

BIBLICAL ECONOMICS INTRODUCTION

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

The Biblical View of Money

Now in that account of the poor widow in [Mark 12](#), there's a most interesting note there at the end of...or near the end of the chapter, [Mark 12, verse 41](#). Listen to what it says. **“Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury.”**

[Mark 12:41-44 \(NASB\)](#)

⁴¹ **“And He sat down opposite the treasury, and *began* observing how the people were putting money into the treasury; and many rich people were putting in large sums.**

Isn't that fascinating? Jesus was in the temple area, temple mount, temple ground and He just found a place to sit, and He sat down and just watched people give. So much to learn, so much to learn. It doesn't say, “Jesus was there talking and He happened to glance and see somebody giving,” it says, **“He sat down there, deliberately, with the intention of watching what people gave.”**

You want to know something? He's still doing it. He did it this past Sunday morning during the offering. You say, “What I do with my money is my business.” No it isn't. It's His business. It's His business. Jesus has every right to know because you reveal your spiritual character in your giving. I don't know how close Jesus was sitting to the offering box, close enough to see that some people put large amounts in there, close enough to see that a widow lady with probably a shriveled, gnarled, old sun-scorched hand dropped in two tiny copper coins. At least He could see enough to identify them as those copper mites. But He's still looking and He's still sitting close enough to see exactly what we give. It is His business.

So, Jesus both wounds us and heals us with His words about money. There are a lot of other words. I won't take the time to show you, but I would summarize His teaching as He summarized it in the **Sermon on the Mount in [Matthew 6](#)**.

[Matthew 6:19-21 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁹ **“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.”**

²⁰ **“But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;**

²¹ **for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”**

That sums up His teaching.

If you're pouring all your money into this world, that's a commentary on where your heart is. If you're pouring it all into the world to come, that's a commentary on where your heart is. If you've set your affections on things above and not on things on the earth, and that's where your money is going to go, and so that's why I said last week, show me your checkbook and I'll know where your heart is. I mean, he gives us a choice. Money wasted on earth and with it a wasted life, or money invested in heaven and with it an eternally meaningful life. And the real joy is there.

I mean, **John. D. Rockefeller** said, "I've made many millions but they brought me no happiness." **Vanderbilt** said, "The care of \$200 million is enough to kill anyone; there's no pleasure in it." **John Jacob Astor** said, "I am the most miserable man on earth." And **Henry Ford** said, "I was happier when I was a mechanic." **Andrew Carnegie** said, "Millionaires never smile." And the **American Journal of Psychiatry** reports that "**Money adds to the risk of suicide,**" in a statement in a Journal article, "**as Risk Increases with Resources.**" The more you have, the more likely you are to kill yourself.

Now, really, life is a vapor that appears for a little time and vanishes away. I may have a few more years; I'm happy for that. But eternity is forever. And the treasures there are what concern me, not the treasures here.

Again, remember, I'm not saying that God wants us all absolutely poverty-stricken. I think He's given us all things richly to enjoy. There's every reason to assume that if the rich man had built his business successfully and had a measure of fulfillment in this life and been rich toward God, God would have been well pleased with that. But we do wisely to learn from that widow as well that God expects deep sacrifice in the matter of our giving. **And it is inseparably tied to our spiritual condition here and in eternity as well.**

So, that's some of the key things that Jesus taught about money, and that fits into that first point I gave you last week on the morality of money. Money is neutral, but it doesn't stay that way very long because what you do with it becomes a manifestation of your spiritual commitment or lack thereof. So we talked about the morality of money last time, and we started to talk about the love of money. **Let's talk a little more about the love of money today**, and just some things to remind you of, nothing too profound but some things very practical and somewhat convicting.

In **1 Timothy 6:10** it says, "The love of money is a 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."

It's not money that is the root of evil, it is the love of it. And some people have a lot of it and don't love it and some have none and love it like crazy. It's the love of it. And the love of money produces lots of things. Let me just remind you of what we said and we'll pick it up from there.

First of all, it brings problems. When you love money, you want money, you're motivated by money, you're trying to get rich, achieve money, get wealth. Rather than be concerned about how well you do something, you're concerned about how rich you're going to get doing it.

Verse 9 of 1 Timothy 6 says,

1 Timothy 6:9 (NASB)

⁹“But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.”

And then in verse 10 it says,

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.”

Many a pain, that's why millionaires don't smile. It brings all kinds of problems and worries and anxieties and temptations and traps.

Secondly, we said last time, the love of money makes you forget God. You remember, we were talking about Proverbs 30 where it says,

Proverbs 30:7-9 (NASB)

⁷“Two things I asked of You, Do not refuse me before I die:

⁸ Keep deception and lies far from me, Give me neither poverty nor riches; Feed me with the food that is my portion,

⁹ That I not be full and deny *You* and say, “Who is the LORD?” Or that I not be in want and steal, And profane the name of my God.”

I don't want more than I need. I don't want less than I need. I don't want to be in a position where if I have more than I need I trust in my riches and forget God. Love of money can lead people to forget God. What do they need God for? They've got it all. They command their lives. It's all in the bank. They have plenty. There's no dependencies there.

I'm reminded of the great story of **C.T. Studd**, the outstanding athlete, a great athlete, a cricketer in England, and world class, world famous, who felt the call of God on his life to go the mission field. And he happened to be from a family that was extremely wealthy. He inherited some old money and massive fortune and felt that it would compromise his spiritual life, so prior going to the mission field he gave every cent of it away and went to the mission field with nothing but dependence on God. He feared the temptation to forget God and to trust in his money.

Let's pick it up from there. **Third** thing I might say about the love of money is that when you love money you begin to trust in it. And that's kind of what we were just saying. You not only forget God but you turn affection toward your money. We say, "Hey, I don't have anything to worry about, I'm set. Everything is great in my life. I've got my bank account built up. I've hedged against every conceivable dilemma that could come along in the future. I've provided for everything as well as I can provide and maybe a little left over. I can take care of myself. I've got all the money I need for the rainy day. I'm covered on every front."

And then you have to ask the question, am I trusting in God or am I trusting in my gold. Now, I'm not saying it's wrong to have some savings. We'll get into that next week. I'm not saying it's wrong to have an insurance policy. But what I am saying is that when you love money you will begin to trust money and not God. In [Job 31](#), Job...and he knew what it was to have it and what it was to lose it...[Job 31:24](#) and following,

Job 31:24-28 (NASB)

²⁴ "If I have put my confidence *in* gold, And called fine gold my trust,
²⁵ If I have gloated because my wealth was great, And because my hand had secured *so* much;
²⁶ If I have looked at the sun when it shone Or the moon going in splendor,
²⁷ And my heart became secretly enticed, And my hand threw a kiss from my mouth,
²⁸ That too would have been an iniquity *calling for judgment*, For I would have denied God above."

If I trust in my riches, I don't trust in God.

And I can honestly tell you, I want to be in my life in a place where I need to trust God because I love the joy of seeing God work in that time. And the Lord does such wonderful things. [Proverbs 11:28 NASB](#) says, "He who trusts in his riches will fall, But the righteous will flourish like the *green* leaf." The somewhat liberated Living Bible chooses to translate that this way, "Trust in your money and down you go." And the rest of the verse says, "Trust in God and flourish like a tree."