

Manage Money Well
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Luke 16:13-15, 19-31

Sophie Tucker, an actress and singer of a by-gone era is quoted as saying:

“From birth to age 18, a girl needs good parents, from 18 to 35 she needs good looks, from 35 to 55 she needs a good personality, and from 55 on she needs cash.”

We ALL have to deal with our NEED FOR CASH. We can't exist without it. But, how do we MANAGE it properly?

Sir Francis Bacon said:

“Money makes a good servant, but a bad master.”

- What do you think he's really saying?
- Question: What are some ways we can tell if we are a SLAVE TO MONEY?

The Life Application Study Bible offers these questions:

1. Do you think and worry about it (money) frequently?
2. Do you give up doing what you should do or would like to do in order to make more money?
3. Do you spend a great deal of time caring for your possessions?
4. Is it hard for you to give money away?
5. Are you in debt?

Like Sophie Tucker's comment about women over 55, we all "need cash."

- We all "need" money to survive.
- But, there are some questions to consider:
 - "Do we control our money...or does our money control us?"
 - "Do we own our 'stuff'...or does our 'stuff' own us?"
 - "WHOSE MONEY and STUFF is it really? Mine or God's?"
 - Most importantly of all, "Has money replaced God as the MASTER of our lives?"

Luke 16:13-15

New International Version 1984 (NIV1984)

13 “No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.”

14 The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. 15 He said to them, “You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God’s sight.

- Verse 13: Jesus says emphatically "No servant can serve two masters." Then he explains WHY "he will hate the one and love the other..." or "be devoted to one and despise the other."
- Question: Why does that have to be the case? Why would I hate one and love the other?

- Each master is going to insist on PRIORITY. They will both be demanding to be FIRST and sooner or later the servant begins to resent one or the other.
- Think of the example of FIDELITY in marriage. Out of love and commitment a man should be FAITHFUL to his wife. But a MISTRESS offers alluring possibilities and temptations.
- MONEY can be like a MISTRESS if it LURES US AWAY from our FIRST LOVE...our TRUE MASTER...our Heavenly Father.
- Verse 14: Luke tells us some Pharisees were in the audience. How does he describe them? Lovers of money.
- What was their reaction to what Jesus just said? They scoffed, sneered.
- Clearly they DISAGREED STRONGLY with Jesus' teaching that you can't SERVE/LOVE BOTH God and money.
- We know that the Pharisees were the religious leaders...yet, they LOVED MONEY.
- Question: How would these Pharisees be SIMILAR to some of the PROSPERITY GOSPEL teachers of today? They believed you CAN serve both God AND money!

John MacArthur:

"Many of the Pharisees taught that devotion to money and devotion to God were perfectly compatible. This went hand in hand with the commonly-held notion that earthly riches signified divine blessing. Rich people were therefore regarded as God's favorites."

- Verse 15: Jesus called them out: You "justify yourselves" in front of others, but "God knows your hearts."
- What many people regard as SUCCESS...LOVE FOR MONEY... is "DETESTABLE" in God's sight!
- Then beginning in verse 19, Jesus illustrates his teaching.

Luke 16:19-21

New International Version 1984 (NIV1984)

The Rich Man and Lazarus

19 "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. 20 At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores 21 and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

- The contrast couldn't be clearer...a rich man and a beggar. One in a house of luxury, the other begging at the gate.
- Jesus gave us some detail too. What are we told about the rich man's WARDROBE?
- Purple clothing meant it was colored with COSTLY DYES and LINEN probably refers to UNDERGARMENTS imported from Egypt.
- The NIV says the rich man lived "in luxury".
- How does the KJV describe his diet? "fared sumptuously" If we wanted to celebrate a BIG occasion with a special meal...at a pricey place, where might we go? Ruth's Chris, etc.
- The rich man ate like that EVERY DAY.
- What do we know about the beggar? His name (only time someone is named in a parable) Lazarus, which means "God helps"; he's sick...covered in sores; yearns for the scraps from the rich man's table; the dogs lick his sores.

- Question: What do these two verses say about the rich man's PRIORITIES? What do they say about his HEART?
- Follow up question: What would the rich man's lifestyle and actions say about his relationship with God?
- Think about the Pharisees listening to this. Remember what we just read about them? Riches would indicate what? God's blessing. Sickness and poverty then (TO THEM) would indicate what? God's displeasure...sin, etc
- Stay with me...because Jesus is about to SHOCK the Pharisees as He continues...

Luke 16:22-26

22 “The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. 23 In hell,[a] where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. 24 So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’

25 “But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. 26 And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’

Footnotes: Luke 16:23 Greek Hades

- Verses 22 and 23: The contrast is still HUGE...but the TABLES HAVE BEEN TURNED.
- The poor beggar is in Heaven and the rich man is in hell. Actually, the Greek word used is HADES.

HADES - “The Greek god of the underworld was named "Hades." The ancients believed that Hades also was a place located in the lower regions inside the earth...a temporary waiting place for the dead until they received final judgement."

John MacArthur points out:

"The suggestion that a rich man would be excluded from Heaven would have scandalized the Pharisees; especially galling was the idea that a beggar who ate scraps from his table was granted the place of honor next to Abraham."

- I'm convinced we're all going to be surprised when we see who IS and who ISN'T in Heaven! In some cases, TRAGICALLY shocked and surprised.
- Someone who doesn't know the Bible, specifically the Gospel might draw some wrong conclusions about WHY the rich man is in Heaven and the beggar is in hell. Question: What kind of conclusions might they make about WHY?
- The rich man wasn't in hell because he had been rich. And the poor beggar wasn't in Heaven because he had been poor. Only a personal relationship with God determines our eternity. For us, that ONLY COMES through a personal relationship with Christ.
- This passage also underlines a HUGE TRUTH: When death occurs, ETERNITY is determined and CAN'T BE REVERSED. As verse 25 points out, a "great chasm" exists between the 'saved' and the 'unsaved'.

- Back to our scripture... Based on verses 19-21, it didn't appear that Lazarus the poor beggar was on the rich man's 'radar screen'. Now, in verses 23 and 24 he not only SEES him, he KNOWS HIS NAME.
- Verse 24: What HASN'T CHANGED about the rich man even in Hades? Still self centered. Still feels entitled.
- The rich man changes his request...

Luke 16:27-31

27 “He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father’s house, 28 for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’

29 “Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’

30 “‘No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’

31 “He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

- The rich man BEGS for Lazarus to come back from the dead to REACH his five brothers so they'll avoid hell.

The rich man here in Luke 16 proves a point: The most motivated soul winners, are in hell...with no way to REPENT, CONFESS, and PROFESS.

- Though we're primarily focused on the proper view of MONEY...there's some important THEOLOGY and GOSPEL teaching on ETERNAL DESTINY in these last four verses.
- For the person who doesn't have a relationship with Christ...the sand is slipping through the hourglass.
- Verse 30: What does the rich man think it will take to reach his five brothers? Lazarus coming back to life.
- Verse 31: What does Abraham counter with? If the POWER OF SCRIPTURE/THE GOSPEL won't persuade them...no MIRACULOUS SIGN will either!
- Even those of us who are believers in Christ sometimes think we need to MANIPULATE in order to PERSUADE unbelievers. We forget that it's the POWER of the GOSPEL that reaches them.

Romans 1:16 says.. I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Tim Keller writes:

Commentators have pointed out that [asking for a messenger to his brothers] is not a gesture of compassion, but rather an effort at blame-shifting. He is saying that he did not have a chance, he did not have adequate information to avoid hell. That is clearly his point, because Abraham says forcefully that people in this life have been well-informed through the Scriptures. It is intriguing to find exactly what we would expect-even knowing he is in hell and knowing God has sent him there, he is deeply in denial, angry at God, unable to admit that it was a just decision, wishing he could be less miserable (v.24) but in no way willing to repent or seek the presence of God.

J.I.Packer writes:

"Scripture sees hell as self-chosen . . . [H]ell appears as God's gesture of respect for human choice. All receive what they actually chose, either to be with God forever, worshipping him, or without God forever, worshipping themselves." (J.I.Packer, Concise Theology p.262-263.)

So, What's the Takeaway?

- We don't get to Heaven by being generous with our money and caring for those less fortunate...however, if we're BOUND for Heaven, those characteristics SHOULD be a part of who we are.
- Being MASTERED by money isn't just being GREEDY or STINGY...it can also be displayed by seeing "money in the bank" as our security in place of GOD as our REAL SECURITY.
- We need to remember, it's not OUR money after all...it all belongs to God we're just entrusted to manage it.
- Finally, as we just read...the clock is ticking, the sand is slipping, for those who don't have a personal relationship with Christ. That fact should motivate BELIEVERS to share the Gospel and UNBELIEVERS to ACCEPT God's forgiveness.