



Money: God or Gift?

*Valuing Jesus Above All
Living His Mission in All*

Money is only a means of exchange, it is no more evil than an item of clothing. Evil comes from within our hearts, from our idolatry, and how we would be tempted to use our power, and have a wrong view of ourselves and God. Money and possessions are one of the most referenced topics in the Bible. What things are we to understand about money and our own hearts, and how does Biblical wisdom teach us to behave toward and with money?

Connect & Review - (Do two or three questions each week)

What are you thankful for this week?

What difficulties have you faced this week?

How did you apply what Jesus taught you from his word last week?

Did you share what you learned with anyone?

How do you sense that God is at work in your life?

PRAY briefly

Read the Passage See Below (page 2)

Have someone read the passage aloud.

Clarify, retell what happens in the passage.

Discover and Explore God's Word

What did you like, what surprised you, what confused you?

What does this passage tell us about: God, people, relationship between God and people?

Can we see Jesus in our passage, or our need for Jesus?

Believe, Repent, Change

How does this passage change how you view God, yourself, or other people?

If I believe this and take it seriously, what would I need to change in my beliefs, attitudes, and actions?

What can I praise God for showing me in this passage?

Prayer response

What needs can I/we meet this week? Who could I tell this to?

Who can I be praying for? Specifically those who don't yet trust in Jesus.

Week 1 Ecclesiastes 5:10 *Here we have briefly stated the view that money gives us into the irony of life. That irony is that we will never stop wanting and that if we do acquire what we want, we will never be satisfied. This fickle nature of our sinful hearts must be fully reckoned with, we can never afford to turn our backs on this, it is a continual surprise.*

Week 2 Mark 8:36 *One of the most powerful and pithy statements of Jesus. Nothing is more obvious and yet counterintuitive to how we tend to live our thought life. Only a very few get to have great wealth, and it is only for a moment. What kind of curse would it be to live a few short years blinded by great wealth and lose our own souls? The contrast is infinite and pitiful. And we all immediately recognize how large of a percentage of our time we are thinking and feeling as if the temporary and the finite were the ultimate. How quickly and powerfully do our hearts wander to meaningless things.*

Week 3 Matthew 6:31-33 *The person who has their priorities straight is a wealthy person. There are real needs in life, God knows we must have them. The wealthy person is not the one who has enough money, but the one who has the God who controls all things! Set your heart, your desires on the ultimate, most real thing, and God promises to worry on your behalf for the ordinary necessities.*

Week 4 2 Corinthians 9:7 *Giving is part of worship, and it is a blessing for us. It is not measured in God's economy by the amount, but by the attitude of our hearts. We are to rejoice in the privilege to give, not the fact that we now have enough left over to give.*

Week 5 Luke 6:38 *The economy of God's kingdom is such that you cannot out-give God. That is not a promise to make you wealthy! It is a promise to overwhelm you with the eternal blessings of his kingdom. It is an issue of the heart, and the dirty little secret about giving is that it will change your heart over time. Are you seeking a better bank account, or a better heart? Which of these two, your heart or your bank account, is God promising to cause to overflow?*

Week 6 Matthew 6:19-21 *Treasure is an evocative word, it is more than you could hope for, it is something to captivate your heart. All of us have treasure, to which our hearts are captive. Jesus does not tell us to simply eradicate something from our heart, he tells us to be healed by the power of a greater affection, a true and worthy treasure. What does it mean to lay up treasure in heaven?*

Week 7 I Timothy 6:17-19 *First, notice that typical effect of riches upon our character, and how we are tempted to hope in riches. Second, notice the contrast between having and enjoying. It is God who gives good things, and the power to enjoy them. Next we see at least a partial answer to last week's question of how we may lay up treasure in heaven. Notice that we may lay ahold of this heavenly treasure even now for an abundant life.*

Week 8 Hebrews 13:5 *Money is like a brick, it is not evil. We struggle with the evil in our own hearts, which would make a god of money to give us a false sense of control over our world. The opposite of the love of money is contentment. Contentment is great gain, it makes a joy of everything that comes our way. Discontent is to sneer at God and to accuse him of evil. The cure is to believe the Lord's promise to never leave us or forsake us. Not believing this is what makes us vulnerable to the love of money.*

Week 9 Acts 20:35 *In all things the Apostle Paul showed the church that he worked hard. For it is a blessing to be able to give and share. It is a privilege to care for the weak. We have only a moment to labour and contribute, before the moment is gone. It is the child who dreams of receiving gifts, and the adult who dreams of being able to give them. And no good thing goes without its reward, both in this life and the life to come.*

Week 10 I Corinthians 16:2 *If giving is a gift that God gives us, and a blessing for us to be able to do, then we will plot and plan for the best effect in our giving. We will work to make giving as generous and effective as we would for any effort we make in life to accomplish our goals. Do you hope and dream of how you might give more in the future, do you take concrete steps to make it a reality? We are to set aside and store up, "as we may prosper". That means that we are not judged by how much we give, but by our hearts, it also suggests that we are ready to give more if we do prosper beyond our needs.*