



52 THE PURSUIT OF JESUS

Why Does Jesus Care So Much About My Money?
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The Crossing Church
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OPENING

We are spending this entire year walking through the life of Jesus. Our focus right now is on His preaching as we continue in Mark Moore's Quest 52 study. In Chapter 30 we are studying Jesus' view of money. Jesus isn't concerned about our money – He's concerned about our hearts. He wants the very best in our lives and for us to trust Him and find our hope in Him. If we are being honest, many of us place our trust and hope in our finances more than in Jesus.

SCRIPTURE¹

Matthew 6:19-34 Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be. The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light, but if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! 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. I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Do not worry saying, "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink?" or "What shall we wear?" For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you, as well. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Colossians 1:15-16 Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see – such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him.

Haggai 2:8 The silver is mine and the gold is mine, "declares the Lord Almighty."

¹ Scripture is NIV unless otherwise indicated.

Malachi 3:10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. “Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.”

OBSERVATION

In Jesus’ day there was a mixture of commodities like silver and gold, and traditional currency in the Roman Empire. The people of those times experienced how easily all of those things could go away through literal rotting, eating by bugs and theft.

APPLICATION

In our world today, we have our version of these commodities. We are involved in consuming and getting more – it’s called storing up. Just check our garages or attics! Stuff seems to make us happy for an instant and then it rusts or is destroyed. Our world says, in order to be happy, we have to get more – money, stuff, status, bigger houses, shinier cars, etc. Mark Moore addresses the subject of materialism and says, “it is idolatry. It sounds extreme, but it is true. Jesus knew that the things we put our money into, we put on a pedestal. Instead of serving us, they become objects we serve.”² The truth is that all of these things we spend our money on and strive after aren’t making us that much more happy, joyful or faith-filled. Jesus tells us that wherever our treasure is, there we will find our hearts.

QUESTION: What treasures are you storing up here on earth?

If we treasure the next vacation, we likely will have a hard time treasuring each day. If we treasure finding that certain perfect someone, we may miss out on what else God is trying to do in our lives. If we treasure having tons of cash, our hearts are going to be obsessed with keeping it. But those things won’t make us whole – they may actually be hurting us. Consider how obsessed we are with technology. In some ways it makes our lives better, but it has also made them anxious, frustrated and unsettled. It’s harder to focus and have a conversation – especially at the dinner table - or when a new device comes out and all of the kids want it, including us.

QUESTION: What phone device are you using today? When is the next one scheduled to appear?

So, what does the Bible tell us about money? God spends an exorbitant amount of time (over 2000 instances) talking about it there so it must matter a lot to Him! We believe that God created everything and everything belongs to Him, right? Our role is to work and take care of His creation. It is called stewardship – the conducting, supervising or managing of something that is entrusted to our care. We are to be overseers, not owners. Our culture says we need to own things, but God entrusts things to be valued and managed by us: **1) Families; 2) Our bodies; 3) Our homes; 4) Our cars; and 5) Our money.** Over the centuries, there are many examples of how money has harmed the hearts of people and hindered them in knowing God. “Wealth increases worry. The rich scheme about how to make more of it, strategize about how to keep what they have, and dream about how to distribute it to heirs. Wealth does not eliminate worry; worship does!”³

QUESTION: In what ways does worship eliminate worry in your life?

Giving is one of the ways we show stewardship. A man named Melchizedek, possibly a Christophany (Jesus appearing in the Old Testament) came to Abraham and a tithe was introduced. This was a 10 % offering of the first fruits of his labor. The tithe was to go into the storehouse or, in those days, the Temple of God. The tithe is so important because it orients our hearts toward God. It establishes His ownership of everything.

QUESTION: Why do you think God asks us to tithe?

God cares about our hearts. He doesn’t need our money - He wants our hearts to have the right attitude about loving Him and others. As we give, we become more generous overall. We don’t give so we will receive God’s

² Quest 52. Mark E. Moore. Waterbrook Publishing, 2021. Page 193.

³ Ibid. Page 194

promised blessings – we are not a prosperity-teaching church – we give because we trust God with finances. Malachi 3 says, “Tithing promises that 90% with God goes further than 100% on our own.”

QUESTION: How are you involved in the stewardship of God’s creation? What can you do to amplify your level of stewardship?

QUESTION: What is your attitude toward tithing after hearing this week’s sermon?

The Crossing Church is led by such smart, God-loving pastors and elders that we can know the charities we support are worthy of our trust, also. Their administrators have been vetted and proven to employ policies and procedures that glorify God as they meet needs in our community and all over the U. S. during disasters, and in many countries in the world. We aren’t re-inventing the wheel by creating giving programs ourselves – we are supporting tried and true ones. We also don’t pass baskets and take offerings on Sundays because this is a heart issue that needs to be settled between us and God.

QUESTION: How much does money govern your thought and behavior today?

QUESTION: What about this week’s study especially caught your attention?

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we don’t want anything to come between us and You. Money is so seductive as it brings worldly things into our possession and make us feel more important in our community. All of it comes back to pride, a failure of character none of us can afford. Help us to come to You humbly grateful for all you entrust to our care. Jesus’ name. Amen.

QUESTIONS

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