

BIBLICAL ECONOMICS INTRODUCTION

THE MINISTRY AND ITS FINANCIAL INTEGRITY, [2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15](#)

The Biblical View of Money

Now, before we look at our text, I want to give you some introductory material. We'll do that this evening and over next several weeks. And I want to talk about several things. First of all, I want to talk about the morality of money, the morality of money. And then later, in a few minutes, the love of money. And then we'll talk about the acquiring of money next week and the use of money. And that will give us a sort of a foundation on which we can build our biblical model for a believer's giving.

Let's talk about the morality of money. Money in itself is not good or bad. It's not righteous or evil. It is neutral. But money is a measure of morality. It definitely is. When we talk about money, we're talking about life. We really are. Money is so central to our everyday living. As a medium of exchange it defines how we live. I can take your checkbook, if you write checks, and I can go through the register of your checks for a period of time and I can discern your priorities. I can see where your money goes. And where your money goes is where your heart is. That's obvious.

Now, those of you who don't use checks but use a credit card, I can look at the accounting for your credit card on the monthly statement and I can pretty well discern where your heart is. Where you put your money demonstrates your morality. Money in itself is amoral, but money, also, is a barometer, it is a measure by which I can know what I need to know about the priorities of your life.

Some people say money corrupts. Well there are corrupt people and, certainly, money is a way in which they manifest their corruption. But there are also people with money who are not corrupt, and money is a way in which they manifest their righteousness. And there are corrupt people who have no money, and there are people who have no money and are godly people. Money doesn't necessarily corrupt; it just shows up more visibly the corruption of the heart that possesses it. You take a corrupt person, give him a lot of money and he'll be able to spread his corruption further. It's not money that is the problem. It's the heart that is the problem, but money measures that out.

Some people have said, "You know, money is so much the problem, you just need to get rid of all your money. It's wrong for a Christian to have more money than is necessary for bare necessities," they say. And they might advocate that you take the vow of poverty or that you take all your money, a group of Christians take all their money, throw it in a common pot, divide it up equally, and we'll have Christian communism.

Well that kind of stuff is not in the Scripture. That's not what happened, for example, in [Acts 2](#). In [Acts 2](#) there were people who had money and had land and property and people who didn't. And when people who didn't had a need, sometimes they would sell what they owned to give money to those who had need. They never pooled it and divided it up equally. There are always going to be those who have and those who don't, and the folks in between.

[Acts 2:42-47 \(NASB\)](#)

⁴² They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

⁴³ Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.

⁴⁴ **And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common;**

⁴⁵ **and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.**

⁴⁶ Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,

⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

The Bible doesn't forbid us from possessing money. Let me tell you what the Bible says about it. First of all, in [Haggai](#), the prophet said, in [chapter 2 verse 8](#):

[Haggai 2:8 \(NASB\)](#)

⁸ **"The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,' declares the LORD of hosts."**

In other words, God says it's all Mine anyway. "The earth is Mine, and all that is in it is Mine. Gold comes out of My earth, and so does silver." And so do trees that make paper that make bills and so does every other metal, whether it's nickel, or whether it's aluminum or whatever it is they make coins out of. "It's all Mine. It all comes out of My earth and My creation. I own it all."

And God, by the way, in [Haggai 2](#), was talking about all the nations of the world. He wasn't just talking about Israel. In [Deuteronomy 8:18](#) it says:

[Deuteronomy 8:18 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁸ **"But you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day."**

Now remember, everything on the earth is God's, everything. Every natural component of the material world belongs to the Creator who made it and owns it. He brought it into existence and He is the one who will take it out of existence when He uncreates the universe. In the meantime, it is His.

Now, He knows that it provides a tremendous treasure for man to use. And He goes a step further in [Deuteronomy 8:18](#), and says, **“I am going to give power to people to make wealth.”** So God has not only created the wealth in His creation, but He is the one who, by virtue of how He has made you and me, has given us the ability to gain wealth.

He’s made some of us capable mentally, some of us capable physically, some of us capable relationally at all different levels so that we can attain wealth. He has made the wealthy people able to attain wealth. He is the one who gave them the mental capacity. He is the one who creates the circumstances of life. You’re born into a certain family and that family is poor, and so that creates a certain legacy for you. You’re born into a certain family and it’s rich, that creates a different legacy. But it’s all in the providences of God, where you’re born, to what family, and what environment.

If you were born, for example, in India, you might be born at the upper caste of Brahman; you might be born into wealth. But the chances are you wouldn’t be. You would be born into the category known as the untouchables, from which you can never rise, which you can never escape because of the karma that is built into the fabric of Indian worship, and you would be stuck there all your life. Well, God is in control of all of those circumstances. God is still in charge.

And God has ordained that the poor you will always have with you but there is going to be a distribution of wealth, the great resources that God put in the earth. He knew they would go somewhere to someone, that’s a part of it.

Matthew 26:11 (NASB)

¹¹ “For you always have the poor with you; but you do not always have Me.”

I believe God has created the human being unique so that he can do marvelous things. Some can make music and by it they can gain wealth. Some can paint great pictures and by it they gain wealth. Some have minds that are mathematically capable so that they can invent things and scientifically capable so that they can discover things and accumulate wealth. Some are tremendous at moving groups of people so they can build great corporations and empires. Those are all things within the framework of God’s creative purpose as He takes what is His and distributes it among human kind according to their several and different abilities by virtue of His creation and His providence. But it’s all His.

In [1 Corinthians 4:7](#) the question is asked, **“And what do you have that you did not receive?”** And the answer is nothing. It’s all God’s.

1 Corinthians 4:7 (NASB)

⁷ “For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?”

God distributes it, and God distributes it to whomever He will, however He desires. And that distribution is within the framework of His creative purpose and His

Bible Study: THE DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE

Biblical Economics Series:

Pastor Eddie Ildefonso

02-10-16

providence. And that, in a nutshell, if you will, is why I do not accept a communistic or a highly socialistic approach to mankind's life, because I do not believe God ever intended everybody to be the same and possess the same. I believe God has designed people very unique. Everyone is an individual, and the distribution of wealth in the providence of God and the purposes of God is scattered across humanity and by virtue of the unique ways in which God has made men, any more than God wanted a brown world where all the flowers were one color.

So God has given this power to get wealth, and all that comes is really His. Everything is His. Everything is His. All of it is His and He has distributed it...and listen to this...He has distributed it as a stewardship. It then becomes a test of one's morality. Money in itself it's not moral, but what you do with it determines that. I have in my hand a few dollars; that's all I got today. My wife gave me \$5.00 last week and wondered where I blew that. So this week she gave me \$4.00, and if I'm not careful next week it will be \$3.00. So I have these dollars. In a very real sense, these dollars have no morality at all. But what I do with them could have significant moral implications, right? What I purchase with them, what I do with them.

That's how it is. Everything we possess is given to us from God and acts as a barometer on our moral life, our spiritual life. Now, sadly, God's gifts then are intended for man's good. God wants man to use them in ways that are good, noble, beneficial for humanity, not just always giving it all to missionaries and all to gospel preaching. The Lord knows there needs to be food and clothing and the joys of life, things that we can appreciate and enjoy in His beautiful, beautiful creation.

God wants them to be used for good and for His glory. But man takes what he has and generally perverts it into evil. Generally speaking, money goes into evil, the vast majority of it. Certainly, that is true on the part of unbelievers, that the discretionary money apart from what they eat and use just for the matter of clothing and housing gets diverted into things which have no eternal value at all. And that's sad. That's a terrible waste of God's resources.

We expect a certain amount of that in the world. What we don't expect is that in the church among God's people who know better. We expect, for example, that the world will take the benefits of what God has created in nature and they'll invent bombs and weapons with it. We kind of expect that. Or they'll take God's wonderful gift of food and they'll come up with something that turns into gluttony, and then we'll have to have an entire culture built around diet plans to deal with it.

Man has a way of twisting and turning and perverting. He'll get money which God wanted him to have to enjoy, and it could be used to enjoy a wonderful trip and a wonderful time to see some of the beauty of God's creation, but some people will spend it on pornographic material. I mean, the perversions are all around. It's just that in the church we would expect that isn't going to happen. Man has a way of twisting all of good...all of God's good gifts.