

Courage With Each New Step

James 4:13-17

Saturday July 10, 2021

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If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.

—James 4:17

Warren Buffett is the sixth richest man in the world, with an estimated net worth of \$96 billion in 2021. Buffett lives with little or no extravagance and likes it that way. He preaches a message of frugality and simplicity.

Buffett's success comes because of his careful penny-pinching throughout his life. He owns one home. Uses coupons at grocery stores and restaurants. He rarely travels. He shops very little. Buffet and his wife live a middle-class life with the income and investment portfolio of the richest of the rich.

In countless interviews, Warren Buffett has shared his way of life and approach to financial success and contentment. He has found a level of deep satisfaction in controlling his monetary success and keeping life simple rather than letting his material wealth control him. Buffett wants that same level of contentedness for others. In many ways, he is an evangelist for being successful without letting your success ruin you. Buffet doesn't just preach the message of simplicity and frugality through a minimalistic lifestyle; he lives it.

One of Buffett's closest friends, Bill Gates, reminded Buffett of a particularly economical lunch Buffett treated Gates to years ago. Keep in mind that Gates is two places higher than Buffett on the wealthiest people in the world list at number four with \$124 billion. Gates asked Buffet, "Warren, do you remember the laugh we had when we traveled together a few years ago and decided to get lunch at McDonald's? You offered to pay, dug into your pocket, and pulled out ... coupons!" Buffett actually bought Bill Gates lunch at McDonald's and used coupons!

Buffett practices what he preaches. Few do that today. Whether it is handling one's finances, eating and exercising to stay healthy, or building a healthy marriage, many preach one thing and do another. That kind of hypocrisy permeates the lives of many followers of Christ and the culture of many local churches. We say one thing and do another. Our witness for Christ has been blurred by hypocrisy far too much over the years, decades, and centuries of Church history.

Walking the talk transcends the optics observed regarding the church by the world. Preaching one message and living another way is really an obedience issue. The optics before others are one thing. Obedience to God is another! Each step of obedience gives us more confidence to take yet another step.

James 4:17 says, "If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them." God calls us to do what He tells us to do in His Word. When we know what we should do and don't do it, that lack of obedience is sin. The more faithfully we walk in obedience, God's Spirit gives us confidence to take the next steps of obedience. We gain courage with each new step!

As you have been reading, the Holy Spirit may have shown you an area in your life where your walk does not match your talk. Take steps today to do what you know to do in that particular area.

When we fail to do what God calls us to do, it is sin. Each new step of adherence to God's truth gives us courage to take another step!

Today's Prayer

Lord, help me to live a faithfully obedient life for you. Show me pockets of hypocrisy that exist in my life. As I take steps of obedience, give me fresh confidence to take the next step of courageous obedience. Please help me show the world Your Son