

# SAVE ALL YOU CAN

## SMALL GROUP LESSON 2



### 1 TIMOTHY 6:6-11

"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness."

### CONTENTMENT

At first glance, 1 Timothy 6:7 sounds like it is speaking against saving money: "For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it." If we can't take our money with us, then saving it is pointless, right? But when we talk about saving money, in the context of this lesson, we aren't speaking about stashing away as much money as we can. If you gain all you can, and then simply hoard everything you have gained, you are being selfish. By the same token, if you gain all you can, and then spend everything you gained on yourself and your own desires, you are equally selfish.

"Saving all you can" is speaking more to the idea of being content in all circumstances. The reason you save all you can is so you will have the ability to give more. Within the modern church, there is much contention over the role of money in the life of a Christian. On one side, you have the "prosperity gospel" preachers who believe God wants to bless His people with monetary riches. On the other side, you have those who believe destitution is a sign of Godliness. But, the truth is, God uses both the rich and the poor to build His Kingdom.

### FOCUS:

A key component to generosity is learning to be careful in how we spend our money.

### APPLICATION:

Every person, no matter how much they earn, has the capacity to be generous. Human beings have a tendency to spend everything we earn (and often more), no matter how high that number rises. If we are to be generous, it requires that we examine our spending and not waste money. If we spend every dollar we earn, there will be nothing left in our pockets to give.

### GOD'S WORD:

1 Timothy 6:6-11;  
Ecclesiastes 5:10

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## ECCLESIASTES 5:10

“Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income. This too is meaningless.”

In verse 9, when Paul says, “Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction,” it sounds like he is condemning those who are rich. But that is not the case. Rather, he is admonishing those who want to get rich for selfish reasons. Most people would like to make more money. But the question is, why do we want to make more money? Is it so we can buy more things for ourselves, or so we can have more money to invest in God’s Kingdom? Is it so we can buy a bigger house and a faster car, or is it so we can take care of our needs and donate more to worthy causes?

Paul tells us that a prerequisite to generosity is contentment. If we are to be good stewards of the resources God gives us, we must learn to be content.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. 1 Timothy 6:6 says, “But godliness with contentment is great gain.” How do you interpret this verse? What does this verse say to you about wasteful spending?
2. Have you ever passed on an opportunity to buy something for yourself so you could donate that money to someone who needed it more than you? Share about that moment and what you learned from that choice.
3. 1 Timothy 6:11 says we should “flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.” What are some concrete ways we can flee from the love of money and pursue the attributes suggested by Paul?

### THE LOVE OF MONEY

Read Ecclesiastes 5:10.

We all know that person. The one who makes twice as much money as you, but can’t figure out how they will survive on the amount of money they are making. The person who, no matter how many raises they get or how successful their business is, can never seem to be satisfied with their income. It’s a trap that many people fall into. How many times have you thought to yourself,

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“If I could just make \$5,000 or \$10,000 more, I could get out of debt and be successful.” Then, you get the raise you have been waiting for, and just end up with more debt than you had before.

That is how the story goes for most people. We think we need more money to be satisfied. We think that making more money will fix our problems. We believe the source of our woes is directly related to the amount of money we make. But the Bible clearly tells us, “This too is meaningless.”

The fact is, the more we love something, the more we desire, the harder it is to be fulfilled. Think about something you love passionately. Can you ever get enough of it? Sometimes, this is a good thing. If you love your spouse, you can never have enough time with them. If you love your children, you miss them tremendously when you don’t see them for a while. If you love reading, you feel compelled to learn and expand your mind. But sometimes, loving something passionately is bad. If you love alcohol, because it helps you escape your troubles, you and those you love will suffer greatly from the addiction. If you love sugary foods, health problems will eventually plague your body. If you love money, you will never have enough of it and it will drive your decisions and relationships.

I once had a boss once who was driven by the love of money. The stress and pressure of constantly fighting and clawing his way up the corporate ladder cost him his marriage, his friends and eventually his life, thanks to a stress-induced heart attack. It wasn’t the money that cost him everything. It was his love of money—the inability to be satisfied with what he had.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why do you think some rich people seem unsatisfied, while some poor people are satisfied with their lives?
2. If someone loves money, how does an increase or decrease in wages affect that persons’ life? How does an increase or decrease in wages affect the person who is content?
3. Have you ever known someone who paid a hefty price because of their love of money or lack of contentment? What price did they pay, and do you think it was worth the price?

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## MARCUS LICINIUS CRASSUS

Marcus Crassus (c. 115 BC – 53 BC) was a Roman general, politician and a member of the First Triumvirate, along with Julius Caesar and Pompey the Great. Crassus rose to prominence thanks in part to his great wealth and his desire to accumulate more.

Crassus was a shrewd businessman, and perhaps the first “house flipper.” He notoriously purchased fire-damaged and collapsed properties, then used slave labor to fix the properties, which he then resold for a steep profit. Using this method, along with operating silver mines and participating in slave trafficking, he accumulated a great deal of wealth and power.

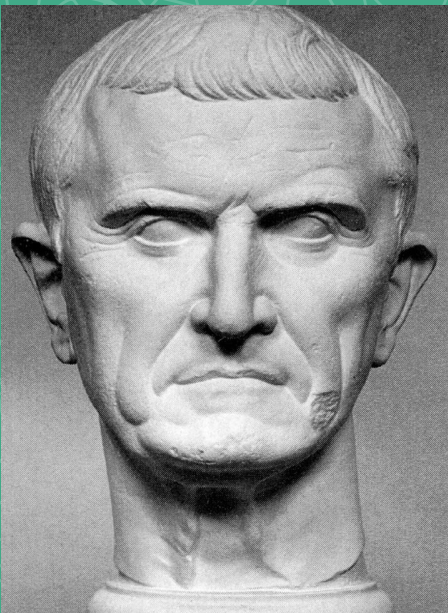
After building his fortune, he turned his attention to the political arena. As the wealthiest man in Rome, he had a strong base upon which to build his political power. His military prowess, partially funded by his own wealth, eventually earned him an appointment as governor of Syria.

But Crassus was not satisfied with his wealth or his domain. He desired more. Parthia was a source of great riches, and defeating them would not only increase his wealth, but also give him another military victory to match his rivals. Unfortunately, Crassus’ greed led to his downfall. His army was defeated soundly by Parthia, and he lost his life in the conflict. To add insult to injury, his head was used as a prop in a play during the Parthian king’s son’s wedding ceremony as a mockery ridiculing Crassus and the Roman Empire.

In the end, though he accumulated a massive amount of wealth and power, Crassus’s inability to be content with what he had not only cost him his life, but forever tainted his legacy. Rather than being remembered solely for his great military victories and shrewd business sense, he became a symbol representing the pitfalls of excessive greed.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. One might argue that Crassus would never have achieved greatness during his lifetime were it not for his greed and love of money and power. Do you think the price Crassus paid for his greed was worth it, considering the greatness he achieved?



### PROFILE: MARCUS LICINIUS CRASSUS

Born c. 115 BC

Died c. 53 BC

Occupation: Roman general  
and politician

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## COMMISSION

Throughout the upcoming week, look for opportunities to be content with what you have and pass on opportunities to spend money on yourself. Instead, donate the money to your church or a charity.

2. Can you think of anyone in today's society whose life resembles Crassus' life? In what ways are they similar or different?
3. Why do you think people are driven by the prospect of accumulating wealth? What is the correlation between wealth and power?
4. Do you believe it is possible for someone to achieve greatness, like Crassus did, without loving money and power? Why or why not?

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