

The Love of Money - Part 4

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen's sermon emphasizes the importance of saving, wise spending, and giving, using biblical examples to illustrate these principles.

Duration: 8:45

Scripture: Deuteronomy 15:6, Luke 17:27, Luke 19:8, Luke 19:23, Romans 13:8

Topics: "Financial Stewardship", "Biblical Wisdom"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of financial wisdom and stewardship, drawing lessons from the simplicity and wisdom of Jesus' life. It highlights the principles of buying only what is needed, avoiding debt, saving for the future, and giving generously. The sermon also stresses the significance of giving back money earned wrongfully and aligning our financial practices with biblical teachings.

Transcript

It's a very simple principle. The ant knows that. If I use up everything now, I won't have anything left for the future.

So, the principle of buying things is buy what you need. And like the proverb says, cut your coat according to your cloth. Don't buy with money that you don't have.

It's one of the simple bits of advice which even an ant knows, but which a lot of human beings don't know. And that's how we get into debt. I don't believe Jesus was ever in debt.

I don't believe he was a very wealthy person, despite what all the prosperity preachers tell us. Jesus was not wealthy. He was poor.

The foxholes had holes and the birds of the air had nests, but he didn't have a place to lay his head. That's true. He lived simply.

We read in John 7, 53, the last verse, Everybody went to his own house, but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives and slept under the trees. He lived very simply. And he was not a rich man.

But he never was in debt. I can't imagine Jesus going to somebody and saying, Can I borrow some money from you? You know, my Heavenly Father sort of let me down now, and I don't have enough. Can you please help me meet my needs? I mean, Christians may do that, who don't realize that they are insulting

their Heavenly Father thereby.

But Jesus wouldn't dream of saying that. Is it possible that my Heavenly Father has let me down? Is there a God in Heaven or not? Does he know my needs? Don't earthly fathers provide food for their children? This is how Jesus lived. He was never in debt.

He never borrowed. A lot of borrowing comes because we don't save. We don't think about the future.

Joseph told Pharaoh, In seven years of plenty, if you don't save up, I'll tell you, when the famine comes, you'll be in need. And even that godless Pharaoh was willing to listen to that wisdom from Joseph. And that's why when there was a time of famine came, they were not in need.

So that's a simple principle that we've got to bear in mind. Now there may be times in an emergency when you've got to borrow from somebody. Basically, I would say it's not God's will that you should borrow, because it says in Deuteronomy 15, even under the Old Covenant, in Deuteronomy 15, verse 6, here is one mark of the Lord's blessing upon a person.

A lot of people say God's blessing. Well, here it says, The Lord your God will bless you, and you will never borrow. You know, that's one mark of God's blessing.

He wants to bless you in such a way that you never have to borrow in your life. But if in some emergency, maybe we are careless and we slip up, we need to borrow, then the New Testament says in Romans 13, verse 8, Oh, no man anything. In other words, if you do end up borrowing, return it as soon as possible.

And that's why it's so important, my dear brothers and sisters, in a country where so many people are careless with the use of the credit cards, I would advise you, use a debit card as much as possible, so you know what money you're spending. And if you do use a credit card, have the discipline to pay it off before you pay any interest on it, so that you're not losing any money. And if you don't have that discipline, stick to the debit card.

I would advise you that. It's a very simple bit of advice, but it can save you and your family from a lot of heartache and a lot of problems in the future. The Lord wants us to save and not be in debt.

Jesus spoke about the last days in Luke chapter 17. He said about the last days being like the days of Noah and the days of Lot. All of us know that expression, like the days of Noah, like the days of Lot.

And we think only about the sex and the violence there was in those days, which is also true. But notice in Luke 17. I want you to look at this verse.

In Luke 17, when Jesus spoke about the last days like the days of Noah, in verse 27. Luke 17 and verse 27. It says, like in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of Solomon.

What were they doing? He's not referring to the sex and the violence. Luke 17, 27. They were eating, they were drinking.

What's wrong with that? They were marrying, they were giving in marriage. Go down to the next verse, in the days of Lot. He doesn't talk about the homosexuality or any such thing there.

He talks about the eating and the drinking and the buying and the selling and the planting and the building. They were doing things, which all of us do. But they didn't think of eternity in all this.

That was their problem. You can get so taken up with the use of money on this earth right now. My eating and my drinking and my buying and my selling and my planting and my building that I forget about eternity.

And that's the great danger. And that's why we need to be wise and think about the future. The fact that Jesus had a treasurer, Judas Iscariot, carrying a bag, indicates that he believed in savings.

He didn't believe that if somebody gave him money today I could spend it all today and trust the Lord for tomorrow. That can be a super spiritual, you know, self-deceptive position. I trust the Lord.

No, God expects us to be wise. And Judas' bag was like a savings bank where you keep it there for future use. And I want you to show you a verse in that connection in Luke 19 in verse 23.

In the parable that we considered earlier, Jesus says to the man who had one mina and didn't do anything with it. Look at this amazing verse, Luke 19, verse 23. Why didn't you put the money in the bank? You'd get some interest from it.

Does Jesus believe in our putting money in a bank and that too in a savings account so that you'd get some interest from it? That's in Scripture. He believes that we should earn as much as we can without sacrificing our soul, putting God's kingdom first. We must save as much as we can without splurging everything on ourselves.

And then we can go on to giving as much as we can. These are the simple principles of John Wesley first described them many years ago. Earn as much as you can, save as much as you can, and give as much as you can.

The simple principles of the use of money and Jesus was the one who taught it. So we come to the third point which is giving. What Jesus taught about giving.

The very first thing that we need to learn about giving is here in Luke 19. The first ten verses we read about Zacchaeus. He was a very rich man.

The Lord did not tell him to give up everything like he told the other rich ruler because the cancer was not so widely spread. Zacchaeus said in Luke 19 verse 8 Lord I give half my money to the poor. And the Lord didn't say no you've got to give all.

No, half is fine. So you see Jesus' rules were not the same for everyone. If the disease is more widely spread he may say give up everything.

You love money too much. But in Zacchaeus' case he gave half to the poor. And Jesus said that's fine.

But then he returned. What did he give? He gave back money that he had taken wrongfully from others. So when we think about giving don't just think about giving in the offering box.

What about giving back? Money which you have taken wrongfully from others in the past. That money that you have in your bank account which is not righteously yours. You have earned it in some wrong way.

You've got to give it back. It's one of the first things that I teach new converts in India. You've got to give back like Zacchaeus.

Otherwise there's a chain on your leg and you're trying to run the Christian race. You won't be able to do it. All your clapping and praising the Lord and doing all those wonderful things are not going to help your progress if you're not right in the area of money.

If you're wrong in the area of money you're wrong in every other area. Remember that. And when he was willing to do that you know what?

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