

- Believers who have only recently been converted should not be confronted with a long list of rules and regulations. They must learn to walk by faith. God Himself will lead them in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake, and He will help them to solve their difficulties. Like Elisha here, we have to trust the Word of God to do its work (2 Tim 4:2).

3. Gehazi's Greed (5:20-27)

- Gehazi is described as "*the servant of Elisha the man of God*" (v20) and yet he was motivated by greed. Unlike Naaman who was a young believer, Gehazi had been exposed to the ministry of Elisha and had been a witness to the power of God. He had the example of Elisha's life and his message as a tremendous source of instruction, challenge and motivation for godliness and a life of service. But Gehazi failed to capitalize and grow through these privileges. Opportunity and privilege are no guarantee of success.
- Instead of appreciating Elisha's unselfish example, Gehazi succumbed to the greed of his own heart. When he saw the large gifts that Naaman would have given Elisha, he was shocked that his master refused to take anything from such a wealthy, influential and grateful man. Gehazi decided to run after Naaman to collect the reward that his master had turned down. Notice Gehazi's use of spiritual language in v20, "*as the LORD liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him,*" to justify his pursuing Naaman to enrich himself dishonestly. This was a very purposeful act on Gehazi's part. Compare Gehazi's greed with the godly contentment of the Shunammite woman.
- When Naaman saw Gehazi running after him, he got down from his chariot, asking, "*Is all well?*" (v21). Naaman was a changed man - no longer proud or dictatorial but grateful, reverential and humble. Gehazi, with cunning deceit, lied to Naaman that Elisha had sent him to say that two young men had arrived at the school and were in need of money and clothing. This was a complete lie. Gehazi presented himself as having no needs of his own, of course—like Elisha, poor but pure of heart.
- Naaman was glad to give Gehazi more than he asked which required two of Naaman's servants to carry it. Naaman had two of his men carry the gift of silver and clothes, but Gehazi stopped them before they reached the house where Elisha was. Gehazi knew what he did was wrong. He hid this treasure in the house, where he was sure Elisha would not see it, but his sin was already known to the prophet. When Gehazi went in and stood before Elisha, the prophet asked him where he had been. Gehazi chose instead to tell yet another lie. He denied that he had been anywhere. But Elisha knew the truth. We don't know if this was supernatural knowledge, or simply gained from observation and knowing Gehazi's character. One way or another, Elisha knew. All Gehazi's attempts to cover his sin failed.

- It was clear to Elisha, and should have been clear to Gehazi, that it was not appropriate at this time to accept gifts from Naaman. If Naaman was allowed to think that he contributed anything to his healing, he would fail to grasp the grace of God in his healing and in his salvation. Elisha's point was that the miracles of God cannot be bought. But why does Elisha add olive groves, vineyards, sheep, oxen, and male and female servants? This is what Gehazi intended to purchase with the silver he had acquired from Naaman. Elisha exposed his greedy heart. Elisha showed Gehazi that he didn't just know about the theft, but also what he planned on doing with the money! It is obvious that God knows both our actions and our plans (Heb 4:12-13).
- As a result of Gehazi's greed, he & his descendants were judged with the same leprosy that Naaman had previously had.
 - This severe punishment was in accordance with the gravity of his sins. As a man in ministry, Gehazi was under a stricter judgment (Acts 5:1-10; Lk 12:47-48). How terrible for someone who had lived so close to Elisha, to have to depart in this manner from the presence of the prophet! Gehazi is OT equivalent of Judas Iscariot This is a serious warning for professing Christians, for all those who are familiar with Christ, the Son of God, yet do not know Him with their hearts.
 - The judgment of the Lord was the very punishment promised in the law of God and, in particular, in the second commandment, the commandment against idolatry. Gehazi was an idolater; money and status were his gods (Col 3:5).
- Mark 8:36 - guard against greed! Here we see the dangers of greed in ministry, but it applies to all of life - 1 Tim 6:9-10. We also see the downward spiral of sin – covetousness, deceit, hypocrisy and death (James 1:13-14). Gehazi's greed is a warning to us (Titus 1:7; Lk 16:13). We are called to be honest in all our dealings. God sees everything and will judge accordingly. We can be sure that our sins will find us out (Num 32:23).
- Gehazi is seen in the presence of the king in 2 Kings 8:4. It seems strange that a severely afflicted leper would be a counsellor to a king, so it seems that perhaps (i) Gehazi's form of leprosy did not require isolation; or (ii) Gehazi, like Miriam before him, repented of his sin and was healed of his leprosy; or (iii) that this actually took place before the events of 2 Kings 5.