



Destructive Desire #5: Power over People

-- The desire for power inevitably inflicts worldly _____ on others (v. 46a).

- The teachers of the Law were obsessed with adding their own rules to God's Law and enforcing those rules vigorously.
- The Talmud contained no less than 24 chapters on Sabbath Law.
- According to the teachers of the Law, one's salvation depended on following every one of their outrageous rules.

-- The pursuit of power imposes worldly burdens on others in order to _____ them and gain control over them.

- At every turn, Satan aims to control us by weakening us with worldly burdens.
- Religion in general has a legacy of pursuing power over people.
- Many of our personal sins stem from a desire to gain power over others.
 - Do not our insults aim to weaken others so that we might feel better about ourselves? Are we not trying to weaken one another in the pursuit of power when we refuse to forgive or hold threats over others heads? Are we not pursuing personal power when we magnify the faults of others while minimizing our own?
 - Too many churches become stages for personal power plays.
- The teachers' sinful pursuit of power was seen in their attitude toward others.

-- With the desire for personal power comes a lack of _____ (v. 46b).

- The teachers of the Law were utterly unmoved by the burdens they were creating.
- They gave no attention whatsoever to helping the people please God.
- It is impossible to please God without _____.

What to Want (Part 5): A Merciful Heart

-- A merciful heart is a _____ heart.

- v. 46b – The clear implication of this verse is that Our Lord wants us to serve others (Matthew 20:25-28).
- Authentic Christian service puts Christ’s mercy in motion.

-- A merciful heart aims to _____ people from worldly burdens.

- Christ calls us to serve others in such a way that their burdens might be lifted (Matthew 11:28-29).
- Whereas the pursuit of power always imposes worldly burdens on others, mercy seeks to lift them in Christ.

-- A merciful heart lifts worldly burdens so that others can be strong in _____.

- Our goal must always be to manifest Christ’s mercy so that others might receive Christ’s mercy.
- Whatever the burden may be, merciful service to others always points them to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

-- A merciful heart seeks to replace the burdens of this _____ with the blessings of _____.

- The New Testament church is not a place of burdens, but a people of privilege, gratitude, and joy.
- Whereas power says “you have to,” mercy says “we get to.”

Application Questions

- Which do we sincerely seek more: To serve or to be served? **Service** or serve **us**?
- Which excites you more: The prospect of having your needs met or the opportunity to meet the needs of others?
- Do the people around you feel more burdened or less burdened because you are around?

- *Do you tend make the people around stronger in Christ or weaker in worldliness?*
- *Is your life more about being in control or being controlled by Christ?*