

The Love of Money - Part 1

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen explores Jesus' teachings on money, emphasizing the need to choose between serving God and the love of money.

Duration: 9:24

Scripture: 1 Kings 18

Topics: "Stewardship Of Wealth", "Serving God"

Description

This sermon delves into what Jesus taught about money, emphasizing the importance of understanding Jesus' teachings on earning, saving, and giving money. Jesus highlighted the concept of money as an alternate master to God, urging individuals to choose between serving God or money. The sermon challenges the notion of serving both God and money simultaneously, emphasizing the need to prioritize one over the other. It explores the profound truth that loving money equates to hating God, prompting listeners to examine their hearts and priorities in light of Jesus' teachings.

Transcript

Today I'm going to talk about what Jesus taught about money. Throughout Christendom today there's a lot of emphasis on giving. A lot of pressure put on Christians in churches, especially through television, and a lot of it is completely against the tenor of scripture, and something that Jesus would not approve of.

When Jesus was on earth twice, he turned out of the temple those who were trying to make money in the name of God, and that's something we must remember. So we need to understand what Jesus taught about giving, and you cannot understand that until you first understand what Jesus taught about money in general. So I want to speak about what Jesus taught about earning money, saving money, and giving money.

Jesus never taught anything that he hadn't himself done first. Acts 1 verse 1 says, Jesus first did and then taught. He did not practice what he preached, he preached what he had already practiced.

And there he set an example for us, that we must never as Christians talk about something which we haven't done, or which we are not at least attempting to do. That's what it means to be a witness. If we talk about that which we haven't done, we are false witnesses, if you're not talking about, if you're not even attempting it.

So no man has the right to talk about giving, who is not doing it or attempting to do it in the scriptural way himself. So first of all, what did Jesus talk about earning money, and generally to understand what Jesus spoke about money itself first. I want you to turn to Luke's Gospel chapter 16 and verse 13, which is like a foundation for us to understand what the Bible talks about, teaches about money, what Jesus taught about money.

And it's very interesting to see here Jesus using the word mammon, referring to wealth in general, it could be cash, it could be real estate, it could be stocks and shares, it could be your car, it could be anything that has monetary value. Money and everything else that has got monetary value, Jesus sums it up in the word mammon and refers to it almost as if it's a god, a false god, just like Baal in the Old Testament. And he says here in Luke 16, 13, which I think is one of the most fundamental verses on money, we need to understand this if we want to understand what the Bible says about money in general.

He calls money a master and as an alternate master to the true God. He says no servant can serve two masters. And if you were to ask the average Christian, 90% of them would reply that the two masters in the world are God and Satan.

No, Jesus says the two masters are God and money. No one in his senses would ever think that you could serve God and Satan at the same time. But a lot of Christians do think that they can serve God and money at the same time.

That's the deception. And that's why Jesus highlighted money as the alternate master. Satan is the god of this world.

The Bible says that, the ruler of this world. But the way he controls people to a large extent is through the power of money. And we can see that everywhere, whether it's in business or politics or in India, even in marriages.

Money is a very big factor. And just like in the kingdom of God, grace is the great power. In the world, money is the great power.

So Jesus focuses on this one thing as the alternate master to God. And he says you've got to make a choice. It's something similar to the way Elijah stood on Mount Parmel in 1 Kings chapter 18 and told multitudes of Israelites who were serving Jehovah and Baal at the same time, alternately.

Sometimes they'd go and worship Jehovah and sometimes they idolized Baal. And it's amazing that they could see no inconsistency in it. They thought that was okay.

And Elijah was the one man in Israel who stood up and had the courage to stand up and say, choose you this day whom you will serve. If Jehovah is God's servant, if Baal is God's servant. And it's something similar here.

If Jesus Christ is God, serve him and live for him. If money is God, live for that and serve that. But you've got to make a choice.

And you cannot serve both. And he even went on to say, Luke 16, 13, you've got to hate one and love the other. Apply that to the two masters.

What does it mean? If you love money, whether you know it or not, you hate God. Now that's the truth. We may not like to face it, but it's like facing an uncomfortable revelation the doctor gives us about our physical condition.

You don't get healed by ignoring it. If you see that's your sickness, if you face up to it, you could probably be cured. But if you don't face up to it, you don't acknowledge the seriousness of it, you may not be cured.

If I love money, I hate God. If I love God, I'll hate money. Tell me if you can find some other interpretation for that verse.

Now you'll never hear a preaching like this generally in Christendom today, because it's uncomfortable truth. And that's the reason why many Christians live so shallow, because they're worshipping Jehovah and Beyond, simultaneously or alternately. Christ and money.

Christ on Sunday mornings and money five days a week. And so he says, you've got to hold on to one and then you'll despise the other. What does this mean in practical terms? I don't think anyone would say honestly, I hate money.

Where love of money is deep down in our flesh. I haven't even met a beggar who hates money. A lot of people think it's only rich people who love money.

No. Have you met a beggar who doesn't love money? It's got nothing to do with your income or your wealth. It's got to do with whether you are a child of Adam.

Every child of Adam loves money. And Jesus came to deliver us from it, not to make us permits and not to say, well, you've got to live on bare minimum. That's not the point.

That's a misunderstanding. What Jesus was saying is, don't let money be your master. And when he spoke about hatred in a previous chapter in Luke 14 and verse 26, he even said, you've got to hate your father and mother, not just money, father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters.

So obviously he didn't mean that we must hate them in the way we understand hatred for sin. No, because in another place in the Bible, in Ephesians 5, it says you've got to love your wife as Christ loved the church. And in Luke 14, 26, it says you've got to hate your wife.

So it's when you compare scripture with scripture, you understand what Jesus meant by hatred. In other words, what he was saying was that your love for Jesus and for God must be so great that your love for any human being becomes insignificant. And you love that person through God.

You love your wife through God, and then you'll never fight with her. You love your parents through God, and then you'll never put them above God in your life. So it's something like, you know, right now in the sky in daytime, if you look out, you can't see any stars.

But you know, stars give a very bright light. Imagine being so powerful,

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