

The Journey to Biblical Manhood

Challenge 8: Money

Session 1: The Spiritual Physics of Money

Unedited Transcript

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Good morning, men. If you would, please turn in your Bibles to Matthew chapter six. So, we are doing the journey to biblical manhood, let's do a shout out as we get going here. So hey, this is a group of men that have been meeting for over 30 years in Colorado Springs, and they recently have started using the video bible study, so they're joining us on Wednesday mornings at 6:30 am. 25 guys. Led by Rex Schultz. They meet for bible study, spiritual growth, and personal accountability. They're called the PK Men's Group, but I wonder if you would join me in giving them a warm and a very rousing Man in the Mirror welcome. One, two, three, who-ah. Welcome men, we are honored to have you join us. Such history there, great to have you. All right so, yeah, the journey to biblical manhood. We're in challenge eight today, the faith and life objectives, they're on the table. We're going to do the head today. The topic of this message today is the Spiritual Physics of Money. The Spiritual Physics of Money.

So, when I tell you that so and so over here is a rich man, what does that tell you? It just tells you that he's rich. To learn that somebody is rich gives you no more information about their relationship with God, then for me to tell you that they own a pocketknife or cellphone. I and you, or grammatically, you and I, we each know rich people, rich men, who love God with all their heart. We also know rich people who are God haters, or apathetic or agnostic or lukewarm. We also know poor people who love God, but we also know poor people who have rejected their relationship with God. So money, by itself, doesn't really give us a lot of information about where somebody is on the spiritual journey. Now I am so excited to teach you from the scriptures this morning what I've been learning this week, so let's get started! Is it okay for a Christian to want to be rich? What? What? Matthew seven says, "Hey look, I'm teaching not you, okay, so I'll give the teaching you don't have to give the teaching," I love to mess with you guys.

I really do, as long as you don't mess back. Matthew, chapter six, verse 19. This is Jesus sermon on the mount, "Do not store up for yourself treasures on Earth where moth and rust destroy and thieves break in and steal, but store up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy and thieves do not break in and steal, for where your treasure is there will your heart be also." Wow. So, what in the world does that mean? Does that mean that you should take the money that you don't need and then store it up in Heaven? Or is it some other piece of information that we should have in order to make an informed biblical decision? Well, the number one rule of interpretation in the branch of theology I was trained in, is that scripture interprets scripture. What does that mean? It means that I don't really care what your personal opinion is about what this text says. I'm more interested in what the other texts in the Bible say that amplify and bring to life the yeasty meaning of this particular passage.

If you've ever involved in one of these bible studies, you know where you sit around, you read a text and say, "Okay, now let's go around the table and you tell me what that means to you." That's called personal opinion bible study, that's not bible study. That's really the integration of what we would like the bible to say, compared to what it actually says. What we're going to do here, is we're going to do a little looking at the text. So we've seen, "Don't store up", well what does that mean? Store up, well it means store up. Keep your thumb there, or your finger there, and turn back to Proverbs chapter 21. Proverbs chapter 21, verse 20. So, it says in this, "In the house of the wise are stores,"there's that word store, "Are stores of choice food and oil." All right? So, don't store up for yourself treasures on Earth, and then do store up for yourself stores of choice food and oil. So which is it?

Which is it? Right? Let's turn to, keep your thumb there, or finger there too, and turn to, well it might be hard to do, but over a couple pages to proverbs 27, verses 23 and 24. "Be sure to know the condition of your flocks. Give careful attention to your herds, for riches do not endure forever." So here it is, here it is, here it is, the brevity of riches are announced and also the wisdom of being careful with what God has given you. All right, now turn back to proverbs chapter 13, verse 14. Proverbs chapter 13, verse four. "The sluggard craves and gets nothing, but the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied." All right? Then, psalm 37:4 says something similar. Delight yourself in the lord and he will give you the desires of your heart, so is it okay for a Christian to want to be rich? Jeremiah chapter 29, verse seven, Jeremiah tells the exiles in Babylon to "Work for the peace and prosperity of the city, to where you have been exiled."

Then look at this verse 13 and the first part of verse four, it says "The sluggard craves and gets nothing," so the opposite, is it okay for a Christian to want to be poor? Probably not. Probably not, but it is okay for a Christian to want to be rich? Turn to Ecclesiastes chapter four, verse five. Obviously you can't turn to all these as quickly as I'm doing it. So don't worry about it if you're not, it says, "The fool folds his hands and ruins himself. The fool folds his hands and ruins himself." So it is okay for a Christian to want to be rich? We haven't answered that yet, but one thing we have answered is that you're a fool if you don't want to be diligent, if you don't want to, if you want to be a sluggard you know, and if you want to fold your hands you will ruin yourself. There are many perils, there are many perils that are announced in the scriptures that have to do with money. Turn with me to Ecclesiastes chapter five, one page over, verse 10.

"Whoever loves money never has enough. Whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income," so there's a peril, "As goods increase so do those who consume them, and what benefit are they to the owner except to feast his eyes on them." Michael Novack writes "The aftertaste of affluence is boredom." Verse 12, "The sleep of a laborer is sweet whether he eats little or much, but," watch this, the peril, "The abundance of a rich man permits him no sleep." Back over in chapter four, verse six it says, "Better one handful with tranquility than two handfuls with toil and a chasing after the wind." So what is it? Is it okay for a Christian to want to be rich? Scripture interprets scripture. Here is the scriptures and then this capstone scripture, the golden key to give you your answer, turn to Luke chapter 12, Luke chapter 12. By the way, there are several parables that make the same point roughly that is made here in Luke chapter 12, starting at verse 16. Jesus speaks, "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop.

He thought to himself, what shall I do? I have no place to store," there's that word store, "My crops. Then he said this, this is what I'll do, I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all of my," store, again, "All my grain and goods. I'll say to myself, you have plenty of good things laid up, stored up for many years. Take life easy, eat, drink, and be merry, but," parable, "But God said to him, "You fool," we've heard the word fool in a few of these texts already, "This very night your life

will be demanded from you. Then, who will get what you have prepared for others?" No, who will get what you have prepared for yourself, there's a hint, there's a hint, and here it is, BOOM! Verse 21. "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself, but is not rich toward God." So it is okay for a Christian to want to be rich?

It's an irrelevant question. What God wants us to do is to store up for ourselves, the wise man stores of choice food and oil, to take care of ourselves so that we will not be burden on others. Then to be, with the rest of it, to be rich to our God. What those percentages are, and what that looks like, that's up to you. I can't tell you what God's will is for you in that area. In fact, no one can tell you what God's will is for your life on anything, unless it's specifically commanded or prohibited by scripture. Everything else is legal. Everything else is lawful, everything else is in the Anaphora (Latin word), the gray. You have the black, you have the white, and then you have in the middle, you have the gray. So I can't tell you what home to buy, I can't tell you what job to take, I can't tell you what city to live in, I can't tell you how much money you ought to make, and I can't tell you how much money you ought to give away.

You see the perils. You see what it means to be a fool, to be lazy. You see what it means to store up for yourself and not be rich toward God. Is it okay for a Christian to want to be rich? Well, let me give you one more verse. Turn to first Timothy, chapter six. First Timothy, chapter six. I love these days where we're really going 60 miles an hour in the Word. First Timothy, chapter six, verse seven. So, this is why Jesus has said the cautionary thing, and many other cautionary things about wanting to be rich. Remember, he said it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for the rich man to enter Heaven. Very cautionary. Here's the cautionary reason, the one that I like the most personally. "For we brought nothing into the world and we can take nothing out of it. If we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People," here it is, watch this, "People who want to get rich," is it okay for a Christian to want to be rich?

Here's the answer, "People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction." If you've ever wanted to be rich and God allowed that to happen, using your free will to overcome his preferred will, then you know what this verse is talking about. That is certainly happened to me, because my first life philosophy was that money will solve my problems and success will make me happy. The one that I pursue with great diligence, you know until God, in the brutality of his grace, rescued me from destroying myself. Reading on, "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves," pierced themselves, "With many griefs." Some people, not everybody, so is it okay for a Christian to want to be rich? Here's the problem with wanting to be rich if you're Christian, this is not the big idea, but it's big enough you might want to write it down. All the benefits of money are temporal, all the risks of money are eternal. Yes? Got it.

All the benefits of money are temporal. All the risks of money are eternal. That's what these scriptures are telling us. Physics, the spiritual physics of money, we have two things trying to occupy the same space, it's very difficult to get two objects to occupy the same space. Two objects of the same volume trying to occupy a space that only has room for one. Here's the Big Idea of the day, trying to love God and money is like trying to love two women. Neither will be happy. **Trying to love God and money is like trying to love two women. Neither will be happy.** Just let me ask you, don't raise your hands, how many of you have ever loved two women? I mean really loved two women. We had a guy at the bible study, came to the bible study once, first time visitor, and he was married to one woman and loved her, and in love with another woman. I was convinced after listening to him, you know, he may have been tricking himself and me, but I was pretty sure that he actually did love both of these women.

Neither of them were happy. Neither of them were happy. Or maybe you got a girl on the side, nobody in this room, but some of you online, you may have a girl on the side. If those two women know about each other, which one's going to be happy? Neither one of them is going to be happy, and money, it's inanimate obviously, but if money had a mind, it would hate God. If you love God and money, God's not going to be happy. We're going to look at this in the scripture, can God and money coexist? Let's look at Matthew, back to Matthew six. Gosh I said keep your finger there so long ago, I took mine out a long time ago. Let's see, Matthew chapter six. Yes! Verse 24. "No one can serve two masters." No one can serve two women. I'm talking about in the spiritual way, okay. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or else the other way around. Oh, you cannot serve both God and money, or mammon. So, can God and money coexist? Yes!

God wants to bless us. Especially he wants to bless us when we live after him. When we're living, seeking after him. He loves to bless us. "Delight yourself in the lord and he will give you the desires of your heart." Philippians, it's written down so you don't have to look it up on your text there, Philippians 4:19, "But my God will supply all of your needs according to his riches in glory through Christ Jesus." My God will meet all your needs. So can God and money coexist? Absolutely they can coexist. Here's the problem, you can't love them both, you can't love them both. The text does not say that you should not serve both God and money, that would be a priority choice. That would be advisable, it's not advisable to do that. That would be a priority choice. You should not serve both God and money. It could have said, you cannot, it said "You must not. You must not serve both God and money," that's an accountability issue, and that's a moral choice.

So if God had said, "You should not" serve both God and money, he'd be telling you to make this a priority. If he told you that you must not serve both God and money, then he would be telling you that it's a moral choice. He doesn't say that. There's a third thing. The first is advisability, the second is accountability, but the third is impossibility. He says you cannot, you cannot serve both God and money. So can God and money coexist? Absolutely, because God wants us to have it and we need it. This money love thing, oh my gosh, it just doesn't work. This money love thing just doesn't work. Now God has given, you know we're not going to get into the, we're in the head piece this week, we'll do heart and hands, but you know there's a pressure, there's a safety valve for this pressure cooker. You know, if you got too much money, if you got too much money and you need to get rid of some of it, God has given you a way to do that.

It's called tithes and offerings. It's called tithes and offerings, it's generosity. Generosity is how, generosity is the safety valve on the pressure cooker in which you've been loading your money so that you don't blow it up and take out a lot of other people with you. That's another message for another day. The main thing here today is that we understand that trying to love both God and money is like trying to love two women. Neither of them is going to be happy. Then finally, so in times of great need it's important for us to understand that God will sustain us, because you know money is always an issue. Does anybody not have a money problem today? Raise your hand. Okay, I'd like to talk to you about being a donor to Man in the Mirror then. You know how much it cost to pull off this bible study, you know around the world and everything? About \$100,000. You know how much we get out of this room? Yeah, that would do it, that would do it.

Yeah. Yeah, we get a few hundred dollars a week, so what was I even talking about? I don't know. Oh back to the text. So in times of, it's important for us to know that, and to me this is, okay so here it is, here it is, here it is. What I'm about to give you is the wisdom of God. The wisdom of God. If this has never made sense to you, one possible reason might be that you have been trying to be in control. You

have been trying to love both God and money. Here's the thing, here's the thing, here's the thing, when you try to control the situation, trying to control any situation results in the immediate loss of wisdom. That's another big idea. Gosh, got too many ideas here today, but trying to control the outcome or the situation results in the immediate loss of wisdom. If you've had a hard time with this text or ready to look, have you been trying to be in control of the money deal, rather than letting God be in control?

Jesus says, "Therefore I tell you don't worry about your life. What you're going to eat or drink." I'm sure he didn't say it like that, but you know, I don't know how he said it, wouldn't that have been cool? Just a thought. "Or about your body, what you will wear, is not life more than food and the body? More important than clothes. Look at the birds of the air, they do not sow or reap or store, or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly father feeds them". The wee pets and, I just love watching the white egrets and the blue herons down on the lake shore. Being provided for by God. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you worrying about your life can add a single hour and why do you worry about clothes? See the lilies of the field, they do not labor or spin, yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all of his glorious splendor was clothed like one of these.

If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and gone tomorrow, thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, oh you of little faith. You don't have to be a rich man, you don't have to love money. So do not worry saying what should we drink, what should we wear, for the unbelievers run after all these things. Your heavenly father knows that you need them. Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all of these things shall be added to you. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day, each day has enough trouble of its own. God will take care of you. You don't need to want to be rich. He's going to take care, be rich toward God, he will most certainly always be rich toward you. You don't have to try to please God, please money, you don't have to love both God and money, you don't have to try to love two women. You don't have to do it.

When you are having money problems, and look, our ministry, it's summer, we are absolutely running on fumes and we have been, I mean I have no idea how it's going to work out. I mean, I do know, actually let me take that back, I know exactly how it's going to work out, but I have no idea how it's going to, what I know is going to happen it's going to work out. Right? In fact, you know, you get to a point where you're, you know if you have a little money, you know you're trying to control it you know, because you say, "Oh just a little human effort, and I can make this work," hey, it's so far gone I can't do anything about it, so freedom! Freedom! You know, I'm loose baby, I'm loose. I don't have anything to worry about. I'm banking on the truth of God's word. That in times of great need God will sustain us. I've been telling like our president, Brett Clemmer, I say look, we've been around for 31 years.

I started, left business, this bible study 31 years, I left business in '91. Every year we've had one or two times where it's been like this. I'm still standing. I'm still standing. I feel like it's, you know, and personally I'm still standing. I mean I think it's pretty good that I'm in my 60s and I'm only two weeks behind. I mean, that's not bad. That's not bad. God is never more near when he seems far away. Another big idea. God is never more near than when we seems far away. That's the whole counsel of God. We'll attest to that. Big idea today is this, so don't do it. Don't do it. Save yourself, save yourself. Listen, trying to love God and money, it's a bad bet. It's a bad bet. It's easier to go through the eye of the needle. It's a bad bet. The big idea today, trying to love God and money is like, it's like trying to love two women.

Nobody's going to be happy. Nobody's going to be happy. Hey, not only will neither of them be happy, but neither will you.

Let's pray. Heavenly father, thank you so much for your word, that scripture will interpret itself, that we can understand even the most difficult, complex questions have answers. Even though there's a lot of mystery that are surrounding, we have all that we need for every matter of both faith and life, we can find in your word and through working that out together in community. We thank you and we ask you now to tutor our hearts in the truth of today's message. In Jesus name, and everybody say. Amen.