

Can You Pass the Test of Faith With Your Money

by Tim Conway

This sermon emphasizes the importance of faith in relation to money and contentment, encouraging listeners to resist the love of money and serve God.

Duration: 57:54

Scripture: Luke 16:13, 1 Timothy 6:10, 2 Timothy 3:2-5, Hebrews 13:5

Topics: "Faith And Money", "Godly Stewardship"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the battle to keep our lives free from the love of money and the importance of being content with what we have. It challenges believers to trust in God's provision and not to fear what man can do, highlighting the need to serve God rather than money. The message focuses on the root of all kinds of evil being the love of money and the impact it has on various sins, urging believers to despise money and make it serve God. Ultimately, it calls for a deep trust in God's faithfulness and provision, encouraging a lifestyle of faith over financial security.

Transcript

Hebrews chapter 13, verse 5, Keep your life free from love of money and be content with what you have. For He has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you. So we can confidently say, the Lord is my Helper.

I will not fear. What can man do to me? Brethren, if we have eyes to see, you can see it right here in this verse. The battle, I mean, you see it there, right? Keep your life free from the love of money.

We live in a society that just bombards us with temptations to love money and to be discontent. The battle to not be a lover of money. The battle for contentment.

The battle to handle money in a God-honoring way. I'll tell you what, at the deepest level, it's a battle of faith. It's fighting the good fight of faith.

There are a few things that will test what we really believe. Like money will test what we really believe. Jesus, He talked a lot about money.

I'll tell you why He talked about money, because where your treasure is, your heart is always going to follow. If there's anything that tests what we really believe, it's money. What we trust or who we trust, it can

be found here.

I mean, do you see it in the verse? I'm to keep myself free from the love of money. But on what grounds? On what grounds? Just because? Just because it's not good? Just because it's not right? Just because? That's not what the author of Hebrews does. He says, look, keep yourself free from the love of money because... because.

He wants us to think. He wants to give us logical reasons. He wants to give us food for our faith.

Here's a promise. Live on the promises. This is the basis for which we don't love money.

It's the promise. God says, I will never leave you, nor forsake you. You can see that there.

Money is the great tester of what we believe. Money tests what we trust or who we trust in a way that almost nothing else does. I've entitled my sermon, Can You Pass the Test of Faith with Your Money? And I'll tell you this, unless perhaps you think that I am over-exaggerating when I say that money will test what I trust as almost nothing else will, I would remind you of what our Lord Jesus Himself said.

Jump over to Luke chapter 16. Luke 16. And there's an account that takes place here.

You remember that the Lord tells a parable about this dishonest manager. Unfaithful manager. And as He begins to wrap this thing up, this parable, He says this in verse 13.

No servant can serve two masters, for 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 God and money. Now think about that.

You cannot serve God and money. Of all the sins, of all the forms of idolatry that our Lord might have pointed to, pointed out as being a rival contender for affections to God, where does He go? Money. Money.

It's a contender with God for our deepest affections. Money gets the attention of the one who knows the very things in this world that keep men and women out of heaven. I mean, you need to remember that.

If anybody knows what it is that keeps men from glory and keeps men from salvation and keeps men from finding eternal life, it's the Lord Jesus Christ. And He pointed to the things. He saw those things in this world that would likely draw the hearts of men away.

He knew what they were. He knew what was dangerous. He knew the sort of things that were there.

He knew what was at stake with money. Our Lord sees money as a huge threat to mankind. You better believe He does.

That's why He talks about it the way He does. It's a primary competitor for our love, for our affection, and for our servitude. That's how He sees it.

And you all see that. Let's, I mean, let's think about money. Think about, sometimes we just need to step back and ask some of the simple questions.

Wait, what is money? I mean, somebody handed me a 20 today and they wanted change for it. And I went over to the box and I was looking in there and there were these bills in there and I couldn't find change for what they had given me. But, you know, the box has bills in it.

What is that? It's just basically worthless paper. And even if you look at coins, what are they today? Nickel, copper, zinc. Pennies aren't copper anymore.

They're zinc. It's just worthless little pieces of metal. I mean, where does its worth come from? You think about that? You think about it.

Even if I have solid gold coins. I mean, imagine, I have a bag full of solid gold coins. Men's hearts want that.

Why? I can't eat it. I can't sleep on it. It doesn't protect me from rain.

I can't drink it. I can't wash with it. I mean, it really can't protect me.

I can't wear it. I can't drive it. It doesn't make my car go.

And yet for all that, I mean, the thing is, if I had this bag full of coins and it was a clear bag, you imagine that. I got a big old bag here and it's clear plastic and it's full of gold coins. For all that it can't do, if I walk down Commerce Street through the east side neighborhoods holding that bag out, I might have to watch out for myself.

I might not want to do that. Why? Somebody might do something to me that I don't want them to do to me in order to get that bag of coins from me. And why would they want them? I mean, if somebody came and knocked me over the head and took my bag of gold coins, what are they going to do with them? Are they going to go home and put them up on the fireplace mantel and just look at them and admire them for the rest of their days? Is that what they're going to do? No, what they're going to do is they're going to take them to a pawn shop or we buy gold, you know, those stores, and they're going to take it and they're going to turn it into modern currency.

Why? To take the modern currency home and put it up on the mantel and observe it and admire it for the rest of their days? Well, that's not what they're going to do either. You know what they're going to do? They're going to go out and buy a huge LED TV and bring it home and watch the Spurs. And they're going to buy a case of beer and they're going to buy a box of Twinkies.

Right? I mean, isn't that what they're going to do? I mean, you might fill in the blank with whatever. I mean, they hit me over the head and they broke my skull for one ultimate reason. And it wasn't to put it up on the mantel.

You know what they did it for? They did it in order to get the stuff that they suppose is going to make them happy. And they're willing to beat my head in in order to be happy. And get happiness the way that they think they're going to get happiness.

I mean, that's it. And here's the thing that I want you to think about. Think about the stuff that they get man-made and designed, engineered, that LED TV.

Man raised the hops and all the other stuff. Brewed the beer, put it in bottles. Man concocted Twinkies and baked them in the oven and put them in plastic bags, or at least designed the machinery that put them in plastic bags and boxed them up and somebody shipped them out and a guy drove the truck and they... Men did that.

You see, money opens up the door into the realm of man's greatest attempts to give happiness. That's really what it is, right? That's what money does. You think about money.

You think about what money can buy and what it can't buy. Money cannot buy God's protection. But money can buy a gun.

Money cannot buy the true bread, but it'll buy a loaf of sourdough from H-E-B. It'll do that. It can't buy answers to prayer, but it can buy favors from men.

It can't buy God's friendship, but it can buy friends in this world. It can't buy intimacy with Christ, but it can buy sex. It can buy a round of golf.

It can buy transportation. It can buy vacations and gasoline and houses and clothes and entertainment and computers, phones and drugs and education, new shoes. It can get you all the things that man has for sale.

That's what it can get you. That's what money's all about. Money gets you what man sells.

And you know what the great promise of all of it is? Here, it comes back to faith. It comes back to what we believe. The great promise is get this and you'll be happy.

Get this and you'll be fulfilled. Get this and you'll be satisfied. Money.

You think about it. Even in its best day, Jesus calls it, remember the old terminology? Filthy lucre. Even in its best day, Jesus calls it unrighteous wealth a little bit earlier here in Luke 16.

In its best day, that's what it is. You know why? Because in its best day, all money is is an emblem. It is the great emblem of the arm of the flesh.

So you see, to resist the love of money is to resist the love of really the things that money can get you. That's the issue. And to resist the love of these things is to resist believing the promise that these things make to us.

Serving God or serving money is all about faith. It's all about what we believe. It's all about whether we believe the promises made to us in the commercials or we believe the promises made to us in the Word of God.

That's what it's all about. What do we believe? Who do we trust? Do we really trust the Lord? I've seen more perhaps than one Christian raise an eyebrow at the manner in which... You'll know ever since we've been talking about buildings, the idea of a loan would come up. And I would say, look, I am not inclined to lead this church in the direction to go into debt for a building.

And I know the eyebrow would be raised. Because money, loans, that kind of thing, looking to this world's financial system and the way the world trusts in money, there's such a temptation for that. But looking to the Lord, trusting the Lord.

That's what this is all about. I want to bring out some thoughts. Here's just a list of thoughts concerning loving money.

I'll have you stay right here in Luke 16 just because I intend to come back here for a second, but listen to it as I quote Hebrews 13.5 again. Don't turn back there, but just listen to me quote it. Keep your life free from the love of money.

Now listen to this. And be content with what you have. Being free from the love of money is sister to contentment.

It's a companion of contentment. And if we turn that thing on its head and look at the opposite, keeping yourself free from the love of money goes hand in hand with contentment. Loving money goes hand in hand with what? Yes, that is not rocket science.

Discontentment. Discontent. Ecclesiastes 5.10 He who loves money will not be satisfied with money.

But they will not be satisfied. Yes, they won't be satisfied with money. Nor he who loves wealth with his income.

They're just not satisfied. And you know the kind of satisfaction, you know the kind of contentment that we're talking about. Certainly God never wants us content with how far we've progressed in the Christian life.

He doesn't want Paul strained to reach forward. Don't be content with the degree of glory you've attained in the Christian life. We need to be like Moses.

He was not content to the degree of glory that he had seen in God already. He said, Lord, I want to behold more of it. And he let it pass before him.

And you can believe he wasn't content with that. And God wants us that way. God wants us longing.

God wants us panting after Him. God does not want us content with the amount of Him that we have beheld. When he talks about contentment, he says this, be content with what you have.

What you have. That's in the stuff department, right? It's the stuff in this world. It's the stuff in this life.

It's the stuff that money can buy. That's what it's all about. Be content.

Be content. I don't know how it was with you. When I was lost, I was not content.

I was just driven. I needed to have more, more, more. New golf clubs, new gun, new motorcycle, new car, new this, new that.

I was just never content. More, more, more. This unsatisfaction.

God wants us content. Why? Why? Why is it so important to be content? Because it's got everything to do with faith. My faith is riveted in the truth that I have something.

Oh, I can remember. Brethren, my dad died back in 1999. And I was going to Michigan.

My dad wanted me to do his funeral. And I can remember my brother was not dealing with my dad's estate the way that my dad had wanted him to. And my brother was the executor.

And I came across this text that morning in devotions before I got on the airplane and flew up to Michigan to do that. And it was just like, it put me in such the right spirit. I don't care.

I don't care about my dad's stuff. I don't care about getting money. I have the Lord.

He's mine. It's like, what does my brother have? If he gets all that stuff, and you don't have Christ, you're a pauper. You're bankrupt.

I just thought I have the living Lord. I am His and He is mine. He's never going to leave me.

He's never going to forsake me. What do I have need of? All the things that this world goes after and they pant after and they'll break your skull for. And, well, we have the treasure of all treasures.

That's what this is. But you see, you can't live that way unless you really believe it. You read those words that morning before you go to the funeral, and if you don't really believe it, if you've bought the lies of the commercial and you really think, no, getting stuff and getting money is what really matters.

Oh yeah, I'm religious and I'm a Christian and I read the word this morning. But if you don't really believe it, it doesn't work. It doesn't work.

You'll go wander the hallways of the mall and you just pant after all the stuff in this world. You see, you become a Christian, you don't even have to go in places like that. You don't want to go in places like that.

You see the emptiness, the emptiness, what the world promises. I mean, you know, this is all a matter of faith. It's a matter of I have the Lord.

And you know what? Everything that I possess, it's been meted out to me exactly according to His infinite wisdom and knowledge. He who has determined that everything in this lifetime, everything in this world is working out for the good of those that love Him. Yes, it's going to be just like it is with David that he says there in the Psalm, goodness and mercy follow me.

I have a God who I am in His attention all the time. Look, God is infinite. God has us in His full attention all the time.

You ever thought about that? It's not like God's attention is divided between, well, that Christian and that Christian. He fully knows you and is fully aware of you all the time. And think about this.

To be one for whom He has given His Son up for, Christ Himself who laid His life down as sacrifice out of love for His people, and that is the Savior that I have that comes alongside me and says, I'll never leave you or forsake you. One who has shown me He means to do nothing but good for me and will pour out His very life's blood. I have one at my side who is going to protect me and help me and be there and never forsake me.

One like that. I mean, if you really believe that, you can laugh at the things in this world. What are they to me? It's just like throwing sparks on wet kindling.

There's no spark there. There's nothing to ignite. My heart is satisfied in Him and Him alone.

That's the idea, but there's faith in this. There's faith. Do I really believe it? Do I really? You see, brethren, look, the way the Apostle argues is this way.

You brought nothing into the world and you can be sure of it. You're going to take nothing out of the world. And if you are His, what is on the other side? An eternal weight of glory.

The riches on the other side, there's an inheritance. It is undefiled. It is eternal.

It is reserved in heaven for those of us that love the Lord Jesus Christ and find Him precious. I mean, you know, this is just a short little season of trial and testing and we pass through this world and our Father perfectly gives us everything that we need here and just as much as He knows that we should be endowed with, we can trust Him. Contentment.

Oh, do you know what that says about what we believe about God? There's probably more worship in just a simple Christian being content than listening to a hundred sermons. What worship when the Christian just, worship is all about worth in Him. Oh, what worship there is when the Christian simply says, Lord, you have me where you want me and I'm content.

You know what it says? I trust you. I trust that this is the best thing for me. I trust you.

I trust that there are gonna be pleasures forevermore at your right hand. I trust that there is an eternal weight of glory out there. I trust you're gonna take me safely through this Jordan at the end of this life and deliver me into that celestial city.

I trust, I'm waiting for a city that has foundations and I believe it's out there. Brethren, it's all about faith. You know why? You can pull the money out of your pocket and you can see it, but you don't see the unseen Christ.

You don't see the unseen God. These promises have not yet entirely been fulfilled. We're living on that hope.

We walk by faith, not by sight. That's the Christian life. This is a life of faith.

Can you pass the test of faith when it comes to money? Can you really say, I may not have a husband. I may not have a wife. I may not have a million dollars.

I may not have my own home. I may not have this, but I have you. I have you, Lord, and that is enough.

And with that, I am satisfied. The Lord is tremendously worshiped in that. He's delighted, but I'll tell you, when people are discontent, just like those Israelites, which we find here in this book of Hebrews, back in chapter three, He destroyed them.

Why? Because when people are discontent, such a reflection upon the Lord Himself. Anyway, back to Luke 16. I want you to see this.

Here's another thought. The first one had to do with discontentment. Because we see content and discontent right there in Hebrews 13.5, where it talks about keeping your life free from the love of money.

If you come over to Luke 16.13, again, we get the idea of the love of money. Now, you say, well, doesn't it talk about service? Yeah, it talks about that. It talks about devotion, but it also talks about love here.

16.13, no servant can serve two masters. Now, we know that these two masters are God and money. We know it from the end of the verse.

Either he will hate the one, and here's love, and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money. Now, here's something that really jumps out at me.

Those who serve God, see what it says? If I serve God, what do I do to money? Despise it, hate it. And you can see that there. Those who serve God will despise their money.

Now, look, that doesn't mean that we stop using it. You know what's interesting to me? Is those who serve God don't stop using money. And those who serve money often talk a lot about God.

You know, serving money and serving God doesn't mean that you take money and God, respectively, and throw it out. That's not the idea. You don't stop using it, but you despise it.

You know the picture I see? I see God, the picture I have, maybe you can envision Christ and all of his glory. Like we sang about, conquering now and still to conquer this triumphant one. Majestic and beautiful, and there he is.

And he stands. And then you have money over here. Imagine money, personify it.

It's a man. And money stands over there. And see, I'm in between.

I'm the one that's going to serve the one or serve the other. And the picture that I have in my mind is that when Christ enters, I go over and I kick money in the knees. And I knock its legs out from under it.

Why? Because if I'm going to serve God, my money's going to serve God. And I'm going to despise it. And it's going to fall down, and I'm going to put its face in the dirt.

It's going to worship God with me. I mean, that's the picture that I see. The true God-serving Christian kicking the legs out from under money and making money bow down with its face to the dust, serving God.

You serve God and not money when you make your money serve God and Christ's kingdom. And that's the thing. You despise it.

You hate it by not letting it be master, by not letting it be the love of your life, by not letting it be the controlling factor. It doesn't drive you. It serves you and it serves God.

That's the picture that I see. On the other hand, those who serve money, they want God to bow down to money. And they typically, you know, some of these, the people that he's speaking here, these are Jews.

But here's the thing about it. Those that serve money, if you notice in verse 14, Luke 16, 14, the Pharisees who were lovers of money, there it is. They are what the author of Hebrews is telling us that we ought not to be.

They heard all these things and they ridiculed him and he said to them, now Jesus says this, you are those who justify yourselves. You know what that means? They make excuse. You know what one of the hallmarks is of people who serve money? They're excuses.

Well, I can't give. I'm too poor. My needs are too big.

I'll tell you what, the Macedonians would come alongside you and say, even in extreme poverty, you can kick the knees out from under money. They did that. In their extreme poverty, they overflowed with a wealth of generosity.

They implored Paul to allow them to give. And he was like, you've given enough. You guys, you're in straighten yourself.

But that's what it is when you serve God and not money. Even when you're very poor, you'll make your money serve the Lord. Away with the excuses.

Some make the excuse, well, God loves a cheerful giver after all and I can't give very cheerfully and so I'm not gonna give at all. Listen, Paul didn't write 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 to convince you that you ought not to give. He wrote it to convince you to give.

He didn't say God loves a cheerful giver so that you would look at it and say, well, I'm not cheerful, therefore I'm justified in not giving. I've actually heard some people reason that way before. That's crazy.

If you go through and you read those two chapters, you know what you find? Is Paul has given you every reason under the sun to be cheerful. It's not meant to excuse you from it. It's meant to give you all the manner of reason to make you cheerful.

What are they? Well, Christ. He was rich. He became poor.

That we who are poor might be made rich. You follow in His tracks. Why else? Because when you give, it actually meets people's needs.

And when you give, they praise God. God gets the praise. And when you give, they go to God in prayer for you.

I mean, there's all manner of reasons He's giving to be joyful. Joyful! But lovers of money make excuses about why they can't, why they ought not to do things with their money. Here's another thought.

Luke 16, 14. The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things and they ridiculed Him. Now, I don't want to make too much of this because it doesn't overtly say it, but I know that often, when these Jews wanted to defend themselves and ridicule and mock our Lord, you know what they did? They said things like this.

You know, Jesus said, if you abide in My Word, you are truly My disciples. And He said, you'll know the truth and the truth will set you free. You know how they answered Him? We're offspring of Abraham.

You remember John the Baptist? He said, don't say to yourself, we're children of Abraham. God is able, out of these rocks, to raise them up. Didn't they like to come back with that? He talks about their father.

He was meaning the devil. And they said, well, we have one father, Abraham. You see, they liked to come back with that.

And you can see that. You know, who's this guy to talk to us about the way we use our money? We're in. I mean, he makes it sound like if we don't use our money right, we're going to miss glory.

They laughed at Him. They mocked at Him. You know, what could they have said? We're children of Abraham.

You say, why would you even come up with that? Because, you know, after this, He tells another story. And if you look at it there, in Luke 16, 22, you know the account, the rich man and Lazarus? The rich man,

in verse 22, also died and was buried, and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off, and Lazarus at his side. And he called out, Father Abraham.

That's very interesting. Father Abraham. This is a Jew.

He's regarding Abraham as his father. And Abraham doesn't even seem to reject that notion. If you look at verse 25, but Abraham said, child? Almost like acknowledging him as his child.

I mean, what a way to... He didn't say you cursed, which the man is, but he called him child. He called him father. He called him back child.

It's almost like our Lord tells one story, one parable, this unjust manager. These guys ridicule him, and then he turns around and he tells another story, specifically with somebody who is a Jew and they're cast away because of their misuse of money. And brethren, I'll tell you what.

I have seen this repeatedly in preaching through Hebrews. How often it seems like Christians, they position themselves in their thinking, this once saved, always saved mentality, where, well, I'm a Christian, and therefore, it doesn't really matter how I live because I'm a Christian. And if I'm a Christian, I'm saved by grace through faith.

And so, if I have all these failures in my life, it really doesn't matter. It really doesn't speak to me. It's amazing how many Christians protect themselves from the warnings of Scripture.

Just by saying, well, I'm in, rather than saying Scripture says that if I persevere in this type of life, or if this is characteristic in my life, if I'm practicing righteousness and if this is true, if I handle money right, if I'm conquering sexual sin, if I put to death the deeds of the body by the Spirit, if these things are happening, then, yes, if I have a love for the brethren, and yes, if I continue and I persevere to the end, yes, this is all solidifying the fact that I believe I'm saved and it's backing it up and it's credible and that's what biblical Christianity looks like. So many people get into the place, well, I said the prayer, and so I know I'm saved. You see, they start by saying, I know I'm saved, and then it doesn't matter what their life looks like.

They pretty much reason and they defend themselves from any of the warnings of Scripture because after all, I'm safe. I'm in. That doesn't apply to me.

You see, that's what they were doing. That's what the Jews were doing. The Jews are saying, hey, we're children of Abraham.

Don't talk to us about the way we use our money. I'll tell you this, Jesus said you cannot serve God and money. He is saying this is life and death.

To serve God is to be a Christian is to go to heaven. To serve money is to be damned. And it's one or the other.

There's no middle ground. You serve one or you serve the other. And it's a matter of faith.

It's what you believe. We are saved by faith, but faith works through love. And that's what matters in the Christian life.

Faith works. Faith without works is dead. Faith without works doesn't save.

Faith without works is no better than demon faith. Brethren, how we use our money says everything about what we truly believe at the deepest levels. Brethren, why are we approaching this building over there this way? Because, at least I believe, and I believe a number of you believe that God is able, if God determines to give us a building, He can do it in a way that we don't have to revert to the world systems.

Why? We have a God who does, we heard it before, own the cattle on a thousand hills. All the silver and gold is mine. The earth is mine and the fullness thereof.

Are we serving an impotent God? Are we serving a God that doesn't hear our prayers and can't answer? Aren't we serving the God who we want to be able to boldly say, and God wants us to be able to boldly say, He is my helper. He won't leave us. He won't forsake us.

This is a matter of faith. We gotta get away from this idea that we can have this faith, but faith doesn't work in love and faith doesn't manifest itself in a transformed life. The same grace that gives faith is a grace that turns our life upside down and causes us to view money entirely different.

It's no longer our refuge. It's no longer our strong haven. It's no longer our security.

Yes, some people have walked out of this church angry and left and one of their beefs was that they said, you know, I press them to not living in gated communities and I press them not to have retirement. I press them not to have insurance and I press them these areas. Brethren, what I press is this.

We need to be a people that live by faith. We need to be a people that trust that God is indeed with us and will not forsake us and that He is indeed our helper. And brethren, when we get old and our hair is gray, even though everybody else may turn from us, He will not.

Social security may fail. The government may fail. Your kids may disown you, but God will not.

Do we really believe that? Do we really believe when we have needs that God knows what those needs are? The truest needs. Not what we think we need. See, we don't like that.

We want to be in control financially. We don't like to leave Him in control because He doesn't always give us exactly what we want when we want it, but He gives us what we need when we want it. But do we trust Him? We can get away from this mindset that, you know, well, I'm a Christian.

How I handle money, it doesn't really matter. And whether I trust it or I trust God, it doesn't really matter. And who I serve, it doesn't really matter.

After all, I'm a Christian. Well, if your Christianity is the kind that serves money, you're in a bad lot. You're with a bad group.

The love of money. 1 Timothy 6.10 The love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. I mean, help me out here.

You tell me, the love of money, not money itself as is often the misquotation. Money is not the root of all evils. The love of money is the root of all evils.

And it's the root. You think about a root. The root is beneath the ground.

It's unseen. The plant comes up and fruit comes out above the ground. The love of money is the root of a plant that is called all kinds of evil.

There's a plant of many fruits and they're all evil. The fruit itself, the foliage on it, it is not necessarily the love of money. It is the root that drives it.

It is the root that feeds it. It is the root upon which it lives. What do people who love money do? I mean, help me.

If people who love money fall into all sorts of different sins, what kinds? Stealing? And you know, we're very respectable, right? We go to church on Sundays. But I mean, can you come to work late and you feel nothing? Your conscience ought to bother you if you come in to work five minutes late and you get paid for it. It really ought to.

It ought to bother you to stay on break five minutes longer. I mean, there are forms of stealing where you don't go into the mask on your head and the gun in your hand and break into a convenience store. There are lots of ways that we steal subtly.

And if you love money, you'll do that kind of thing. You see, the thing is, if you love money, you despise God. And so you despise His Word.

And so when He says certain things, you kind of brush it aside. You excuse the Word of God. The Word of God is made void.

Our Lord talks about pay your taxes. I mean, I'm surprised to see those who profess to be Christians who get paid under the table. You're despising God.

You see, that's the issue. I want to use my money in a way that glorifies Him. Money is there for that.

Whatever I do, whether I eat or drink, whether I use my money, I do all to the glory of God. It's servant to Him. You've got to kick the knees out from under that thing.

If the Lord says, this is what I want you to do with my money, money, I serve Him, you're going to serve Him. Whereas if we want God to bow down and serve money, you know how it is. How do we get God to serve money? All of our prayers.

Boy, if you want to know if you're serving money, you just look at what you pray for. People, Lord, give me that job. Lord, give me this, give me that.

Give me that. You want God to be subservient to you in increasing your wealth. Is it really that you want your wealth increased so that you can do more and give more and help the brethren more and extend the Gospel more? But other sins.

Stealing. Gambling. It's amazing how it will lead you to lie too.

And sometimes, oh yeah, those little white lies. These exaggerations. You know, you go to sell something and you want to make it look as good as possible because you love money and you want to get as much out of it as you possibly can.

And so, the proverb speaks about, oh, when you go to purchase something, you know, bad, bad. When you go to sell the very same thing, ah, it's wonderful. There's something wrong with that.

Debt. You know, I'm not going to say Scripture forbids every form of debt. But most of the debt in this country is nothing but a result of lust for money.

For stuff. I'm not talking about a responsible mortgage. That somebody, you know, they size up their situation and they say, this is just being prudent.

This is being responsible with what God has given me to not pay rent my whole life, but to get a mortgage. And once that's paid off, then I don't have any housing costs. There's responsibility.

But the people just swing the credit cards all around because they need clothes and they need food and they need to go out to eat and they need rings and they need this and that and they need an iPhone and they've got to have all this and they've got to have the latest, greatest car and they go head over heels into debt. That's just... Those who love money borrow oftentimes and do not pay back. Those who love money don't want to know about others that have needs.

They try to ignore it. Oh, I don't want to be there. I don't want to know that.

No, no, no, no, no. Don't... Those who love money, they don't set their minds on things above. They set their mind on money.

Always thinking about money. Oh, when I was lost, I was thinking about, oh, if I'd find treasure or win the lotto. How many people, it's just so close to their lips, winning the lotto.

Winning the lotto. If I win the lotto. Because they're thinking that way all the time.

Get, get, get, get. You have 2 Timothy. I'll go on to another thing here.

Not just that love for money gives place to other sins, but in 2 Timothy 3, verse 2, people will be lovers of self, lovers of money. Notice how those two go side by side. Lovers of self, lovers of money.

Now if you crap out a bunch of these and you go to verse 4, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. You just put those together. Lovers of self, lovers of money, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.

Having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people. And have you ever noticed how people deny the power of true godliness by shouting legalism? Anytime you want to talk about just striving for excellence.

I mean, it's even here. How should we view money? Jesus Christ said, don't lay up treasure here. Now we all have to sort that out.

And I'm not going to be legalistic in going further than what Scripture goes in defining that. But laying up treasure here, we all have to weigh that out. Is retirement laying up treasure here? I'll let you figure that out.

But what do we really believe? Do I have promises in Scripture that seem to lead me to believe that if I take my money and I give it to the widow and orphan and I take money and I give it to the extension of the Gospel and if I take my money and I give it to the stranger and I give it to the hungry and I give it to the

thirsty and I give it to those who are in prison and I give it to God's ministers and I give it to these things. Is there anything in Scripture that might lead me to believe that if I give and I give and I give and I give so that I don't have any more and then I come to be and need myself and I cry out to God, Lord, help me! Is there anything in Scripture that would lead us to believe God is going to say, Here I am! What do you need? And you know what? You go look at the biographies. You look at the George Mueller.

You look at the Hudson Taylor. You look at those men and those women who have given everything. And you follow them through to old age and you see whether they were abandoned.

You will not find a single Christian testimony ever throughout church history where somebody did that and they got to the end and they had nothing. That's not the case. God takes good care of His people.

It's all about what we're going to trust. Are we going to trust the dollar? We live in a system today that is all about trusting money. It's all about security funds and emergency funds and IRAs.

And it's all about you've got to have insurance in place and you've got to have all the things of this world just in case, just in case. But if you have the God who says, look, all of it's mine. And I'm with you.

And I'm not going to forsake. What do you think I won't forsake you mean? I mean, look, it means nothing. If I'm going through a war zone and some little guy comes up to me and says I won't leave you or forsake me and it's, you know, that's nice.

I mean, that's a nice gesture. But I need real help. God doesn't say I'm never going to leave you or forsake you because it's just a nice gesture and He can't really help and He's going to be there at my side, but He's really weak and He's pathetic and He can't do anything.

He's saying, I am the God who is almighty. I am the mighty God. I am the Creator of all.

I know your needs before you ask. I am at your side. I only have your greatest good in mind.

I'm not going to leave you or forsake you. Everything you need, you will have and you will have it when you need it. I mean, can we trust Him? Can we trust Him to take care of us? We are to be like little children with a father.

Our little children don't go around all full of anxiety, pining away when they're two years, three years. I see these little children, they're running around their parents' legs. Do you think they're all concerned? Oh, what's going to happen when I get old? What's going to happen when it's dinner time? The birds out there don't do that.

Jesus used that as an example. The flowers seem to be quite well taken care of. But, you know, we get more mature, we get wiser, then we worry, right? Full of anxieties.

Oh, what's going to happen then? Look, I know, naturally we want to be in control. Don't you want that? It's nice to have a bank account. You can go look at it and say, well, you know, I've got this much stashed away.

Boy, I'm secure. When I get old, I'll be able to do what I want to and when I want to. I'm not going to have to be reliant on anybody else, including God.

But Christian, our Lord wants us to live resting on Him. Oh, He has such a way. In fact, maybe you might recall a promise somewhere that says He's going to cleanse us from all of our idols.

Be sure He's going to put the moth and the thief and the canker worm and the rust to work. Right? Riches get wings and they fly away, we might read somewhere in Scripture. Oh, brethren, you see what happens in Hebrews 13.5? As we move from His promise to the confidence and the words, therefore, we can confidently say God is my Helper.

And I'm not going to fear what man can do to me. Why? What can man do to me? Ah, they can make the stock market crash. They can steal my stuff.

They can abandon me when I'm old. These very people in Hebrews, what did they have people do to them? Pilfer their stuff. Break into their homes.

That's what people can do. But I'm not going to fear that. Why? Because God's with me.

I can confidently say, my hope is in all this building stuff, I just want this church to be able to come out of this with more confidence. That as a whole, we can confidently say, wow, God is our Helper. He's come through again.

So that next time we're faced with another hard thing, we can say, God has been faithful. God is our Helper. He's never going to leave us or forsake us.

Onward, brethren! We can go! We can go into the face of the enemy. We can go out onto that battlefield. We can charge forward.

We don't have to put our rest in money. We don't have to make decisions as a church based on checkbook ledgers. We've not gotten into the habit of that.

And to some of you, this may seem crazy. What? You're trying to buy a building and you don't have any of the money? Okay, before anybody mocks, before anybody gets filled with anxiety, before you get into some sort of doubtful fit, wait for June 10th. It's kind of fitting that this verse would come up at this point in time.

Brethren, as I've said before, and this is what I want to leave you with, what I want... I don't expect everybody to go out and cash in their retirement funds. If you did, and you did it prayerfully, and you did it trusting in the Lord, and you go and you gave it to the things, I mean, you were rich towards God, you're going to have treasure in Heaven. Jesus said as much.

Would I applaud it? Absolutely! Will I rejoice with you on that day when you become a possessor of that inheritance and that treasure? I will. I'll rejoice with you and so will many of us here. But what I hope is that you'll be pressed further to consider the claims of God, to consider His faithfulness, and to make choices, to make more and more choices that really glorify Him and show that you trust Him more than money.

The more we do that, the more we make decisions that just show our rest is in Him. If we just live a little bit more by faith, more and more, just upward and onward, our faith is growing. We're trusting Him more.

If we can raise that bar and walk forward from today and look for opportunities to trust Him, to trust Him. And just remember this, Emmanuel, that is not a hollow name, God with us. He's with you.

He shed His blood. Do you think He's going to let you go hungry? Do you think He's going to cast you off now? Do you think He's going to neglect you? Do you think you're going to take on a stepchild status now? I know you don't have all that you want. I know you don't get everything you want when you want it, but the hand of omnipotence undergirds you.

His gentleness and His goodness, His wisdom have you right where you are. His full attention, undivided attention, is focused on you. He follows you.

He watches you. He knows your needs every moment. He knows them ahead of time.

Nothing catches Him by surprise. And He's ordered it this way. It's all by His design.

Those hands, those everlasting arms, they have wounds in them. He gave Himself. How is He not going to also with Him give us everything, brethren, everything we need from the riches of that supply? Brethren, kick the knees out from under money.

Despise that money. Put its face in the dirt. It is God's servant.

And to be faithful stewards, we need to make it serve Him. Father, we pray for grace to be able to do this. In Christ's name we ask, Amen.

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