

SERIES DISCUSSION GUIDE

GOD DOESN'T WANT YOUR MONEY, HE WANTS YOUR HEART - CLAY SCROGGINS SEPTEMBER 29, 2024

If you would like to watch the message, visit rpc.me/messages.

LEADER

You go first:

- Introduce yourself.
- How long have you been attending RPC?
- Describe your family.

Have everyone introduce themselves using the same questions.

ICEBREAKER

- If you were granted one talent in life what would you choose:
 - Play a musical instrument
 - Sing
 - Act
 - Write a book, movie, or play
 - Paint
- What was your favorite subject In school?

MESSAGE RECAP

This week's message is week 2 in a 3-week series on the Biblical view of money. Be a shrewd steward so you can be a generous giver. Being a generous giver requires Priority giving, Percentage giving, and Progressive giving. Remember, God does not need anything from us, but He wants things for us and one of those things he wants to give us is peace and freedom that come with generosity.

MAIN POINTS

- Do you believe there is life after death?
- Clay opened with a discussion around being fired from a job.

Have you ever been fired from a job? Let me be more specific...have you ever been fired from a job where you kind of knew it was coming? You didn't exactly crush it. You played a lot of Candy Crush but didn't

do a lot of work. And you kind of knew it was coming? That's the story I want to tell you about today. And let me warn you, it's kind of confusing because Jesus seems to be celebrating someone who does the wrong thing. It seems he's using a bad example to teach a good lesson.

- Context for this Parable:
 - Jesus gave us about 40 parables recorded in the four Gospels accounts. Of the 40, 1 out of 3 of them are about money.
 - Dominate role in the teaching of Jesus because it has a dominant role in our lives.
 - There was a study done that showed we spend more of our time thinking about money than anything else we think about.
 - How to acquire it, how to acquire more of it, how to spend it, how to save it, how to invest it, how to borrow it, counting it, loaning it, and sometimes giving it away.

READ

Luke 16:1-15

1. Jesus told his disciples: "There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions.

- Missing conjunction...de kai. Meaning – "And Jesus" or "Jesus also..." This was connected to Luke 15. Kingdom of God is like...
- Immediate clue as the theme of the Parable...namely, the prudent use of money.
- This comes just after the Parable of the Two Sons. That was an example of a terribly wasteful use of money and now this is an example of a wise use of money.
- Two primary characters – the owner and the manager.

2. So, he called him in and asked him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.'

- Not clear whether his poor management was deliberate or not.
- What is clear is that he's being fired for poor performance.

3. "The manager said to himself, 'What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I'm not strong enough to dig, and I'm ashamed to beg—

4. I know what I'll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.'

- Had a "eureka moment" or an epiphany. Quite resourceful guy.
- Self-preservation mode: What am I going to do when I have no job?
- The manager decided to do something that would enable him to get another job with one of the people who owed his master money.
- He cuts his commission to garner favor for the future. First debtor:

5. “So he called in each one of his master’s debtors. He asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’

6. “‘Nine hundred gallons of olive oil,’ he replied. “The manager told him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred and fifty.’ Second debtor:

7. “Then he asked the second, ‘And how much do you owe?’ “ ‘A thousand bushels of wheat,’ he replied. “He told him, ‘Take your bill and make it eight hundred.’

Important Note: 1) Did the manager dishonestly cheat his master out of what others owed him, or 2) Did he deduct the interest that would have come to him as the agent for each transaction? The first alternative is a real possibility. However, it seems unlikely that Jesus would have proceeded to commend the manager and hold him up to the disciples as an example to follow, if he was that dishonest (v. 9). Furthermore, if the manager had chosen to cheat his employer further, he probably would have ended up in jail, rather than in the good graces of his master's debtors.

8. “The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly.

- Why was he characterized as dishonest? o It could have been because of how he acted here, or it could have been because of how he had squandered the money in the past.
- Either way, he didn’t praise his dishonesty. He praised his shrewd actions.

9. “The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light.

- People of the light = Those who live in the light of God’s revelation...living under the rule of his kingdom.
- Jesus’ point: prudent dealings characterize unbelievers more than believers.

REVIEW: Does God just want your money? No. God already has your money. Your money is God’s money. If you believe God just wants your money, you’ll never give enough, you’ll never find contentment, and happiness will be relegated to moments.

Stewardship: Using God-given money and resources for God-given goals and objectives.

BIBLICAL APPLICATION KEY LINE: *verse 9 I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves.*

- You’ve heard that money can’t buy happiness. True. But generosity toward others does create influence for you.

Verse 9 I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.

Key Takeaways:

1. Certain things last. Wealth is not one of those.

2. Use your temporal wealth for eternal worth.
3. The point isn't that money is evil. It's that money is a tool. It's to be used for things that really matter.
4. Wealth is a wonderful tool and a horrible god.
5. Wealth will fail you! It does not fulfill.

Vese 10-13 *"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? • How you handle worldly wealth is a picture of how you'll handle God's true riches. • This is all a test. And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own? "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."*

- This word for money is the Greek term Mammon = wealth.
 - Means more than just money. Literally means: What one trusts.
 - God doesn't just want your money. God wants your heart and your heart is tied to your money.
 - We can't worship money and love God.
 - God wants us to use our money, not worship our money.
 - We don't worship God because of the money. We worship God with the money. Be a shrewd steward so you can be a generous giver.

APPLICATION: Generosity is not a destination. It's a trend line. Are you trending toward generosity? Here's a simple plan on becoming a generous giver:

GENEROUS GIVING:

I - Priority

- It's not yours. It's mine. You're just stewarding what I've given you. First fruits.
- Give, Save, Live, not Live, Save, Give on what's left.

II - Percentage

- Does making more money equate to more happiness?
- No - \$75,000 is the magic number. Anything below, it grows. Anything above, no change. People say money doesn't buy happiness. Except, according to a new study from Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School, it sort of does — up to about \$75,000 a year. The lower a person's annual income falls below that benchmark, the unhappier he or she feels. But no matter how much more than \$75,000 people make, they don't report any greater degree of happiness.

III - Progressive

- That it would grow as your income grows.
- He gives us more money not to increase our standard of living but to increase our standard of giving.
- For some, giving ten percent is too high. For some, it's too low.
- The idea of maturity though is just that...that you would grow. As you follow Jesus more, your generosity should grow.

CLOSING Be a shrewd steward so you can be a generous giver. So do you believe in a life after this life? You either do or you don't. If there's not, none of this matters. Spend every dollar on yourself. If there is, then all of this matters. All of what you have matters. If there's a life after this life, it lasts longer and matters more than this life.

QUESTIONS

1. Why is Jesus is a better God than money? How deeply do you believe that?
2. How does money want to enslave you?
3. If Jesus set your budget, what would be different?
4. When it comes to being a priority, percentage, and progressive giver, what needs to change in your life?

APPLICATION QUESTION

- What is one "a-ha" you will take from the weekend message and our discussion?
- How will you apply the message to your life this week?

CLOSE IN PRAYER: your closing prayer could include the following:

1. *Gratitude.* Thank you, Lord, for giving us this time together to study Your Word.
2. *Acknowledgment of "a-ha" moments.* We are so grateful for the new awareness and insights you gave us today.
3. *Request for help throughout the week.* As we go back to our homes, families, and workplaces, please remind us of what we've learned today and give us the courage and strength to obey whatever You are calling us to do. Amen.

LEADERS: Please take attendance and follow up with anyone who did not attend this week.