

The Gospel of Mark: Money - Part 1

It All Comes From God

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Part of The Gospel of MarkMoney

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Money and finances are the second most referenced topic in the Bible, mentioned in roughly two thousand verses in the Bible.

*For the **love** of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.*

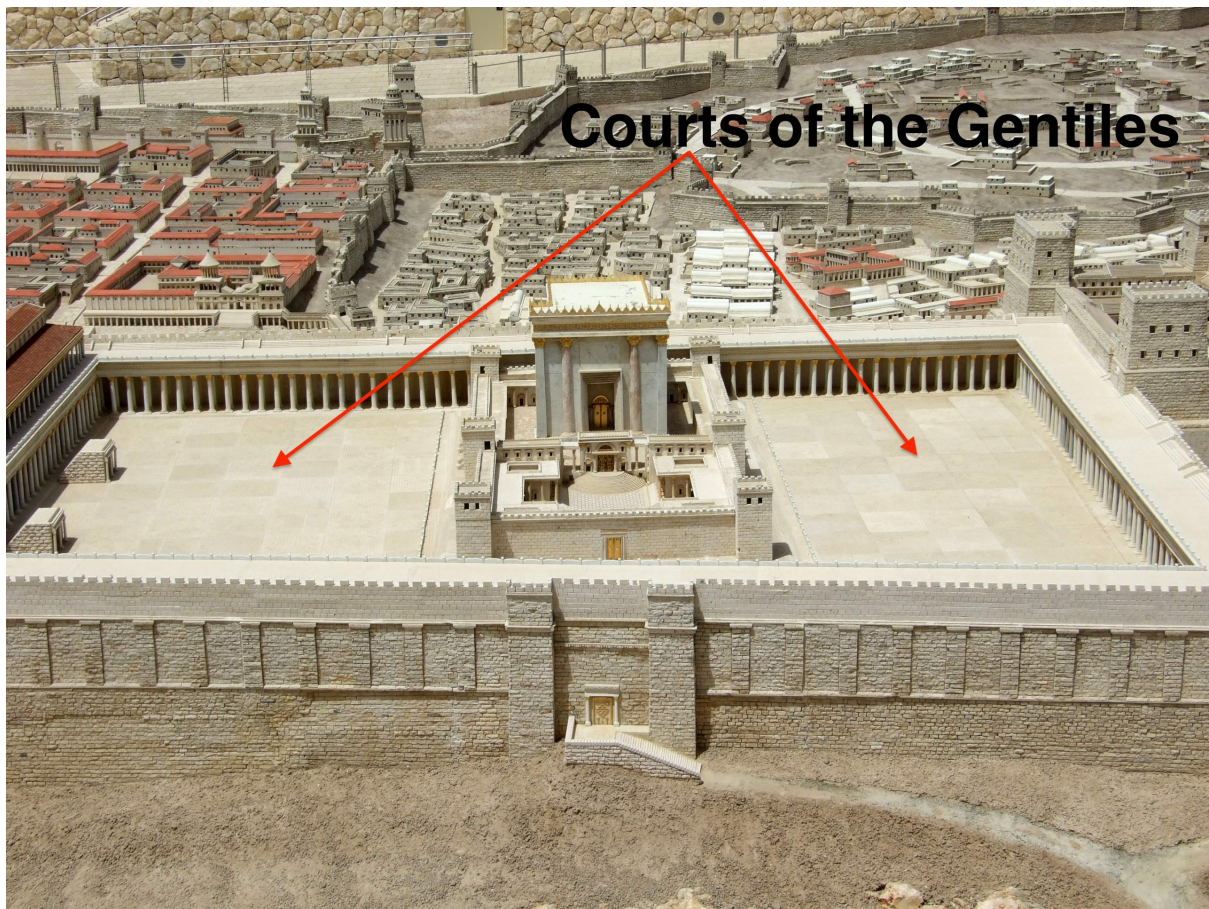
—1 Timothy 6:10 (NLT) (emphasis added)

Money itself isn't *good or bad*, but it does wield great power in our lives and can easily become an idol.

Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment.

—1 Timothy 6:17 (NLT)

In Mark 12 there's an underlying principle that also underlies how we view money and resources.



Then Jesus began teaching them with stories: “A man planted a vineyard. He built a wall around it, dug a pit for pressing out the grape juice, and built a lookout tower. Then he leased the vineyard to tenant farmers and moved to another country.”

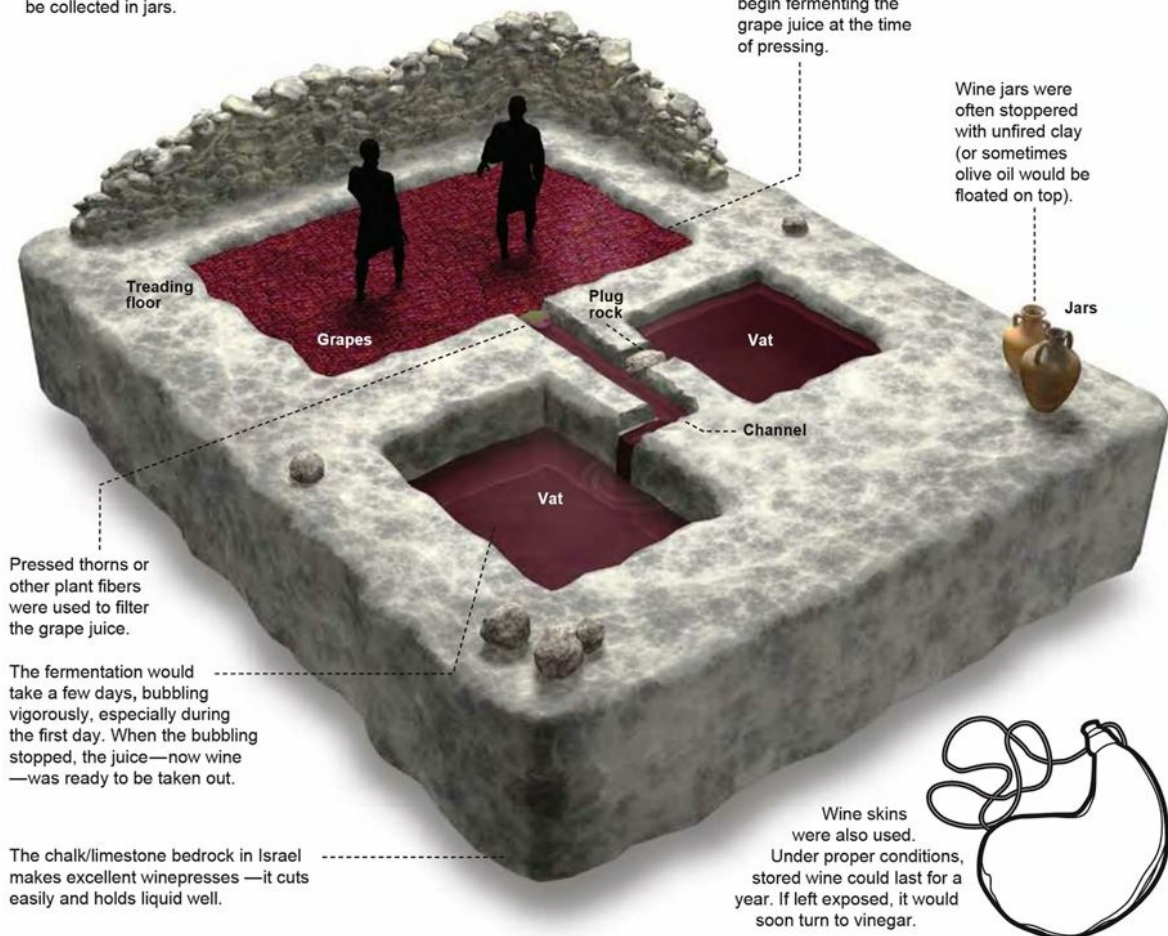
—Mark 12:1 (NLT)

The Parable



A Winepress in Ancient Israel

An ancient winepress was a rock-hewn open-air system. Grapes were pressed by being trodden underfoot in a treading floor. The juice would pour through a channel into a vat, where it would ferment. It would then be collected in jars.



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“At the time of the grape harvest, [the man] sent one of his servants to collect his share of the crop.”

—Mark 12:2 (NLT)

“But the farmers grabbed the servant, beat him up, and sent him back empty-handed.”

—Mark 12:3 (NLT)

The farmers have reneged on their agreement, choosing to act as if the land is theirs rather the landowner’s and claiming all the profits for themselves.

“The owner then sent another servant, but they insulted him and beat him over the head.”

—Mark 12:4 (NLT)

How did *the farmers* reach this point of defying the landowner and claiming all the harvest for themselves?

It's easy, over a period of months or years, to forget or rationalize, or even become convicted, that we deserve everything we have, perhaps forgetting how it all came to us in the first place.



If you ever see a turtle on a fencepost, you know he had help getting there!

If the *landowner* had *not* “planted a vineyard,” had *not* “built a wall around it,” had *not* “dug a pit for pressing out the grape juice,” and had *not* “built a lookout tower,” the farmers would have had nothing to work with, nothing to care for, nothing from which to gain the harvest of grapes!

The underlying principle - God created it all, and it's all His!

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

—Genesis 1:1 (NLT)

For every house has a builder, but the one who built everything is God.

—Hebrews 3:4 (NLT)

The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him.

—Psalms 24:1 (NLT)

Just as the landowner created the vineyard, God created everything, including us and all the resources available to us.

God created it all, and it's all His - and yet, He's asked us to return a portion back to Him, the tithe, ten percent, as a sign of gratitude and a mark of obedience.

God has given us enough to give and still have enough to live on, and a great example of this comes to us from the Old Testament, with the Israelites as they left Egypt.

***God:** "I am the LORD your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt, the place of your slavery. You must not have any other god but me."*

—Exodus 20:2-3 (NLT)



To build the Tabernacle, God told Moses that these former Israelite slaves, who had had virtually *nothing* in Egypt,

were to provide the resources to build it.

The LORD said to Moses, "Tell the people of Israel to bring me their sacred offerings. Accept the contributions from all whose hearts are moved to offer them. Here is a list of sacred offerings you may accept from them: gold, silver, and bronze; blue, purple, and scarlet thread; fine linen and goat hair for cloth; tanned ram skins and fine goatskin leather; acacia wood; olive oil for the lamps; spices for the anointing oil and the fragrant incense; onyx stones, and other gemstones to be set in the ephod and the priest's chestpiece. Have the people of Israel build me a holy sanctuary so I can live among them."

—Exodus 25:1-8 (NLT)

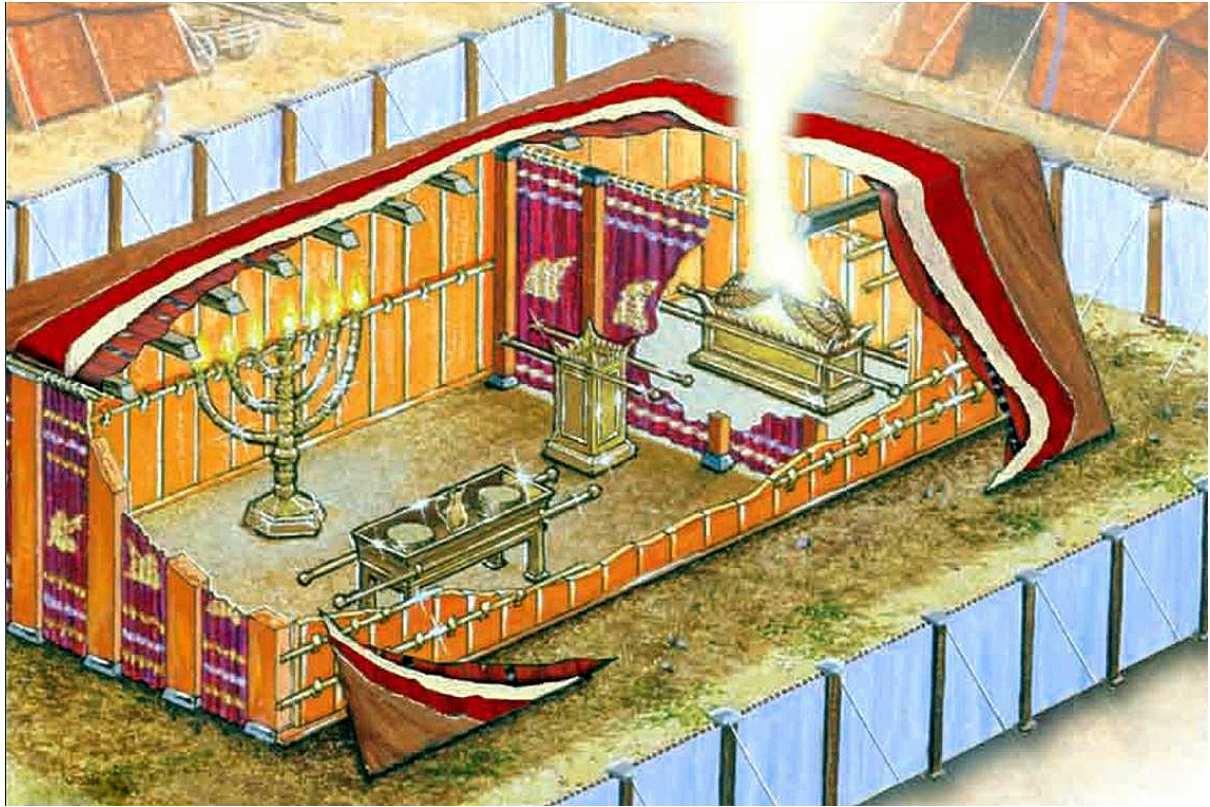
Where did these poor slaves get such wealth?

God: *"So I will raise my hand and strike the Egyptians, performing all kinds of miracles among them. Then at last he will let you go. And I will cause the Egyptians to look favorably on you. They will give you gifts when you go so you will not leave empty-handed. Every Israelite woman will ask for articles of silver and gold and fine clothing from her Egyptian neighbors and from the foreign women in their houses. You will dress your sons and daughters with these, stripping the Egyptians of their wealth."*

—Exodus 3:20-22 (NLT)

And the people of Israel did as Moses had instructed; they asked the Egyptians for clothing and articles of silver and gold. The LORD caused the Egyptians to look favorably on the Israelites, and they gave the Israelites whatever they asked for. So they stripped the Egyptians of their wealth!

—Exodus 12:35-36 (NLT)



God created it all, and it's all His, and He provided the resources for the Israelites to make their offerings to Him for the Tabernacle.

[God] will always make you rich enough to be generous at all times, so that many will thank God for your gifts which they receive from us.

—2 Corinthians 9:11 (TEV)

When we faithfully give out of gratitude and obedience, the Bible says God gets the glory!

Everything we have comes from God - He owns it all - and He has graciously shared with each one of us more than we could have ever had without Him.

We have everything we need to do everything God has called us to do.

...What do you have that God hasn't given you? And if everything you have is from God, why boast as though it were not a gift?

—1 Corinthians 4:7 (NLT)

God is serious about this, not because He needs the resources, but because we need to be the kind of people who want to give them, who want to be like Jesus and be generous.

“The next servant he sent was killed. Others he sent were either beaten or killed, until there was only one left—his son whom he loved dearly. The owner finally sent him, thinking, ‘Surely they will respect my son.’ But the tenant farmers said to one another, ‘Here comes the heir to this estate. Let’s kill him and get the estate for ourselves!’ So they grabbed him and murdered him and threw his body out of the vineyard. What do you suppose the owner of the vineyard will do?” Jesus asked. “I’ll tell you—he will come and kill those farmers and lease the vineyard to others. Didn’t you ever read this in the Scriptures? ‘The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone. This is the LORD’s doing, and it is wonderful to see.’” The religious leaders wanted to arrest Jesus because they realized he was telling the story against them—they were the wicked farmers. But they were afraid of the crowd, so they left him and went away.

—Mark 12:5-12 (NLT)

When we fail to understand and conform to the underlying principle - God created it all, and it’s all His - there are consequences.

God wants love and gratitude to drive us as we recognize all God has done for us and live our lives in ways that honor Him and bring Him glory.

When we take our eyes off the money and put them on God, we discover that we become content with whatever we have.

***Paul:** ...I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with*

*plenty or little. For I can do everything through Christ,
who gives me strength.*

—Philippians 4:11-13 (NLT)

**As we apply these principles to the resources in our lives -
time, talent, treasure and testimony - we take our eyes off
what we *don't have* and discover *all we do have* in *Christ*,
for he gives us the strength we need.**

**Next Week - The Gospel of Mark: Money - Paying Taxes to
Caesar (*Mark 12:13-17*)**