

Alive and Well: The Art of Living Wisely

LESSON GOALS

The point of every session is a main idea with the goal of informing our knowing, feeling, and doing.

With God's help, you can manage your money to do good.

- **Head Change:** To know that money isn't the problem, but your attitude towards it may be.
- **Heart Change:** To give thanks that God provides for your needs.
- **Life Change:** To practice generosity and financial wisdom.

ICEBREAKER:

What's the coolest story you've heard of God's miraculous financial provision for someone? Has anyone ever anonymously deposited money into your bank account? If you suddenly had access to limitless funds, who is the first person or organization you'd want to help with a reality-altering donation?

INTRODUCTION:

Money tends to get a bad rap in the Bible, not because it's bad in and of itself, but because it's most often closely associated with our unhealthy attraction to it. In this session, Pastor Watson guides us through the wisdom offered in the book of Proverbs on how to steward our finances for the good of others and the glory of God.

As you watch today, write down how Pastor Lance Watson answers these questions.

1. Is money the root of all evil?
2. According to Pastor Watson, what are some of the problems associated with money?
3. How can we overcome an addiction to money?

REVIEW

Pastor Watson points out that there are four times as many Bible verses about money and possessions as there are about faith. It's an important topic. Do you struggle to trust God with your finances? If not, what has helped you to put your hope in God, where money is concerned?

1 Timothy 6:10 tells us that the *love* of money (not money itself) is the root of all evil. Do you think the friends and family members who know you best would say that you love money? Why or why not?

Pastor Watson reminds us that money can never make us truly happy (Proverbs 15:16), money is far from the most important thing in life (Proverbs 11:4), and money is addictive – a problem that leads to other problems, like dishonesty (Proverbs 21:6).

How does the world try to convince us that money *will* make us happy, that it's the be all and end all of life, and that our lust for it isn't a problem? Do you find yourself feeling jealous of those with more money than you? What practical step could you take to overcome envy and dissatisfaction? Do you ever think about what will happen to all your stuff when you die?

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Being greedy and selfish with money is a sin. And yet, money can be used to do tremendous good, lending us opportunities for greater Kingdom influence. Proverbs 19:17 says, 'If you help the poor, you are lending to the Lord – and He will repay you!' Pastor Watson adds, 'We give because God commands it. If you give to someone, or a church, because you think you'll get more money, it's money you're worshipping, not God.'

How might verses like Proverbs 19:17 be twisted to support the prosperity gospel – the false doctrine claiming that if you give money (to your pastor or the church, for example) then God will reward you with *more* money? How has God rewarded you for generosity? Describe the joy and satisfaction you've experienced when you've had an opportunity to contribute to someone else's financial wellbeing.

The antidote for an addiction to money is generosity (Proverbs 11:24). Giving regularly and generously reminds us life isn't about hoarding as much as we possibly can. The word 'currency' actually indicates that money should *flow* freely between people. It's not meant to stagnate with us. What might it look like for you to live as if money isn't the goal, but merely a means by which you can contribute to something bigger than just your own life? How does your gratitude influence your generosity?

Proverbs 28:19 says, 'Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits will have plenty of poverty.' What habits could you build, or what accountability measures could you put in place to help you consider the value of something before you spend money on it? Do you have a story about buyer's regret – a time when you wasted money on something you really shouldn't have?

Proverbs 6:10–11 and 28:20 speak to the value of hard work, patience, and perseverance. Get-rich-quick schemes rarely deliver on their promises. Mostly, they end in financial disappointment, even disaster. Is there someone in your life who has been an example to you of working faithfully and being rewarded for patience and perseverance? Which of their habits could you emulate? How would you describe their character?

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Read Hebrews 13:5. What does knowing God's character have to do with our attitude towards money?

Jesus talks about money in Matthew 6:19–24 and Luke 12:15. Discuss His motivation for warning His followers about the powerful hold money can have on their lives.

Proverbs 13:22 and Ecclesiastes 11:1–2 both refer to saving for the future. What's the difference between wise, responsible financial acuity, and greed or hoarding? How might you check your motives when it comes to saving or investing your money?

Read Proverbs 10:22 and Philippians 4:19. Why should you feel neither guilt nor anxiety when it comes to money?

LAST WORD

Let's remember that being generous, considering the worth of what we pursue financially, and being patient and hardworking will help us own the money God blesses us with – *without ever being owned by it*. As we grow in gratitude for all God has given us, and as we look for ways to bless a desperate world,

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may Proverbs 30:8–9 be our prayer: ‘...give me neither poverty nor riches! Give me just enough to satisfy my needs. For if I grow rich, I may deny You and say, “Who is the Lord?” And if I am too poor, I may steal and thus insult God’s holy name.’

DEEPER WALK

Select at least one activity below to complete before watching the next session.

Read: Spend some time meditating on Matthew 6:33 and ask God to show you if perhaps you are seeking money or stuff or expensive experiences above Him and His Kingdom.

Write: Fill up a page of your journal by writing down material things your generous Heavenly Father has provided for you. If you have time, fill another page with things you could give away to those in need.

Pray: If you’re holding onto your money a little too tightly, ask God to loosen your grip. Pray for ways to be generous, even today.