

**BACK TO THE FUTURE - 7**  
**Having the Right View of Wealth**  
**Matthew 6:19-21**

**Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**

Human beings are naturally thing-oriented. We are strongly inclined to be wrapped up in seeking, acquiring, enjoying, and protecting material possessions. In prosperous cultures such as those in which most Westerners live, the propensity to build our lives around things is especially great.

The Bible does not condemn wealth, in fact, God has blessed many of His followers with great wealth. The Bible does condemn wealth received through illegitimate means and it warns against accumulating wealth for its own sake.

**Do not overwork to be rich; because of your own understanding, cease! Will you set your eyes on that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away like an eagle toward heaven. Proverbs 23:4-5**

The Apostle Paul summed up the attitude we should have concerning wealth.

**Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. 1 Timothy 6:6-9**

It is scriptural to work hard to provide for ourselves and our families. The idea of modern socialism which provides for those who refuse to work by taking from those who do violates

biblical principles.

**For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner not working at all, but are busybodies. Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread 2Thessalonians 3:10-12**

While we are to help the poor especially those who are disabled and unable to help themselves, it is wrong for those who have the ability and opportunity to provide for themselves to expect the government or anyone else to do it for them.

**But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. 1 Timothy 5:8**

Having a right view of wealth involves not making an idol of our possessions and becoming greedy for things, but it also includes working hard with the abilities which God has given us to have the things we need.

**And you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth...Deuteronomy 8:18**

## **1. UNDERSTANDING THE USE OF WEALTH**

In our text, Jesus is not advocating poverty as a means to spirituality. While in one case, Jesus told a wealthy young man to sell his possessions and give to the poor, the young man's wealth was his idol. The problem was not in the wealth itself, but the man's unwillingness to part with it. The Lord did not specifically require His disciples to give up all their money and other possessions to follow Him, although it may be that some of them voluntarily did so. He did require obedience to His commands no matter what that cost. The price was too high for the wealthy young ruler, to whom possessions were the first priority.

Both the Old and New Testaments recognize the right

to material possessions that are honestly acquired. God has made many promises of material blessing to those who belong to and are faithful to Him. The foundational truth that underlies the commandments not to steal or covet is the right of personal property. Stealing and coveting are wrong because what is stolen or coveted rightfully belongs to someone else.

God expects and commands His children to be generous and thankful concerning material blessings. But He also makes it clear that we are to enjoy the blessings He gives us.

**Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who give us richly all things to enjoy. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. 1 Timothy 6:17-19**

We do not give of our possessions in order to acquire eternal life, but generous giving is an evidence that we are living in the light of eternity.

The Bible counsels us to work hard to provide for our families, to make reasonable plans for the future, to make wise investments, to give to the poor, and to give to the Lord's work. But if we are acquiring wealth only for wealth's sake or to spend only on ourselves, we are sinning. When we accumulate possessions simply for our own sakes -whether to hoard or spend selfishly - those possessions become idols.

If God has blessed us with possessions, then we are to honor Him with the use of those possessions.

**Honor the LORD with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of all your increase; so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine. Proverbs 3:9-10**

## **2. STORING UP WEALTH FOR ETERNITY**

Nothing we own is completely safe from destruction or theft. And even if we keep our possessions perfectly secure during our entire lives, we are certainly separated from them at death. Many millionaires will be heavenly paupers, and many paupers will be heavenly millionaires.

While it can be said that you can't take it with you, there is a sense in which you can. God intends for us to enjoy the blessings He gives us in this life, but we must always remember - **THIS LIFE IS TEMPORARY!**

While we are to enjoy our possessions, use them in the right ways, share them with others, and give of them to God, we must always keep this truth before us:

**... one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses. Luke 12:15**

Living life God's way involves understanding that we are stewards not owners. Everything we are and everything we have is because of God. Since this life is to be lived in preparation for eternity, we are to use our "possessions" in view of eternity.

**For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 2 Corinthians 5:10**

We lay up treasures in heaven by living always with a view of eternity. Does the way you spend your time, spend your money, and use your possessions reflect a view of eternity? If you knew you only had a few weeks left on this earth, would you do things differently?

**Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 1 Corinthians 3:12-13**

Gold, silver, and precious stones are not necessarily in reference to the use of our finances in this life, but rather describe the works we do in general. Gold, silver, and precious

stones describe the things we do, the sacrifices we make, the lives we live for the glory of God in this life. Wood, hay, and straw describe wasted resources and time or efforts made with the wrong motives. What are you building in heaven today?

### **3. REVEALING THE MOTIVES OF THE HEART**

If the heart is right, everything else will fall into place. *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.* The location of the treasure indicates where the heart already is.

**But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. 2 Corinthians 9:6-8**

God's people give of themselves and their resources because God first of all does a work in our hearts. We don't give to get, but God blesses us when we do give so that we may give more. A generosity in giving indicates a heart which is right with God but also brings blessings upon the giver.

**Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you. Luke 6:38**

The way at which you look at possessions and the way you handle them is a reflection of your heart.

**Now may He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God. 2 Corinthians 9:1-11**

Use your possessions wisely keeping eternity in view.