



THE FELLOW THAT HAS
NO MONEY IS POOR.
THE FELLOW THAT HAS
NOTHING BUT MONEY
IS POORER STILL.

-BILLY SUNDAY

TRANSFORMED BY GIVING

Paradigm Shift

A steward is someone who has been entrusted with something. In the Gospel accounts, Jesus talks about money around 25% of his ministry. God desires that we trust Him with our finances. It comes up 15 times in Matthew and 11 times in Luke. Money is something that we can either see as God's or see as ours. The Apostle James says: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights" (James 1:17). John the Baptist said: "A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven" (John 3:27). The Apostle Paul says: "What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it" (1 Cor. 4:7)? These Scripture passages teach that it is God who gives us all things including our money. Consequently, we are not to boast or take pride in the amount of money that we have. Rather, we are to see it is a gift from God and use it for His glory. **God is the Owner of all of our life and possessions including our money.** It is this worldview shift that needs to happen for us to move from a selfish perspective to a godly perspective on money.

Worship God

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also....No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money. -Matthew 6:19-21, 24

Life on Earth is a Temporary Assignment

Jesus talks about storing up for one's self treasures in heaven and not treasures on earth. Some believe that life is about accumulating as much as one can before they die. Jesus is teaching that this perspective is shortsighted. You will not take any of your possessions with you to the next state of existence. As Christians we believe that Jesus gives us eternal life. This life on earth is only temporary. When we live in the light of eternity, we shift from seeing life as not about *getting* but about *giving*. We are only here for a short time and there is nothing here for our own "profit" or "gain." When we store up for ourselves treasures in heaven by being good stewards of everything God has entrusted to us, then we live for His glory and not ours. If our hearts are with our possessions, we are worshiping our possessions and not God.

Money is not a good god

Jesus says in Matthew 6:24, "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money." Jesus says that we cannot have it both ways. You cannot have two masters. If you worship money, you are worshiping something that is not all-knowing, all-powerful, and all-loving. Only God is all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-loving. Only God can give you life, joy, and hope.

1 Timothy 6:17-18 says: "Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. "

Here we see that the Apostle Paul teaches on the uncertainty of riches. It can be lost fast! It comes and goes. The stock market rises and falls. If we put our hope in riches, we will be disappointed! Conversely, Paul says to put our hope in God who provides everything for us. Once we worship God and not money, we will then be able to give generously.

Contentment

But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. -1 Timothy 6:6-10

1 Timothy 6:10 is a famous verse quoted in many contexts: “The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil.” Some who desire to get rich will sin in order to get rich. They will lie, cheat, or steal, in order to accumulate wealth for themselves. They will oppress others and treat others unfairly so that they will gain. Paul says: “For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that” (1 Tim. 6:7-8). We will not take our money with us into eternity. Consequently, God calls on us to be content with whatever He provides us with. If we have food and clothing and a place to live, God calls on us to be content.

Giving

Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ In your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. -Malachi 3:8-10

- A “tithe” is 10% of one’s income.

- The “storehouse” is the treasury where funds were stored to support the ministry.
- The church is the only divinely instituted ministry on this earth.
- This is the only place in Scripture where we are told to put God to the test.
- God will supply more so that you can give more. This is also taught in 2 Corinthians 9.
- There is blessing, thanksgiving, and glorification of God as we give together as the body of Christ!

Four Biblical Teachings on Finances

- Produce (Genesis 2:15; Proverbs 12:11)
- Save (Proverbs 6:6-8; Proverbs 22:7)
- Invest (Matthew 25:14-18)
- Give (2 Corinthians 9:6-8)

Conclusion

God has given us so much in Jesus Christ. He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. He has richly provided for our salvation and promises to provide for us financially. He simply asks for faith. By faith we receive the grace of God. And by faith we give back for His glory.

- Automatic monthly offerings to your church’s general offering gives the church’s ministry the greatest sustainability.

Head: These questions help us understand Scripture

1. Why is worshipping God the gateway to giving towards His cause?
2. Why is contentment such an important biblical truth?

Heart: These questions help us wrestle with our beliefs for our lives

3. How do you feel when you hear teaching in Church on money? Why?
4. Do you believe God will provide for you even if you give a tithe to the church?

Hands: These questions help us do something after hearing the Word

5. What changes do you intend to pursue as a result of this biblical teaching?

