

BIBLICAL ECONOMICS INTRODUCTION

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

The Biblical View of Money

Now let me remind you of a principle in [1 Timothy 6:17](#).

1 Timothy 6:17 (NASB)

¹⁷“Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on **God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.”**

The passage is talking about material wealth, talking about money, and it says this, “**God gives us richly all things to enjoy.**” I think that’s so practical. God gives us richly all things to enjoy. God wants you to just enjoy them. It’s not wrong when you get a new couch. It’s not wrong when you get a new car.

It’s not wrong when you take a vacation and when you go to visit with family and friends you love on the east coast, or go and spend a little time to watch the leaves turn in the Carolinas or you go up to the mountains to ski and enjoy your children in the beauty of God’s wonderful creation. Why do you think He made a world like this? He wanted us to enjoy it. It’s not wrong when you enjoy the beautiful color expressed in new clothes that you purchase. It’s not in itself wrong.

God has given us richness to be able to enjoy the things that He’s put in His world. He’s not a cosmic killjoy; He’s not trying to rain on your parade. He’s not a browbeating ogre who wants to cause you nothing but pain and misery. He’s given you all of this ability to make wealth. He’s given you all of the circumstance so that you have these things. And He knows that there is in His world a tremendous, tremendous opportunity to enjoy what He’s made. And He expects you to enjoy that. And in the enjoying of it thank Him for it.

I can do that, can’t you? I can thank God for the wonders and the beauty that I see. I can thank God for a comfortable chair and a comfortable place to study and do my work. I can thank God for the wonder of His creation, for a little granddaughter in a pretty dress. I can thank God for any of that. I can thank God that...that I was able to save some money in order to provide an education for my children, for His provision there. I don’t have to take the vow of poverty. I can richly enjoy all things that He’s given me.

I remember God decided to give **Job** a whole lot. And then **Job** got real spiritual and God gave him even more. And God gave **Abraham** a lot and **Isaac** and **Jacob**. In fact, God gave Israel riches. In [Isaiah 2](#) in [verse 7](#), it says of Israel, “**Their land is full of silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures.**”

Isaiah 2:7 (NASB)

⁷ “Their land has also been filled with silver and gold And there is no end to their treasures; Their land has also been filled with horses And there is no end to their chariots.”

Why did God do that? Because that’s God’s nature. God is a God of generosity. God is a God of giving. God is not selfish. And He wants you to use the money to enjoy what He’s made and enjoy what He’s provided as long as you give Him the glory and as long as you don’t become indulgent and self-centered.

I mean, if I were an executive in a corporation and I were handling company funds like some of you handle God’s funds, I’d be in jail for embezzlement. We’re responsible. I mean, if your employer comes to you and says, “Here’s \$1,000.00 dollars, I want you to use it wisely to benefit the company,” I think if somebody did that in your company to you, you’d probably be pretty careful about how you spent that \$1,000.00 because you know the future implications of it. If you did something stupid with it, it could cost you your job. If you did something wise with it, it could lead to a promotion. We would be very careful with an earthly employer, but how do we deal with God?

You see, that’s how you...that’s how you view the morality of this whole thing. How do I view this? Some people say, “Well, if I just had more I’d give more.” No, I’ve heard that. You always hear them say, “If I had \$1 million I’d give it over here and I’d give...if I could just win the lottery. Oh man, if I could just win the lottery.” The question is not what would you do with \$1 million. The question is what are you doing with this \$4.00 you’ve got in your pocket. What are you doing with the \$10.00? What are you doing with the \$20.00 or the \$60.00?

That’s the issue, because [Ecclesiastes 5:10-11](#) says:

Ecclesiastes 5:10-11 (NASB)

¹⁰ “He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves abundance *with its* income. This too is vanity.

¹¹ When good things increase, those who consume them increase. So what is the advantage to their owners except to look on?”

Another way to say that is, the only advantage to money is to watch it slip through your fingers. The more you get, the more that goes. So it isn’t a question of if you had more you’d give more. No, that’s not the issue.

Jesus said it this way:

Luke 16:10-13 (NASB)

¹⁰ “He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much.”

¹¹ Therefore if you have not been faithful in the *use of* unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true *riches* to you?

¹² And if you have not been faithful in *the use of* that which is

another's, who will give you that which is your own?

¹³ No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

The issue is simply that. If you're not faithful with a little, you wouldn't be faithful with more. If you're faithful with little, then God will give you more because He knows you can handle it and you'd be faithful with it. It's not a question of having more, it's a question of what are you doing with what you have.

Now I realize some of you are in the pit of debt and you're going to have to get out over the long haul. And that's a tragedy of its own character. But you have to recognize that as a major spiritual problem and begin to deal with it. Riches can significantly obstruct spirituality and they certainly do demonstrate where you are in your spiritual life. So the morality of money is something to consider. It is a barometer of your moral life, your spiritual life.

Let me talk for a brief few moments on the love of money, the second point. The love of money. This is how we regard money. And when I say the love of money, I don't mean you take out money and say, "Oh, money, money, I love you," you know. It's not an emotional, it's not a...it's not an emotional thing. The love of money simply means an inordinate attachment to it. It simply means that you are driven to attain it.

First Timothy 6:10, "The love of money is the root of all sorts of evil."

1 Timothy 6:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ "For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs."

The love of money is the root of all sorts of evil. You know, you're around money all the time so it's easy to love it. I mean, it's there all the time. It is a powerful and constant part of our lives. We're never away from money matters. And it's so easy to become completely enamored with money.

What do you mean by that? Well, take it in the language of **1 Timothy 6:17**.
"Instruct those who are rich in this present world."

1 Timothy 6:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ "Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy."

It's fine to be rich, **"but instruct them not to be conceited."** And that is proud about their station in life, proud about their possession. **"Or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches but on God."** You know you love money when you pursue money, not God.

When you can't say, as [Psalm 42](#) said this evening, **“As the deer pants after the water brooks, so pants my soul after Thee, O God.”**

Psalm 42:1-2 (NASB)

¹“As the deer pants for the water brooks, So my soul pants for You, O God.

²My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; When shall I come and appear before God?”

But in all honesty you'd have to say, **“As the deer pants after the water brooks, so pants my soul after money.”** Is that what drives you? That's really what drives people in the world. It really does.

One of the general managers of one of the Major League baseball team was being interviewed on the television program ESPN. He's been the GM of that team for several years. And recently he was saying that he had quite an interesting conversation with his first baseman; he had gone four days without a hit and it was obvious he wasn't putting out the effort.

And so he went to this young man and he said to him, “Look,” he said. “What's wrong, four days you haven't had a hit. You're not putting out the effort.” To which the young man replied, “Well what do you expect, I'm only making \$600 thousand a year. The general manager replied to him, “You've got a problem, friend. You need Jesus, come with me.” Took him in the office, sat him down, opened the Bible and explained some things to him.

Now what kind of an athlete would a young man be who is motivated only by the dollar sign? He'll never be what he could be. It's wrong to be motivated by money; it's counterproductive to be motivated by money. You should be motivated by the desire to be the best you can be and when money comes, it comes. That's the issue. Even among a secular people there ought to be a love...if you're a baseball player, there ought to be a love of the game. There ought to be something inside of you that says, “I'm not going to take this ability that I have and settle for less than the maximum expression of that ability.”

And if I'm working in an office, I'm not going to be concerned about what my pay is. I'm going to be concerned about what my effort is. I'm not going to be concerned about how much they pay me; I'm going to be concerned about how effectively and efficiently and carefully and excellently I work. But some people just pursue the money, and they fix their hope on that. It could even happen to Christians. If you derive your sense of security from money, that's idolatry. If you pursue money instead of excellency before God, instead of like it says in [Colossians](#) and [Ephesians](#), working, doing not eye service but working as unto the Lord. If you do anything other than work to honor the Lord, if you just work for the buck, that's idolatry. That's the love of money. And you can love it and have a lot of it and you can love it and have none of it. But when you derive your sense of security from your money rather than from your God, that's idolatry.