

## **Show me the Money #1**

**Your financial attitude will determine your financial altitude.**

*Ecclesiastes 10:19 ESV*

*(19) Bread is made for laughter, and wine gladdens life, and money answers everything.*

What we are dealing with in today's economy is a crisis not based upon the need of our nation, but the greed of our nation.

*National Economic Council Chairman Lawrence Summers said in March of this year*

*"An abundance of greed and an absence of fear on Wall Street led some to make purchases — not based on the real value of assets, but on the faith that there would be another who would pay more for those assets... greed begets greed."*

It is not that we don't have an ability to make money, or our markets are not good or our economy is not sound...but the reality is some members of the banking, investment and government sectors got greedy.

They thought that the money in the USA was theirs to take and not steward.

Life can be summed up in three words: Leadership, Relationship and Stewardship.

You and I don't own the things we have, we are only stewards of them.

I believe it is peoples bad attitude towards money that rob's them from ever seeing God bless their lives and bring them increase.

If we could realize that we are stewards of the finances we have and not owners then our approach to getting it, having it and holding it would be different.

### **A poverty mindset**

A poverty mentality focuses on self, where a prosperous heart focuses on God and others.

One of the enemy's great tactics is to stop God's people believing for more.

This limits the purposes of God in their own lives, and in turn for the church corporately.

I have heard people say *All I need is enough to get by and put food on the table tonight!*

Does that not strike you as an incredibly selfish way to live?

What about the family down the road whose husband just got laid off? What about the man who just had his truck and all his work tools stolen?

Don't you think it would be tremendous to be in a position to be able to help them all from your abundance?

## **The Power of the Mighty Dollar (yen, pound, shekel etc)**

I believe we all have to learn to see and think beyond your own circumstances and needs to see the real power of money.

To think with a kingdom mindset you have to think beyond your own table and your own needs, you have to enlarge the borders of your tent<sup>1</sup> or the borders of your territory<sup>2</sup> as the scripture encourages us.

Enlarge your thinking to think about other people and how you can be blessed in order to be blessing.

It is self-centered to think you don't need money.

Money is a resource that causes us to be more effective.

Resist the kind of thinking that limits your life and finances to one of barely enough

Money has great power and potential.

You have to learn to think beyond yourself and only wanting enough for your own table, and enough for your own bills. Enlarge your thinking and begin to think about other people and what you can do to bless them.

I was with some business people on Friday night, all of who were sitting around talking about the fact that they have not seen a better time in U.S. history in 40 years to make money, than now!

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<sup>1</sup> Is 54:2

<sup>2</sup> 1 Chronicles 4:10

## **You need more money**

We started this morning with reading one of my favorite *Making hamburgers out of someone's sacred cow* type scriptures

***A feast is made for laughter, and wine makes merry;  
but money answers everything.  
(Ecclesiastes 10:19)***

### **What the bible says**

Whenever I quote this Ecclesiastes scripture, peoples first reaction is: *That's NOT true, the bible doesn't say that.* But it is there. The bible said it.

So then... does money answer everything?

Think about it...

If you're hungry, what do you need? Food – right? But what buys food? Money.

If you are praying to buy a house, what is the answer to your prayer? Money.

If you are praying for God to help you pay your bills, what are you praying for? Money.

Some go so far as to suggest that 89% of all marriage breakdowns happen over stress relating to money issues<sup>3</sup>.

Money is a representation of your life.  
We give our time,  
our talent,  
our passion everyday at work and in return we receive money. Money is foldable time.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://ezinearticles.com/?id=123632>

Every occasion that we fold up our paycheck and put it in our pocket we are putting away a representation of what we spent our lives energy on for the week or month.

How you spend your money shows what you value in your life.

If you show me where you have spent your money I can tell you what you love.

So why do we have such a hang up over something that is so basic and fundamental to our life? Why is this a taboo subject?

I believe the issue lies in the fact that for centuries the western church has suffered from false teachings in the area of personal and corporate financial prosperity.

Do you realize that no eastern religion portrays poverty as a virtue? The Muslims don't embrace it. The Jews don't see poverty as a virtue; it is only the European church that embraced it as a teaching during a period known as the dark ages.

The Catholic Church at the time extolled the virtue of poverty as a way to raise money from people and exert control over the priesthood.

The priesthood was bound to the church and dependant upon it for all their daily needs. This meant that they were bound to preach what they were told to preach and do what they were told to do or they would not eat.

If I can help you with your thinking and help you develop a healthy attitude towards money, I believe we can all walk in the blessing and prosperity that God intends for us regardless of what CNN tells us.

## **Lets start by looking at two terms...Wealth and Riches**

Our western culture does not differentiate between wealth and riches.

In fact we believe that you need riches to be wealthy.  
The truth is it's the other way around.

If you don't have wealth you'll never have lasting riches.

Riches are "perishable assets" and Jesus warned us not to be improperly focus on these temporary riches as the primary goal of our life.

Wealth on the other hand, is different.

In our western world we have reduced prosperity to an issue of money, just like we have reduced poverty to an issue of money.

Both prosperity and poverty are far more reaching than that in their effect on people and nations.

The bible defines **poverty** as:

Destruction, ruin, terror, want, lack, need, thing needed, naked, uncovered, neglected, lack of restraint,

It also defines **prosperity** as:

Goodness, best, merry, fair, precious, fine, wealth, beautiful, favor, righteous acts, truthfulness, salvation, satisfied, enough, pleasant, agreeable.

Think of it this way.....

Riches are something we HAVE.  
Wealth is someone we ARE.

If you take riches off a rich person - they will become poor.

If you take riches off a wealthy person - they will simply be without money.... for a while.

### **So....How do you treat money?**

How do you view money and further more, how does God?

### **Confirming His Convent.**

In the coming weeks I would like to address this morning a couple of scriptures that have been used to manipulate and confuse God's people concerning money.

Remember when interpreting scripture,

The simple rule is...Before and After.

If you want to know the context of a verse, If you want to make sure it is not being misrepresented to you,

Read the verse before it

And the verse after it

The chapter before it and the chapter after it

Then ask the simple question...who is writing this and why are they writing this...

*Deuteronomy 8:18 ESV*

*(18) You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day.*

Now lets just spend a little time looking at the structure of this verse and the meaning behind the words:

**You shall remember the Lord:**

You shall  
mention;  
keep in remembrance;  
to recall.  
The Lord

**He who gives you:**

He has granted or bestowed upon you.  
He has committed or entrusted to you.

**The Power to get:**

To make;  
to produce;  
to acquire;  
to bring about;

**wealth**

strength  
riches  
power  
might

**That He may Confirm:**

To verify the truth or validity of something

**His Covenant:** treaty, agreement or pledge.

So a composite of this verse can read accurately:

*But keep in remembrance and recall the Lord your God,  
for HE has granted, bestowed, committed and entrusted you  
with the ability to make, produce, acquire and bring about  
wealth.*

*That He may place something permanently in position;  
That He may make something valid or operative;  
That He may verify the truth of the treaty and agreement He  
promised to your fathers today as it was back when it was  
originally promised.*

The Jews knew about this covenant  
This prosperity was so that the heathen nations could see that God  
was real.

Now we as Christians are participating in this covenant through the  
work of Christ

So.... logically it does not have to be confirmed to us does it?  
We know about it  
We are experiencing it

So if it does not have to be confirmed to us;  
Then to whom does God want to confirm it to?

Who does God want to see that He is the God of the universe and we  
are His chosen people?

God wants to show those who are yet to become Christians that he is  
alive and well on planet earth.  
That He is above the economics,  
The doom and gloom and is faithfully providing for His people.

He wants to use your financial blessing to confirm His covenant in the  
earth.  
He wants to use your ability to create, manufacture or obtain wealth  
as a witness and as a tool.

Before you were saved, Christianity was all about you.  
Since you have been saved, it is all about them!

Before you were saved, the supernatural was a means to grab your  
attention, now it is a tool to get theirs.

Before you were saved the promise of prosperity was a promise of reassurance and hope,  
Now it is evidence in your life of the truthfulness and the Goodness of God. It is the proof in the pudding.

What prosperity and personal wealth were never meant to be...was a focus.

They were always meant to be a bi-product

It is not an object for self-consumption,  
But a tool to be used to reach out and touch this world.

It is a sign, a fruit of His covenant.

To think that salvation is only applicable to you,

Is the same as to think that your prosperity is only for your consumption.

You are not the only one that Jesus died for.

You are not the only one that God wants to touch through your God-given ability to create wealth.

Our ability to handle and be wise stewards of our finances is actually a qualifier put in place by God to judge whether or not we are ready/able/capable of being a steward over the more important spiritual resources and responsibilities HE has for us.

Jesus said that if a man cannot be faithful with money, he can never qualify for true spiritual authority.

*Luke 16:10-11 ESV*

*(10) "One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in very little is also dishonest in much.*

*(11) If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?*

If you cannot handle the things of the world, why would HE trust you with the keys to the Kingdom.

The global church income is more than \$12.3 TRILLION annually, however only 1% of that goes to reach those who have NEVER heard the gospel

America spends more money annually on dog food than it does to support foreign missions.

We need a vision that goes beyond our ability to be consumers only; A vision so big, so powerful that we cannot even accomplish it in our own lifetime!

## **Do you love money? Is money your God, Do I worship money?**

I want to end this morning addressing the question that plagues most Christians growing up in church in America or Australia at one time or another.

Do I love money?  
Is money my God?  
Do I worship money?

People are worried about these questions.

The reason being is that ...again...scripture has been misquoted and misunderstood for centuries.

So lets deal with this issue head on and resolve it for you once and for all.

The three scriptures that have given people the most challenges concerning money are:

- 1) The story of the rich young ruler (Mark 10:17-23)
- 2) The misunderstanding of the scripture that says you can't serve God and mammon (Matt 6:24)
- 3) The misquoted scripture that money is the root of all evil (1 Tim 6:10)

## **The Story of the Rich Young Ruler**

This story is found in mark 10 and I would ask for you to go home and read it over lunch.

To summarize it... Jesus is confronted by a young man in his passionate pursuit of the Kingdom.

This young man has a revelation about Christ, that up to this point only Peter has had.

This Young man recognized that Jesus was the giver of eternal life.

Now this young man came to Christ and said what must I do to get this eternal life that only you can offer?

And Jesus gave Him a unique response.

He told him to do something that he had never asked of any of the other disciples – all of who were business people.

Jesus said....sell everything you have and give it to the poor.

The response of Christ to this young man was not in the context of finances, but in the context of Lordship.

The issue was...Could this young man serve Him with abandon?

Could He submit to Him?

Could He follow Him as the others Apostles had?

Now remember, Christ calling to this young man wasn't as to the 70 or the 120, but it was the same as to the 12.

Jesus only said the phrase, "*come follow me,*" to those in whom He invested the Apostolic calling.

Christ was not dealing with this young man concerning money, but concerning his calling.

Wealth is a great insulator.

It will keep you warm in the winter.  
It will take you to the doctor when a loved one is sick.  
It will pay a lawyer and keep you from reconciling with a brother.  
It will embolden you to walk away from your spiritual leader instead of submit to Him in times of pressure and conflict.

You can be your savior instead of depending upon The Savior.

Jesus was dealing with this potential Apostle in the area of lordship, not finances.

Finances in the right hands can do a lot for the kingdom, but I don't think the issue was whether the young man had possessions, I think the possessions had the young man.

## **Now the second issue: Worshiping God or mammon**

*Matt 6:24*

*No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon*

So lets break this verse down

### **Serve (Greek):**

*To be a slave, to be of service, to obey, to submit*

### **Mammon:**

*Chaldee or Syriac word meaning god of riches*

Let me read you this Scripture from Clarke's translation and commentary:

*The master of our heart may be fitly termed the love that reigns in it. We serve that only which we love supremely. A man cannot be in perfect indifference betwixt two objects which are incompatible: he is inclined to despise and hate whatever he does not love supremely, when the necessity of a choice presents itself.*

The issue isn't money in this Scripture,  
Its love and worship.

It again is an issue of dependency.

Who do you look to in times of need – God or Money?

What do you pray for more of when things aren't going well – God or money?

If money is your answer, then money is your God.  
If money is what you serve for and strive for and occupies your mind, then you are living a lifestyle that is forcing you into a place of the worship of money.

We cannot serve God and serve Mammon,  
But neither can we serve God and any other idol.

In this situation, Jesus was talking about idolatry more than He was talking about money.

Regardless of my need, I WILL worship God!

## **Now the third issue - Having money is an evil thing.**

### 1 Timothy 6:10

*"10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."*

Money in itself is not evil, today there are millions of people engaged in heinous sin that don't have two dimes to rub together.

The problem is not wealth, but the pursuit of the heart.

Churches have for so long taught that there is an evil associated with wealth that people have come to believe that poverty is synonymous with godliness.

The result has become that God's own children don't have enough for life and His church does not have enough to touch and change the world.

It is not wrong to be rich, the issue is trusting in riches and seeing them as your source.

Again, riches are not wrong.

It is our attachment to them and what we do with them that is the issue.

## Take the “Do I love money?” test

People generally presume: those who have money, love money!  
Often people judge others according to their possessions not their motivation.

So how do you recognize it?

Here are five questions that will help you know whether or not you love money or have a problem with it.

### **(1) Do you react to the thought or mention of giving or offerings?**

When it is time to take up the offering at church, what is your response?

Do you love it, or do you react?

Do you find yourself sitting there muttering, “Here they go again” or “All they every talk about is money.”

Which is the one statement I really think is weird.

Even if I was to talk about finances for a maximum of 5 minutes every church service – which is say about 90 minutes - that would mean statistically I am spending 5% of the time trying to help people with the thing that preoccupies 80% of their thinking!

Look at what Jesus said:

*Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.  
(Matthew 6:21)*

It is as simple as that.

If your treasure is giving, not getting,

Then that is what will excite your heart.

You will look forward to any opportunity to give.

If you love money, you will feel nervous when the subject of giving comes up, and will always find reasons why not to.

If your heart is right, you will warm to the concept of giving and rejoice when you have the opportunity.

## **(2) Do you resent what other people have?**

No matter what circumstances you are facing in your own life, your attitude to other people should be consistent.

Beccy and I have had times when we have been down to our last hundred dollars with thousands of dollars in bills due.

We have moved nations and had to start from scratch all over again, struggling just like we did 20 years ago before we got married.

Yet through it all we have always rejoiced when other people were being blessed and prospering. In fact it inspired us... *If God can do it for them, he can do it for us!*

To be honest if you resent people and what they have, your issue isn't a love of money it is an envious and judgmental spirit.

### **(3) Are you living in the grey zone?**

*An inheritance quickly gained is lost* Prov. 20:21

Dishonest deals,  
Tax avoidance,  
Fraud is not only evidence of a love of money, but will eventually bring destruction.

Trying to build more money into your life through deceitful means will only position you under a curse.

There is no grey zone for men and women of integrity.  
Only right and wrong.

When you appear to do evil in the eyes of the world, to them it is evil.  
As a Christian you must live above this reproach at all times.

Now pay as little taxes as are legally required...that is in fact the law...but pay Caesar what is Caesar's

### **(4) Tight fisted vs Good Steward?**

There is a fine line between good stewardship and being tight-fisted.  
Good stewardship involves godly wisdom.

Being tight-fisted is a manifestation of a poverty mindset.

## **(5) Is money too high on your agenda?**

The love of money isn't measured by how big your house is, or what car you drive. It is measured in the inner heart and condition of a man.

It is an attitude that wants to hold on rather than release and sow, and it has the capacity to contain and rob you of all that God has for you. You must never be ruled by, or live according to, money alone.

Money is but a small portion of total prosperity.

Make a list of the most important things in your life.

They are the things that add up to the totality of your prosperity.

The most important thing in my life is Beccy and the kids. Then my health, then the things God has asked me and given me to do.

Where is money in that list.... Woven amongst it all.

The oil that makes it happen, but not the focus of my activities.

## Get a plan

So...How do you ensure that you don't fall into the *Love Money trap*?

Simply put...you need to GET A LIFE

I believe people like this waste their money away on self-indulgence because their life lacks purpose.

Without real direction, money can never be a real blessing in your life. If you have no direction, your money will also be directionless and will slip through your hands.

You will spend more money buying things you don't need to fill a hole that will never be filled that way.

All of mankind was design for a God-given vision and to live what I call a God-Sized life.

Allow God to build His vision in your life and it will affect every decision you make, including the way you use money.

Your money will no longer be a focus, but a tool.  
You have graduated from a love of money and self, to a love of God and His kingdom purposes.

Think about it

Money says to land, "I can **own** you"  
Money says to vision, "I can **fulfill** you".  
Money says to buildings, "I can **build** you"  
Money says to a missionary, "I can **support** you"  
Money says to things, "I can **buy** you"  
Money says to poverty, "I can **feed** you"  
Money says to opportunity, "I can **accept** you"

Church as your pastor...I am asking you to make a barrellful of money.

I am asking you to become wealthy beyond measure!

Because the world is going to hell in a hand basket and we must do something about it

We are committed to seeing a reformation in our lifetime,

Lets not limit God by thinking, living or dreaming small

Lets pray!