

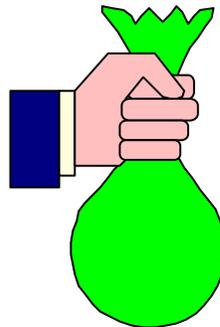
RIGHT INVESTMENTS

There is nothing wrong being good stewards of our money by saving for our future. In some respects superannuation regulations force most people to do this anyway. Many financial advisers say that we should put at least 10% of our income away for our non-income producing retirement. But we should never become reliant on our money or investments.

8. Where did Jesus say we should store our “treasure”, and what kind of treasure is he talking about? (Mat. 6:20)

9. What does Jesus mean by His statement in Luke 12:21? (Note the context)

Let's be a people who control our money, rather than it control us! God can bless us with money so that we can be content and a blessing to others. It's vital that we put God first with our money.



Amen.

LIVING DIFFERENTLY

Part Two

This second series of studies on the remainder of the Beatitudes is designed to show us how Christ expects us to live. We have already seen that if the world lived by the standards of Christ, our societies would be radically different. While our societies may not corporately change, we as individuals can. This is what Christ expects. He not only prescribes how we should change, but He also gives us the supernatural power to do so.

IN CONTROL OR CONTROLLED?



Read Matthew 6:19-24

In our modern society, we are pressured by two kinds of power: sex and money. It appears that ancient Palestine may not have been too different. Jesus had quite a bit to say about immorality, and even more to say about money. Naturally, the Pharisees who clung to their power over people wanted to use these two aspects of power to control people. Whenever people, who have wrongfully used power to control other people, are challenged there is often a strong reaction. This is what Jesus experienced from the Pharisees when He challenged their use of power. Today, when we start talking about these two aspects of power that the Devil likes to use to control people, we too can expect a reaction from unspiritual people.

We have seen that our tithe, the first ten percent of our gross income, is dedicated to God. It is not ours. To take it and use it for our own needs or wants is called robbery (Mal. 3:8). It is also like saying to God, my situation is too difficult for You to overcome, I must now rule my own life- starting with my money. And it is this issue of control that Jesus now addresses. *Just who is controlling who?*

WHAT IS MONEY FOR?

We have been conditioned to think in terms of dollar values for everything. During some recent rescue missions which involved various emergency services, the media was quick to comment on how much they estimated the various search and rescue missions were worth in dollars. Many people feel restricted because of a lack of dollars. Still others feel that they could never amount to anything in life unless they had more money. Recent surveys of young people have shown that the highest priority that most of them have for their lives was to make vast amounts of money. Lotteries are getting bigger and bigger and revealing the heart of our society as it becomes increasingly materialistic.

1. Do we need money?

When you think about it, it's money that we really crave. It's what money does!

2. According to Philippians 4:11, what had Paul learned that would be good for us to learn as well?

Many destinies have died, many businesses never started, many churches have restricted their vision, all because they had bowed before the feet of Money and pledged their allegiance to it, rather than God.

3. Who did Jesus say we had the choice of being the servants of? (Mat. 6:24)

Perhaps this is one of the reasons why tithing is so crucial to the Christian's walk. It is a declaration of whom we serve. No matter what your need, or how desperate things are financially- don't stop honouring God with *His* tithe! Recently in the *Evangel* (August 1997) there was an article about a family with a young child

suffering from AIDS. They had accrued hefty medical and associated debts. When they came to the Lord and started tithing, the blessing of God brought healing for their child, and in a short period of time their debts were wiped out! God is greater than Money!

4. Is being wealthy wrong? Can you be a Christian and have a lot of wealth? What do we notice about these particular disciples of Christ?

Luke 8:3 _____

Matt. 27:57 _____

2Cor. 8:9 _____

1Tim. 6:17 _____

James 1:9-10 _____

5. What does the blessing of the Lord do? (Proverbs 10:22)

God is certainly not against His people becoming wealthy. Riches and godliness is possible (Prov. 22:4).

6. But, what tends to happen to people who pursue wealth? (Prov. 11:28)

Biblical prosperity is having enough to be content and enough to share with others. John Wesley said once that having money was so dangerous that whenever he got some, he tried as quickly as he could to get rid of it!

7. When a person serves Money before God, they are allowing what kind of plant to take root in their lives? (1Tim. 6:10)
