mater. xxx
Counsel dir

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by Tim Hale

MATERIALISM

I. Biblical Principles

A. The topic of materialism is untological in scope, i.e., things that presently exist.

B. God created all material things. They are not evil.

- o Asceticism is wrong (I Tim. 4:1-5)
- o Christ not ascetic
  - --attended banquets (Lk. 7:36ff; Mk. 14:3ff)
  - --incurred label of "glutton/drunkard" (Lk. 7:34)

C. Man's worship and devotion can be effectively given to either the Creator or the creature. Worship of these two is mutually exclusive (Rom. 1:23; Mt. 6:24).

D. Priority given to the material world and its affects is idolatry (Col. 3:5).

E. Effect on non-Christians.

1. obstacle to germination of Word (Mk. 10:24-28)
2. cause of conflict and strife (James 4:1-2)

F. Effect on Christians.

1. Seductive (I Tim. 6:9-10, Mt. 13:22)

G. Wealth is not a sign of God's blessing (James 5:1-6, Mt. 19:23,24, Lk. 16:19ff).

II. Proof that Materialism is Wrong

A. Explicit Statements of Christ.

1. Mt. 6:19-34 dependence should rest in Christ, provision and security emanates from the Father
2. Mk. 10:23 wealth impedes repentance
3. Lk. 14:33 incompatible with discipleship

B. Example of Christ.

1. Birth and adolescence (Lk. 2:7; Lk. 2:23 (family was poor)
2. During ministry (Lk. 9:58)
3. Self-effacing (II Cor. 8:9)

C. Apostolic Teachings

1. Greedy will not inherit Kingdom of God (I Cor. 6:10; Rom. 1:29; Eph. 5:5)
2. Covetousness is idolatry (Col. 3:5)
3. Love of money is root of many evils (I Tim. 6:10)
4. Wealth is associated with oppression of poor (James 2:1)
5. Greed is a mark of a false teacher (II Pet. 2:14)
6. Excommunicable sin (I Cor. 5:11)
7. Seeking for wealth is a sin (I Tim. 6:9,10)
8. Serving the Lord for the sake of money is disgraceful (I Tim. 6:5)

III. Implications

A. Discipleship predicated upon loyalty to Christ, not wealth (Lk. 14:33; Lk. 9:3).

B. However must be responsible to care for family (I Tim. 5:8).

C. Should learn contentment without regard to circumstances (Phil. 4:10-13, I Tim. 6:8).

D. Anxiety over circumstances = unbelief (Mt. 6:25-34). Contentment and greed mutually exclusive. Therefore, be free of it (Heb. 13:5).

E. Freedom from greed essential qualification for church leadership (Titus 1:7, I Pet. 5:2, I Tim. 3:3).

F. Failure to share and part with possessions indicative of lack of understanding of God's love through Christ (I Jn. 3:16ff).

G. Money and possessions should be considered a means for ministry and an opportunity for spiritual growth (Lk. 16:11; Eph. 4:28; Gal. 6:10, Rom. 12:8; Phil. 1:5 & 4:15).

IV. Personal Application

A. Do I make expenditures for the purpose of satisfying worldly urges of pride, status, fashion?

B. Is it right to have a proportional relationship between what I buy and what I make? That is, things shouldn't be purchased simply because I can afford them. Graduated tithe.

C. Of money spent on myself, do I make a distinction between expenditures that promote my spiritual growth and excessive investment in hobbies and insignificant activities?

D. Am I equally stable and reliable in conditions of abundance and scarcity?

E. Do my actions show that I realize that greed can lead to the destruction of life itself (I Tim. 6:9)?

F. Aside from normal allotment of time and vocation, family, and sleep where is my free time specifically invested? Material or personal gain, or God's work?

G. Do I have a stewardship view of my possessions or do I consider them my own?

H. Do opportunities for your spiritual and material advancement conflict? If so, which opportunity do you routinely choose?

I. Do you ask for spiritual counsel regarding your personal finances?