

EMBERS FROM MY FIRE

June 2006 - By Pastor Ken Damon

HOW TO MAKE MILLIONS!

There are many self-help books today that talk about how to become a millionaire. Some of the titles include: The Millionaire Maker: Act, Think and Make Money the Way the Wealthy Do, Secrets of the Millionaire Mind: Mastering the Inner Game of Wealth, and my personal favorite - The Automatic Millionaire: A Powerful One-Step Plan to Live & Finish Rich. Thank God, they've finally got it down to just one step! That's for me!

Bill Gates, the richest man in the world, and co-founder of Microsoft says that the person he has learned most from in the world, aside from technology colleagues, was fellow-billionaire and legendary investor Warren Buffett. Gate's cited Buffett's integrity as the most important quality of his billionaire buddy. Note it well. Integrity is the most important factor for success financially.

Berkshire Hathaway executive Warren Buffett said at the shareholders meeting last year that the qualities of good managers include: "a passion for business, intelligence, and integrity." Buffett went on to say, "If they don't have the last, the first two things will kill you." (AP 5/2/05)

Integrity is defined as: rigid adherence to a code of behavior; honesty; veracity; reliability; unimpaired; uprightness; probity.

Developing clarity in values is essential for a person to have integrity. As long as principles of life remain vague or poorly reasoned a person cannot have integrity. If the process of value clarification is flawed then the whole system comes crashing down. This is why the Bible works hard on teaching principles of morality.

The Bible makes a big deal about integrity, personal character, and righteousness (doing the right thing). I would describe the Gospel of Jesus Christ as being made up of 2 great characteristics: **GREAT MERCY and GREAT MORALITY.**

The great morality of Jesus Christ is epitomized by the command to "love your enemies" along with a number of other extraordinary ideals presented in the Sermon on the Mount. I think we would all agree this represents a profoundly high morality.

The only way to begin to attempt to live by such high standards is to find greater mercy. This great mercy is received through the saving grace of Christ that removes the shame and penalty of our many sins. The forgiveness and presence of Jesus gives us the power to live by the morality of the Great Commandment to love God with everything and to love our neighbors sacrificially.

With this approach we do not have to lower God's biblical standards of morality. Instead we receive more mercy and grace from God to live up to the great expectations of the gospel.

Many of the foundational principles of practical morality that Christians embrace are found in the book of Proverbs. I believe that an expert knowledge in biblical morality begins with understanding and embracing the core principles taught in the wisdom of King Solomon's Proverbs.

I am challenging you to read one chapter of Proverbs each day throughout the summer. Since there are 31 chapters in Proverbs then it is simple to read the chapter that corresponds to the date (You have to double up on the last day of June). I also encourage you to keep a personal notebook about what you learn and discuss your discoveries and questions with others.

“By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures. A wise man has great power, and a man of knowledge increases strength.” Proverbs 24:3-5

If you study and apply these treasures of wisdom you will become truly rich! God guaranteed!

Pastor Ken