

# WHEN GIVING EQUALS LIVING

A remarkable story of the extent to which people value possessions is offered by Dr. David Jeremiah, senior pastor of Shadow Mountain Community Church in California, in his book, *Turning Points*.

The Italian city of Pompeii was destroyed by the eruption of the volcano Mount Vesuvius in AD 79. When modern excavators began digging in the ruins, among the many bodies found frozen in time was that of a woman whose feet faced the city gate but whose hand was reaching back for a bag of pearls. Her effort to save her wealth was rewarded with death.



Perhaps the woman dropped the pearls when fleeing the city, or perhaps the pearls had been dropped by another. In any case, she wanted them. “Two people died that day,” Dr. Jeremiah said, “a person who loved life and a person who loved wealth. In her case, wealth won and life lost.”

If we pursue righteousness and greed together, he added, our destination is disaster, according to Matthew 6:24. “The Pharisees discovered this when they refused to support their own parents by claiming that all their funds had been dedicated to the Lord’s work (Mark 7:9-13). The idea that God would be pleased with such hypocrisy shows how little the Pharisees knew of Him. Greed will make hypocrites out of the pseudo-righteous before they have time to say, ‘I wanted to give more but ...’

“The righteous live and give the same way,” Dr. Jeremiah declared.

We should make sure we don’t lose something eternal while grasping for something temporal, as did the woman in Pompeii long ago.

*For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil* (1 Timothy 6:10).

– Beecher Hunter