

# THE POWER OF MONEY

Matt 6:19-24



## SYNOPSIS

The topic of money is so sensitive that we consider it a private matter. Jesus made money a matter of lordship, stewardship, and trust. He personified money as something that seeks to master us, and its negative impact often goes undetected in our lives. We must subdue and harness the power of money for good, by the power and conviction of the Holy Spirit.



## OUTLINE

1

### UNDERSTANDING MONEY'S LIMITATION

Money cannot solve all our problems. It is a good commodity that we have elevated to the status of a counterfeit god. Money overpromises and under-delivers. In contrast, Jesus our master invites us to give him our burdens. (Matt 11:28; 1 Pet 5:7) Jesus personifies money as something that seeks to master us. (v24) One reason money is easy to idolize is that it has become a surface idol that we hope will satisfy some of our foundational impulses. (Tim Keller) Greed/love of money is especially hard to detect in ourselves. Jesus encouraged vigilance against greed as it is a common blindspot in all people. (Luke 12:15) The power of money is elusive, and the manifestations of greed vary, depending on whether you consider yourself rich, poor, or middle-class. Money can serve us well, but it is a harsh master.

2

### UNDERSTANDING OUR ROLE WITH MONEY

We must rightly deploy money 1) toward ourselves, 2) toward others, and 3) toward God. **Toward ourselves**, we should live with simplicity and contentment. Money can solve problems and increase happiness, but only up to a certain point. Spending tends to expand to fill income. Intentionally living simply and contentedly helps loosen money's grip on us. **Toward others**, we should be generous, especially toward those who cannot repay us. (Luke 14:13-14) It is more blessed to be a spiritual conduit than a spiritual cul-de-sac. (Tony Evans) **Toward God**, we must see tithing and giving as intentional acts of worship. We ascribe worth to God through our giving. Growing in generosity must start somewhere. Develop a rhythm of giving. Learn from someone who gives well. Seek accountability. Make a plan and keep track of your spending. Regularly ask Holy Spirit if you are putting money in its proper place. When we come before the Lord, we should bring a sacrifice of praise and of resources. We are stewards, disbursing God's money in obedience to him.

3

### UNDERSTANDING GOD THE PROVIDER

God's desire is to bless, to partner with people to bless, and to reward his faithful partners. Fear often surrounds money. Faith and trust in the Lord counteract that fear, and we must have faith to please God. (Heb 11:6) It is hard to be generous when we are fearful. It may feel mercenary to be motivated by reward, but that promise is Biblical. Jesus rewards his good and faithful servants who steward his resources well. Eternal treasure can be stored up in heaven, through receiving God's blessings and partnering with God to bless.



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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

What is your attitude toward money? What do you hope it will do for you?

2

How do you feel about tithing? Is it a tax, a tip, a duty, an act of worship, or something else?

3

How would you evaluate your ability to live simply/contentedly? To live generously (esp. to those who cannot repay you)?

4

Do you experience any fear/anxiety around the topic of money? If yes, why? What assumption does this imply about God?

5

How would you like to grow in your relationship to money? (Please name actionable steps.)



## BIG IDEA

Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

May our hearts be free from the love of/slavery to money. May our hearts be free to give generously and worshipfully. And may we do the hard work of practicing this freedom, for our own sake and for the sake of the reward our Father in heaven has promised.

