

Money and Possessions

How Does God Want Me to View My Earthly Possessions?

One of the greatest temptations a believer can face is the tremendous materialism in the world. We are misled to believe that success is measured by material wealth, when as we saw in a previous lesson, success is measured by following God's will. The wrong attitude toward money and possessions leads many people into great harm. The purpose of this lesson is to guide you in managing your resources by establishing a Biblical attitude toward physical possessions.

- I As a believer, you must get out of ownership and into management of your resources.
 - A God owns everything.
Psalm 24:1, 50:10-12
 - B God has entrusted you with the management of a portion of his resources.
I Chronicles 28:1, 29:11-14
 - C God will require an accounting of your stewardship of his resources.
I Corinthians 4:1-5, Luke 16:1-12
- II The amount of money you have is no indication of your true worth to God or man.
 - A God does not condemn people simply for having money, nor does he give special treatment to anyone just because they are poor. Instead, he looks at their attitude. The Bible does not say money is the root of all evil, it says the love of money is the root of all evil, and poor people can love it as much as the rich can.
I Timothy 6:10
 - B Some people are poor because they violate Bible principles with their money. God delights in helping the helpless, but God does not bless those who are poor because of their own sin, laziness and irresponsibility.
Romans 12:11, Proverbs 13:4, 21:17, 25

For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.
(1 Timothy 6:10)

- C Many Bible characters were both wealthy AND right with God.
 - 1 Solomon was one of the wealthiest men in history, with a proper attitude.
Ecclesiastes 2:4-11, 12:13-14
 - 2 Job was the wealthiest man of his day, also with a good attitude.
Job 1:20-22
 - 3 The Lord Jesus Christ was provided for materially by wealthy women.
Luke 8:1-3, John 12:3
- D The poor who are right with God are better than the rich who are not.
Proverbs 15:16, 16:8, 19:1, 28:6
- E Realize the most precious possession you have is your soul, not your things.
Matthew 16:24-26, Job 27:8-9
- F There is always a proper balance to achieve in financial matters. The Bible does not contradict itself, but it deals with issues such as this with balancing truths.
 - 1 The Bible says not to worry about your physical provisions, but it also says you must work and provide for your family.
Matthew 6:25-34, II Thessalonians 3:10-12, I Timothy 5:8
 - 2 The Bible says the love of money is the root of all evil, but it also says the laborer is to be paid and honest work should be rewarded.
I Timothy 5:17-18, Proverbs 13:11, Ecclesiastes 3:13
- III The wrong attitude toward money will affect your relationship with God.
 - A Your heart should always be set on the things of God.
Matthew 6:19-21, Colossians 3:1-4
 - B Possessions can get in the way of your relationship with God if you trust them.
Mark 10:23-27, Proverbs 11:4, 28
 - C You should always depend on God to provide your needs instead of thinking you can provide for yourself without him. Self sufficiency gets in the way of God's blessings.
Philippians 4:19, Deuteronomy 8:10-18
 - D If and when God blesses you materially, do not forget him.
Deuteronomy 6:10-12, Proverbs 30:7-9, Revelation 3:17

E If you lose all your possessions, do not lose your faith in God.
Job 1:20-22

IV The wrong attitude toward money will affect you personally.

A If you make your goal in life to earn vast wealth, you will never be happy.
Ecclesiastes 5:10-15, Proverbs 23:4

B There are many “get rich quick” schemes. Falling prey to them is not wise. NOTE: These schemes are found in the world AND in Christianity! Stay away. These schemes are designed by your enemy to destroy your life in Christ.
Proverbs 20:21, 28:20, 22, I Timothy 6:9

C Be careful of temptation from the media and advertising by making your desires spiritual. Excessive advertising is designed to create covetousness and discontentment.
Psalm 37:4

D Guard against excessive debt. The lure of easy borrowing and purchasing is a snare that will put you in bondage if you are not careful and prudent.
Proverbs 22:7, Romans 13:8

V The wrong attitude toward money will affect your relationship with others around you.

A You cannot measure the character of people by their money. Basing your friendships on material possessions can lead to problems.
Luke 12:15, James 2:1-7, Proverbs 14:20

B Do not be envious of someone else's wealth.
Exodus 20:17, Psalm 49:16-17

C Develop proper character with your personal finances. Your testimony for Jesus Christ will be affected if you are not trustworthy in your financial obligations.
Psalm 37:21, Luke 16:10-12, I Timothy 3:7

D Be honest and ethical in your business dealings with others. Compromising Biblical principles to gain wealth will not bring the blessing of God.
II Corinthians 8:21, Proverbs 10:4, 22

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON:

*Be content with what God has given you. To be content is NOT to have a sour attitude and grudgingly resign yourself to accept your state in life. Contentment is realizing that whatever you have is a blessing from God, and to rest, satisfied in his provision. Contentment is a LEARNED character trait, and sometimes requires adversity to learn it. Paul wrote about contentment while in jail!
Philippians 4:11-13*

Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.
Philippians 4:11-13

- VI An attitude of contentment will result in the blessings of God.
 - A Contentment is not found in things, but in God.
I Timothy 6:6-8, Hebrews 13:5
 - B Contentment results from a proper view of what are TRUE riches. Sometimes it requires sacrificing temporal riches for rewards only God can give.
Hebrews 11:24-26
 - C One of the best ways to develop contentment is to focus on things in life that are far more important than money, and which money cannot buy.
 - 1 Wisdom and truth from the word of God.
Psalm 119:14, 72, 127, Proverbs 23:23, 16:16
 - 2 A righteous life.
Proverbs 16:8, 28:6, Psalm 37:16
 - 3 Quietness, peace, and a good night's sleep.
Ecclesiastes 4:6, 5:12, Proverbs 15:6, 17:1
 - 4 Good health.
Luke 8:43

Basic questions you may be asking:

Does God really want Christians to be rich?

Not really. God wants to bless you and entrust you with as much as you need and can be faithful with. In some Christian's lives, that can be a very substantial amount. But some religious leaders promise you riches if you give them money, and that is a false teaching. If you give them money, THEY will be rich! In many cases, that is their motive.
II Peter 2:1-3

What can I count on for God to provide for me?

God will ALWAYS provide your needs, but not always what you want.
Philippians 4:19, Matthew 6:25-34, Psalm 23:1

What should I do if I am in serious debt and have made a mess out of my finances?

Realize that covetousness is sin. God equates it with idolatry because the desire for things is placed before your desire for a relationship with God.
Colossians 3:5, Ephesians 5:3-5

Just like any other sin, confess it and ask God to cleanse you and change your heart.
I John 1:9

Realize also that God deals with you wherever he finds you. Although he is eager to forgive every sin that is confessed, the consequences of that sin often remain. If it took you years to get into this position, it will not disappear quickly or easily. A serious commitment must be made, and lifestyle changes are required to correct this situation. There are many Biblical programs available to help you. Begin by honoring God with your finances. Seek Biblical guidance from your pastor and from another brother in Christ who is skilled and knowledgeable in these matters.

Do you have any other questions about this subject?

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION:

There are many popular beliefs which are contrary to the truths of the word of God. A discussion of these issues in light of the principles you just learned should give you a proper understanding of this lesson and correct some of these misconceptions:

1.) Explain what it means to “get out of ownership and into management” with your resources.

2.) Why can't a person be truly satisfied by obtaining enough material wealth?

3.) In what ways does money affect relationships we have with God and other people?

4.) Explain what it means to be truly content in life.

Memory Verses:

Philippians 4:11: “Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.”

Philippians 4:19: “But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

Colossians 3:2: “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.”