

LEGACY

OF GRACE DEVOTIONAL
JESUS TAKE THE BILLS

OCTOBER 10, 2021

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Discussion Starter: How would you define wealth with regard to money, possessions, etc.?

Key Text: “Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it.” (Proverbs 13:11)

There was a man who had worked all his life, grew very wealthy, and saved all of his money. However, he had become a miser—he loved his money more than anything. Just before he died, he told his wife, “I want to take my money to the afterlife, So, when I die, I want you to put all my money in the casket with me.” Just a few days later, he died. Just before they closed his casket at the conclusion of his funeral, his wife said, “Wait a moment, please,” and she placed a shoebox into the casket. The wife’s friend observed this, and she said to the wife, “I hope you weren’t foolish enough to actually put all his money in the casket!” The wife replied, “Yes, I promised him I would put every cent of his money in the casket with him. So, I got all of his money together, deposited it into my personal account, and I wrote him a check.”

People have strong feelings about money, and the Bible has much to say about it! With this lesson, we’re launching a four-week series called “Legacy of Grace,” in which we’ll see what Scripture says about wealth, saving, giving, and more.

What Does the Bible Say About Wealth?

Defined simply, wealth is the abundance of valuable possessions or money. We are considered wealthy when we have more than we need to sustain a normal life. Some believe it is immoral to be wealthy: If you have more than enough, then you should spread it around equally. Others say that wealth earned through hard work and wise investments is a personal possession, and no one else has any claim to it. What does the Bible say?

Wealth is morally neutral—it can be used to promote good or to spread evil.

In the Old Testament, wealth sometimes indicated God’s pleasure and blessing on a faithful servant (Deuteronomy 28:1–8). For example, consider Abraham (Genesis 13:2), Jacob (Genesis 30:43), and King Solomon (1 Kings 10:23). However, wealth has never been an accurate barometer of a person’s standing with God. Some righteous people are poor while some wicked people are rich (Psalm 73).

In the New Testament, too, several wealthy people were instrumental in advancing God’s kingdom. For example, Matthew (Luke 5:27–29), Joanna (Luke 8:3), Joseph of Arimathea (Matthew 27:57), Zacchaeus (Luke 19:8), and Lydia (Acts 16:14–15) were all wealthy followers of Christ who used their wealth for God’s glory.

Discuss: Give some examples of when you’ve seen wealth used to glorify God.

One of the most misquoted verses about money and wealth is 1 Timothy 6:10, which says, “*For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil.*” This verse is often misquoted to say that money is evil, but the verse clarifies that the “love of money”—not money itself—leads to evil choices.

Wealth can easily become an idol.

The Bible also warns us that money and wealth can easily become an idol: “*Though your riches increase, do not set your heart on them*” (Psalm 62:10).

Discuss: An idol could be defined as something you set your heart on. Per Psalm 62:10, what does it mean to “set your heart on” riches?

Discuss: What are some warning signs that money may be becoming an idol in someone’s life?

Jesus put wealth into perspective when He warned, “*Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions*” (Luke 12:15). Jesus, who knows our hearts, also warned us about trying to serve two masters (Luke 16:13).

Discuss: How can you tell if you are serving money rather than God as your master?

Discuss: What do you think Jesus meant when He said it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than it was for a rich person to inherit eternal life (Mark 10:25)?

Discuss: Read the short Parable of the Rich Fool in Luke 12:14-21. What are some practical lessons Jesus wants us to learn from this parable?

Viewing money and wealth as a blessing entrusted to us by its rightful Owner, God, helps us keep it all in the right perspective.

Psalm 121:1-2 says, “*I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come?*”² *My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.*” Philippians 4:19 says, “*My God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.*”

Discuss: How does recognizing that all that we are and have comes from God help us to use it all wisely?

Discuss: What is wise about the prayer found in Proverbs 30:7-9?

For Further Study:

The Total Money Makeover: A Proven Plan for Financial Fitness by Dave Ramsey

Christian Financial Concepts at www.crown.org

Debt-Proof Living: How to Get Out of Debt & Stay That Way by Mary Hunt