerning the commandments, the rich young man asked Jesus, "Which?" And Jesus replied:

*"Thou shalt not commit adultery.
Thou shalt not kill.
Thou shalt not steal.
Thou shalt not bear false witness.
Honor thy father and thy mother.
Defraud not.
Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."*

The young man said, "Master, ALL THESE have I kept from my youth up. What lack I yet?"

Jesus told him, "If thou wilt be perfect (which means complete), one thing thou lackest...,

go thy way, sell ALL that thou hast, and distribute to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and COME, take up the cross, and FOLLOW me."

"When the man heard this, he was very sorrowful, and went away grieved: for he was very rich."

Matthew 19:16-26; Mark 10:17-27; Luke 18:18-30

We use the OLD King James Version:

Amos 8:11 "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord:"

It was impossible for this young man to serve God and Wealth. He chose wealth. Sadly, millions of people since have made the same choice because it brings them happiness, instant gratification and security.

Abraham was a wealthy man, but he also pleased God by faith! King Solomon was rich too, and yet he humbled himself before God and before the congregation of Israel! It is not a sin to be wealthy, but beware, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:21).

"...the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it" (Matthew 13:44-46).

The rich young ruler was a servant to his riches, but where are his "riches" now? We can carry nothing with us after death.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Matthew 6:19-20).

"But seek ye FIRST the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and ALL these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall GAIN the whole world, and LOSE his own soul" (Mark 8:36)?

Covetousness means "too great a desire to have wealth." Jesus said "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15).

Believers are commanded to let our character "...be without covetousness; and be content" (Hebrews 13:5). True believers are content.

There are many scriptures that warn and deliver us from the snares of "riches." These scriptures are guides to keep our eyes focused on God, who supplies all our needs.

"...they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of ALL evil". 1 Tim. 6:9-10

Psalm 37:16 - "A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked."

Psalm 62:10 - "...if riches increase, set not your heart upon them."

Proverbs 13:7 - "There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches."

Proverbs 22:4 - "By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life."

Proverbs 22:16 - "He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want."

Proverbs 23:4-5 - "Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven."

Proverbs 30:8-9 - "Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain."

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

Tell God that you are a sinner, and ask Him to forgive you, and cleanse you from all unrighteousness. He is willing to save you and make you His child if you will come to Him in prayer.

Do You Have Questions? Email us!

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