

What to Do With Our Money

by J.R. Miller

The secret of laying up treasure in Heaven is to use money as a trustee for Christ, giving and living for His glory.

Scripture: Matthew 6:19, Luke 12:33, 1 Timothy 6:10

Topics: "Generosity", "Stewardship"

Description

J.R. Miller emphasizes the critical importance of how we use our money, warning that the love of money can lead to destruction. He illustrates this through the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, highlighting that wealth used solely for self-indulgence leads to spiritual poverty. Miller encourages believers to view their finances as a trust from Christ, advocating for generosity and selflessness as the true path to laying up treasures in Heaven. He concludes that giving is essential for spiritual vitality, contrasting the stagnation of hoarding with the life-giving nature of generosity.

Transcript

Our money may destroy us. The love of money is the root of all evil. There is a way of using money, which makes it a curse. But there is a way of using money, which makes it a blessing. Christ told of this when he said, "Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in Heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys." Luke 12:33. That is, there is a way of using our money, by which we shall lay it up in Heaven. This is a wonderful revelation -- that we can take our riches with us into the other world; or rather, that we can bank our possessions in Heaven, as we go through this world, send our money on in advance, so that when we reach there we shall find all our treasures laid up waiting for us.

In one of our Lord's parables -- that of the rich man and Lazarus -- we are told of a man who had not learned the secret. On earth, the rich man lived in luxury and splendor. He was dressed in purple and fine linen. He fared sumptuously every day. That was one scene. But the rich man died. Wealth cannot bribe death. No palace walls can shut out the messenger whom God sends for a man's soul. The rich man died and was buried. But that was not the end. The veil is lifted, and we see him in the other world -- rich? Oh, no; in torment! He is beggared now. He has no sumptuous banquets. He wears no fine linen. He has no honor. We hear him begging Abraham to send Lazarus -- who once lay, a beggar, unhelped, at his gates -- that he might dip the tip of his finger in water and cool his tongue, to ease his torment. This man had missed the secret of laying up treasure in Heaven. He has treasured up only sorrow for himself. This man teaches us how not to use our money on the earth. He lived only for himself -- to accumulate and to spend

in enjoyments and luxuries for his own selfish gratification.

I fear there are too many men in these prosperous days, who are making the same mistake that Dives made. We are not told that he got his money dishonestly. There was no taint of fraud or embezzlement on it. So far as we knew, it was not amassed through oppression of the poor, through robbing of laborers. The man's sin lay in the use he made of his money.

And it was not used in wicked schemes of any kind. Dives was a highly respected gentleman, a prosperous citizen. He spent money freely among the merchants and the tradespeople. He was popular in the city. He was probably a good Pharisee, orthodox and religious. There was no taint on his character. He was honorable in his business, and just in all his dealings with his fellow-men.

What was wrong with Dives? Why is he shown to us in torment beyond the gate of death? So far as we know, it was all because he did not use his money in the right way.

That is, he used it only for himself. He did not use it for God. He did not use it to bless his fellow men. He used it only for his own selfish gratification. He spent it for luxuries in dress and for luxuries on his table. The beggar lay by his gate unfed, unhelped. Human misery lived by his doors, without receiving any pity. Are there not many men in every community who are living just as Dives did? Honest, honorable, respected, with no taint on their business -- but living only for themselves? What sequel to their earthly life can they hope for, different from that of Dives? It is not enough that money be gotten honestly; after it has been obtained in the most righteous way -- it may be so used as to destroy the soul of its possessor. Nor is it only dishonest or wicked using of it, which brings down a curse. It is enough that it is spent only for self and for selfish gratification.

It is a serious thing to have money -- even a little of it. It brings weighty responsibility to him who has it. It is a talent entrusted to us by God; and like all other talents -- it must be used and then accounted for.

Then the practical question for us is, "How shall we use Christ's trust-funds?" How would he use the money himself, if he were in our place, and were to spend it? Part of it he would use in providing for his own needs. He would have us receive food and clothing. Nor does he condemn business energy. Money-making is not sinful. There is no sin in growing rich, provided a man does it as Christ's trustee and for Christ. Only he must keep his own name off it. He must not say "my fruits," "my store," "my bonds," "my gains." We must learn to leave the "I" out of our speech. We must learn the lesson of self-effacement. We must do all for Christ. We are only trustees for Christ.

It is when we have learned to handle our money as a trustee for Christ -- that we have gained the secret of laying up treasure in Heaven. All that we truly use for Christ -- we lay up in purses that will not wax old. The only safety when one is always getting -- is also to be always giving. Giving is living. The pool which has no outlet stagnates and breeds death. The stream that ever flows -- lives and keeps pure and sweet. Giving is living; hoarding is dying.

In India they tell the story of the golden palace. Sultan Ahmed was a great king. He sent Yakoob, the most skillful of his builders, with large sums of money, to erect in the mountains of snow, the most splendid palace ever seen. Yakoob went to the place, and found a great famine among the people, and many of them dying. He took all his own money, and the money given him by the king for the building of the palace -- and gave it to feed the starving people.

Ahmed came at length to see his palace -- but he saw none. He sent for Yakoob and learned his story -- but was very angry and cast him into prison. "Tomorrow you shall die!" he said, "for you have robbed the king!" But that night Ahmed had a dream. There came to him one who said: "Follow me." Up from the earth they soared, until they were at heaven's gate. They entered, and lo! there stood a palace of pure gold, more brilliant than the sun, and vaster far than any palace of earth.

"What palace is this?" asked Ahmed, and his guide answered, "This is the palace of merciful deeds, built for you, by Yakoob the wise. Its glory shall endure when all earth's things have passed away." Then the king understood that Yakoob had done most wisely with his money.

The story has its lesson of truth. The money spent in doing Christ's work in this world, is laid up in Heaven. It may seem to be thrown away -- but it builds its palace beyond the skies.

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