

Title: Money Isn't Enough

Text: Proverbs 11:4

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Place: Decatur Church of God

Introduction: Way back in the sixty's I was part of a youth organization called The Boy Scouts. I have a deep appreciation for their continued work and applaud our young men who partner with them even today.

Back then I worked each year to acquire merit badges that allowed me to progress in rank until I reached the goal of becoming an Eagle Scout. Years of work...it would have been so much easier if I could just have purchased the patch and put it on a uniform. But it would have meant nothing.

Money wasn't enough and isn't enough.

Proverbs 11:4

*Wealth is worthless in the day of wrath,
but righteousness delivers from death.*

* Richard Stearns wrote, In 1987, the largest, single-day stock market crash since 1929 took place. In one day [my wife, Renee] and I lost more than one-third of our life's savings and the money we had put aside for our kids' college education. I was horrified and became like a man obsessed, each night working past midnight, analyzing on spreadsheets all that we had lost, and the next day calling in orders to sell our remaining stocks and mutual funds to prevent further losses. (Of course that turned out to be the absolute worst thing I could have done.)

I was consumed with anguish over our lost money—and it showed. One night when I was burning the midnight oil, Renee came and sat beside me. "Honey," she said, "this thing is consuming you in an unhealthy way. It's only money. We have our marriage, our health, our friends, our children, and a good income—so much to be thankful for. You need to let go of this and trust God." Don't you hate it when someone crashes your pity party? I didn't want to let go of it. I told her I felt responsible for

our family and that she didn't understand. It was my job to worry about things like this.

She suggested we pray about it—something that hadn't occurred to me—so we did. At the end of the prayer, to my bewilderment, Renee said, "Now I think we need to get out the checkbook and write some big checks to our church and ministries we support. We need to show God that we know this is his money and not ours." I was flabbergasted at the audacity of this suggestion, but in my heart I knew she was right. So that night we wrote some sizable checks, put them in envelopes addressed to various ministries, and sealed them. And that's when I felt the wave of relief. We had broken the spell that money had cast over me. It freed me from the worries that had consumed me. I actually felt reckless and giddy—"God, please catch us, because we just took a crazy leap of faith."

Money isn't enough!

Jeremiah 9:23-24

²³ This is what the LORD says: "Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, ²⁴ but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the LORD.

I. MONEY ISN'T ENOUGH FOR ETERNAL SECURITY AND HAPPINESS.

- A. Wealth brings a false security.
 1. Human wisdom – Nebuchadnezzar
 2. Military might – Jericho
 3. Economic plenty – Egypt
- B. Happiness is knowing God.
 1. It is knowing the heart of God.

2. It is understanding how he graciously deals with people.

*A bank teller was encouraging an elderly gentleman to take an application for a new plastic identification card for an ATM machine. She explained that he would be able to get cash any time of the day or night.

He declined saying, “Lady, anything I’d need money for that late at night, I shouldn’t be doing anyway.”

II. MONEY ISN’T ENOUGH FOR A GOOD NAME.

Proverbs 22:1

A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.

A. You can’t buy a good reputation.

* Live so that you wouldn’t be ashamed to sell the family parrot to the town gossip.

—Will Rogers, actor, writer, and speaker, 1879–1935

1. A good reputation is earned.
2. It causes people to think better of us the longer we are around.

B. Money can’t create good character.

* In March 2009, Bernie Madoff pleaded guilty to 11 federal felonies and admitted to turning his wealth management business into a massive Ponzi scheme that defrauded thousands of investors of billions of dollars. Madoff said he began the Ponzi scheme in the early 1990s. However, federal investigators believe the fraud began as early as the 1970s, and those charged with recovering the missing money believe the investment operation may never have been legitimate. The amount missing from client accounts, including fabricated gains, was almost \$65 billion. The court-

appointed trustee estimated actual losses to investors of \$18 billion. On June 29, 2009, he was sentenced to 150 years in prison, the maximum allowed.

1. Good character is developed over time.
2. Good character is created through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

*The “seven” chosen in Acts were men of wisdom and good character. They weren’t chosen by their worldly accumulations, God was at work in their lives.

Mark 8:36

What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?

III. MONEY CANNOT BUY LIFE FOR YOUR SOUL.

A. There is a time when your soul will be weighed.

*The rich fool built bigger barns, but he died anyway.

B. What would you give—that your soul might have life?

*My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness; I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus’ name.

IV. MONEY CAN’T CREATE A HOPE FIXED ON GOD.

1 Timothy 6:17

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

- A. The clear-headedness, hard work, and good sense, which the Gospel introduces into the believer's life often leads to increased prosperity.
 - 1. Guard against being high-minded (proud).
 - 2. Depend upon the Giver of life not upon uncertain riches.

*Mark Twain in *The Revised Catechism* wrote, "What is the chief end of man?—to get rich. In what way?—dishonestly if we can; honestly if we must. Who is God, the one and only true? Money is God. Gold and Greenbacks and Stock—father, son, and ghosts of same, three persons in one; these are the true and only God, mighty and supreme."

- B. God is the giver.
 - 1. God gives with compassion and love.
 - 2. All is of God, both wealth and the ability to acquire it.

*On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; All other ground is sinking sand, All other ground is sinking sand.

V. MONEY ISN'T ENOUGH TO MAKE UP ONE'S MIND AND SETTLE ALWAYS ON THE RIGHT SIDE.

Hebrews 11:24-26

²⁴ *By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. ²⁵ He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. ²⁶ He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.*

- A. The right side is the result of an inward decision.
 - 1. It may involve an outward, courageous refusal.

*Say “no” to drugs. (sexual sin, stealing, gossip)

2. The right side results from a strong character

*Joseph was tempted in Potiphar’s house, but he had already made the inward decision.

B. Choosing the right side indicates that we are participating with the people of God.

1. We are not willing to sell out to the pleasures of sin.
2. We are willing to wear the stigma associated with God’s Anointed.
 - a. There will be those who seek to reproach Christ and us.

*Many in the entertainment industry make light of our faith and our commitment to living right.

b. Will you make the right choice?

*Moses was willing to risk his present and his future on Christ.

Conclusion: You might think by our theme today that I am anti-money. Far from it! I simply realize that money isn’t enough. Jesus is! Through Christ I can find security, a good name, life for my soul, a hope fixed on God, and the ability to make life decisions that are on God’s side.

*A Caribbean airline, now defunct, had a reputation for leaving luggage behind. One day, a plane landed and unloaded the baggage and then reloaded for its return flight. When all was made secure, the plane’s engines revved up, ready to taxi. Suddenly a man rushed out, frantically waving his arms, gesturing to cut the motors. The pilot leaned out of the cockpit. “What’s wrong now?” he yelled.

The man screamed back, “The passengers—you forgot the passengers!”

I hope you are not so caught up in making money and getting ahead in this world that you forget what is the most desirable—relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.