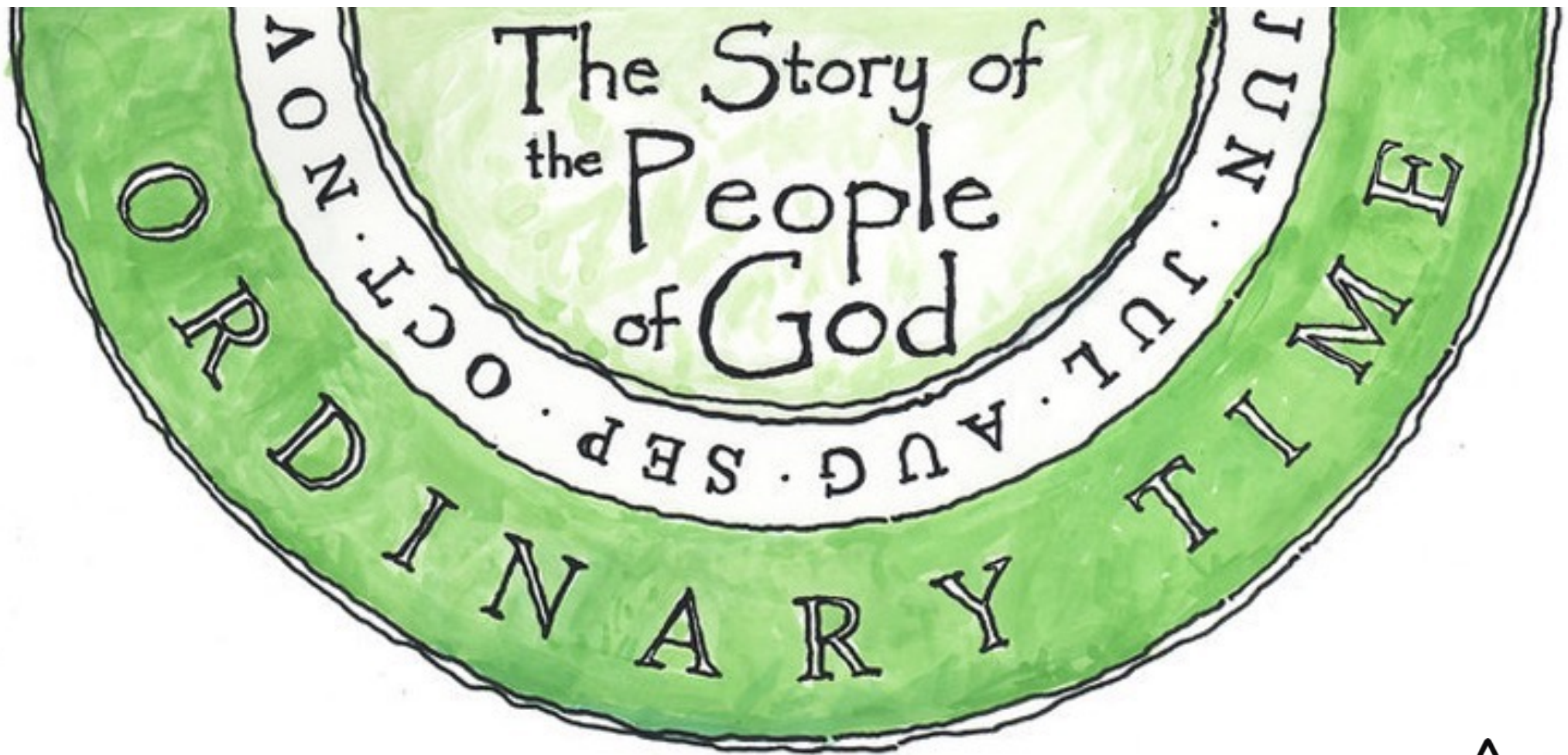


Redeeming Sustainer,
visit your people
and pour out your strength and courage upon us,
that we may hurry to make you welcome
not only in our concern for others,
but by serving them generously
and faithfully in your name.
Amen.

Opening Prayer

A decorative banner at the bottom of the slide. It features a dark background with stylized white line art of hands reaching out. Overlaid on this are several overlapping circles in red, green, blue, and purple. The text 'Opening Prayer' is written in white, bold, sans-serif font on the left side of the banner.





THE GOOD and BEAUTIFUL LIFE



Genuinely good people are those who, from the deepest levels of their understanding and motivation, are committed to promoting the good of everyone they deal with...



LEARNING TO LIVE LIKE JESUS

Learning to live w/out **ANGER**

Learning to live w/out **LUST**

Learning to live w/out **LYING**

Learning to live w/out **VENGEANCE**

Learning to live w/out **VANITY**

Learning to live w/out **AVARICE**

Learning to live w/out **WORRY**

Learning to live w/out **JUDGMENT**



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CHARACTER OF CHRIST

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—DALLAS WILLARD

AVARICE

an extreme, selfish, **INSATIABLE**
desire for attaining/keeping
MONEY or **POSSESSIONS**



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FALSE NARRATIVE

THINGS will bring me some combination of ***SECURITY, POWER, SUCCESS, or HAPPINESS.***



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FALSE NARRATIVE

THINGS will bring me some combination of **SECURITY, POWER, SUCCESS, or HAPPINESS.**

Whether **SAVER** or **SPENDER**, the underlying belief is that **\$\$\$** is the key to **CONTENTMENT**, a belief rooted in the **FEAR** that we aren't **SAFE/VALUABLE** without it



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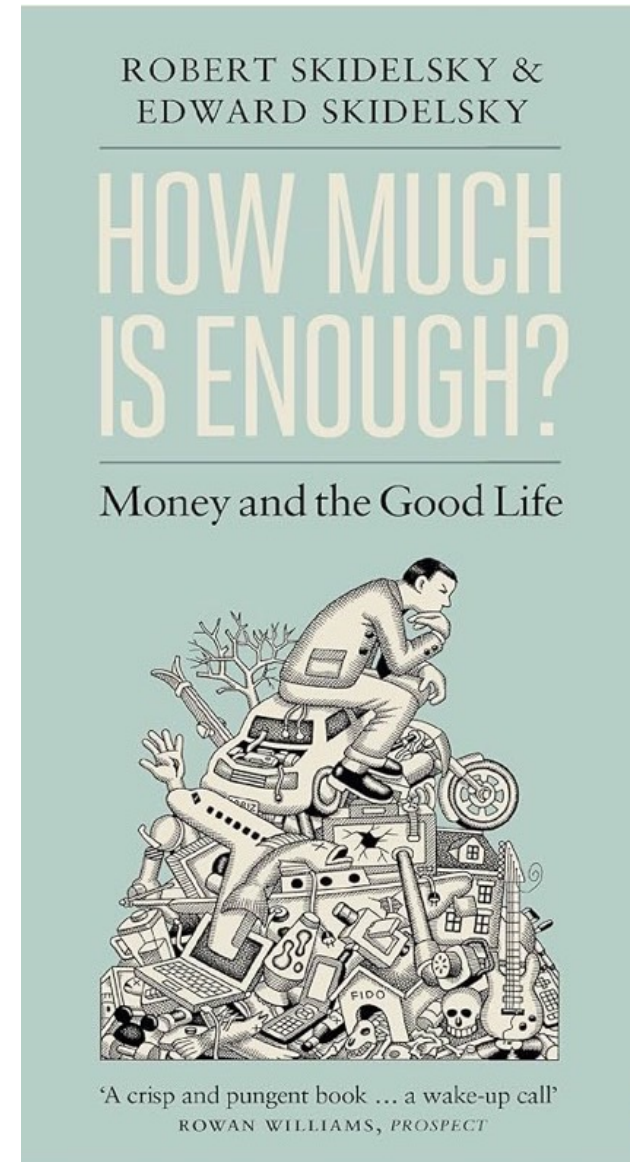
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“If a monkey hoarded more bananas than it could eat, while most of the other monkeys starved, scientists would study that monkey to see what is wrong with it. When humans exhibit this same behavior, we put them on the cover of Forbes magazine.”



The pursuit of money as an end in itself is bad not just because it is detrimental to happiness or the environment, but because it is absurd. It rests on a misunderstanding of the nature and function of money. Money is essentially a means to the good, (but) to ***treat its accumulation as an ultimate goal is to fall victim to delusion.***



FALSE NARRATIVE

THINGS will bring me some combination of **SECURITY, POWER, SUCCESS, or HAPPINESS.**

TRUE NARRATIVE

Consider your **TREASURES**, the condition of your **EYES**, and your ultimate **ALLEGIANCE**



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*Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart **will be** also.*



We reveal what our treasures are by what we try to protect, secure, and keep. So, to discuss our treasures is not to pass it off as dealing with merely “external goods” which are “nonspiritual” or just physical stuff. It is to deal with the fundamental structure of our soul.



*The eye is the lamp of the body.
So, if your eye is healthy,
your whole body will be full
of light; but if your eye is unhealthy,
your whole body will be full of darkness.
If then the light in you is darkness,
how great is the darkness!*



HOLY
BIBLE

MATT

6:22-23

The person who treasures what lies within the kingdom sees everything in its true worth and relationship.

The person who treasures what is “on earth,” by contrast, sees everything from a perspective that distorts it and is systematically (misled by it) in practice.



No one can serve two masters;
for a slave will either hate the one
and love the other, or be devoted
to the one and despise the other.
You **cannot** serve God and Mammon.*

***μαμωνᾱς** = mamonas; money



HOLY
BIBLE

MATT

6:22-23

MAMMON

- A false god promising the peace and security it can never deliver
- Seeks our allegiance, drains our humanity, leads us away from wisdom, in to foolishness



If we do value “mammon”
as (the world) seems to think
we should, our fate is fixed.
Our fate is *anxiety*. It is worry.
It is frustration. The words
anxious and *worry* both
have reference to strangling
or being choked...

(more next week!)



Neuroscientists (have) discovered that people who bought certain items experienced the same sensations as those who had deep religious experiences, (so) advertisers attempt to scare us into believing that *not* buying their product will make us feel less safe, less happy, less free, (less meaning), and less in control of our lives.



This is why living in the kingdom can be a cure to avarice and a way to say no to *Mammon*. We can face (our) fears (of personal or financial insecurity) because we know who we are (indwelt by Christ) and where we live (in the strong, stable kingdom of God.)



QUESTIONS TO ASK RE: OUR FINANCIAL DECISIONS

1. Do I truly **NEED** this?
2. Will it bring me **JOY**, and not merely temporary happiness?
3. How much of the money I would potentially spend on this item could otherwise be freed up for **KINGDOM** investment?*



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This is not about making a person feel guilty for having a latte, or owning a nice vehicle, or taking a nice vacation... Instead, it's about helping people, under the leading of the Holy Spirit, and in light of the kingdom, to make informed choices re: their resources.



EXAMPLE: REPLACING A VEHICLE

- Vehicle **A** costs **\$35,000**, has all the safety features you'd prefer, and is a hybrid; gas + property tax + insurance will have related costs



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EXAMPLE: REPLACING A VEHICLE

- Vehicle **A** costs **\$35,000**, w/all the safety features you'd prefer, and is a hybrid; gas + property tax + insurance will have related costs
- Vehicle **B** costs **\$22,000**, w/some of the safety features you'd like, and a standard engine; gas + property tax + insurance...



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EXAMPLE: REPLACING A VEHICLE

- If you **REALLY** want vehicle **A**, and you can technically afford it, you might still ask:
 - Why do I want this so badly?
 - Are there other factors to consider other than its relative affordability for your income?
 - How will this impact your ability to live generously?



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EXAMPLE: REPLACING A VEHICLE

- If you **REALLY** want vehicle **B** primarily because it's cheaper, you might still ask:
 - Are your financial concerns grounded in reality, or are they rooted in fear?
 - Does wisdom mean opting for the related safety features?
 - Is there room for compromise?



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FALSE NARRATIVE

Your **VALUE** is based in the assessment of **OTHER** people...

TRUE NARRATIVE

Consider your **TREASURES**,
the condition of your **EYES**,
and your ultimate **ALLEGIANCE**



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SOUL TRAINING EXERCISE

Give away **FIVE** things this week, without **ANY** thought of receiving

- Can be as a gift, donation, or as a way of de-cluttering your life
- Deaccumulation helps break the hold possessions have on us
- Reminds us God is our provider and our ultimate source of peace



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The Good and Beautiful **LIFE**

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We praise your abiding guidance,
O God, for you sent us Jesus,
our Teacher and Messiah,
to model for us the way of love
for the whole universe.
May we offer our lives in that same love,
on behalf of one another, our neighbors, our friends,
and even our enemies, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Closing Prayer

