

The Love of Money - Part 2

by Zac Poonen

The love of money is a cancer that can destroy us, and we must be willing to detach from it and keep it under our feet in order to follow Jesus.

Duration: 9:01

Scripture: Matthew 6:24, Matthew 19:21, Mark 10:21, Luke 18:22, 1 Timothy 6:10

Topics: "Stewardship Of Wealth", "Following Jesus"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of keeping money in its proper place as a servant, not a master, highlighting how our love for Christ should surpass all other loves, including the love for money. It delves into the story of the rich ruler in Luke 18, showcasing the significance of detaching from the love of money to truly follow Jesus and inherit eternal life. The message stresses the need for radical detachment from money if it has deeply rooted itself in our hearts, drawing parallels to the cancer of the love of money that requires radical surgery to be cured.

Transcript

Millions of miles away, and you'd be able to see that light on the Earth. It's a very powerful light that stars give out. But, why is it you can't see them during the daytime? They're there, but you can't see a single star during the daytime because the light of the sun is so powerful that it blocks out the light of the stars.

And that's the meaning of the word hatred here. Yes, we do love our parents and our wives and brothers and sisters, but our love for Christ is so great that this word disappears. And that's how we understand the word hatred here.

That our love for Christ is so great that the love for money becomes almost like nothing. In other words, money becomes a servant. Money is a wonderful servant, but a terrible master.

Something like fire. Fire is a wonderful servant. We use it for so many good purposes in the home, but if it takes over your home and burns it up, it's terrible.

And that's what money can do. If you keep the fire in the proper place, on the gas stove, in the fireplace, and keep it under control, it's a very useful servant. But if you are careless and let that fire burn up your house, it's going to destroy you.

And money is exactly like that. A wonderful servant, but a terrible master. And the question you need to ask yourself is, is money your servant? Or is it your master? It's a very useful servant.

The Lord doesn't tell us to give it away, but He says keep it in the proper place. Just like in heaven you read, gold is on the streets. You keep it under your feet.

On earth, they put it on your head. And that's the difference between earth and heaven. And that's also the difference that determines whether you are an earthly person or a heavenly-minded person.

A heavenly-minded person has learned, even now, to put gold under his feet. But as an earthly-minded person, gold is always in his thinking, how to make more money. Whereas a person who is heavenly-minded uses money.

He may have lots of it. The streets may be paved with gold, but it's under his feet. It's not a question of how much you earn.

You can earn, like many people in India, \$1,000 a year. Or, like many here, \$50,000 or more. But the question is not how much you earn.

Not at all. Christians have, through the years, had different concepts on this. A hundred years ago, people used to think that, if you're a Christian, you've got to be poor.

Today, we've run to the other extreme. You see, Christians have this disease called pendulomitis. We swing from one extreme to another in many areas.

Once upon a time, the gifts of the Spirit were all taboo. Now they are everything. Well, this is all wrong.

Jesus told us about the middle way, the narrow way that leads to life. And today, Christians think of, if you're a Christian, you've got to be prosperous. It's not true.

If you're a Christian, how much you earn and how much you own are not the test. The test is this. Whether you have \$1,000 or \$1,000,000, is it under your feet? Are you the master, or is that your master? Is that what occupies your thinking, or is God what occupies your thinking, and you keep money under your feet? In other words, whether you have one maidservant or ten, they are your servants.

They don't take over the house. That's the point. So that's the way we need to see this matter of money.

Jesus once encountered a rich ruler who came to him in Luke 18, and who came to him and asked him in verse 18, What shall I do to inherit eternal life? And because the age of grace had not yet started, Jesus said, You've got to keep the commandments. They were under the law those days. And here was an amazing young man who had never committed adultery, verse 20, never murdered anybody, never stolen, never borne false witness in his entire life, and always honored his father and mother.

Now you'd think such a person is a wonderful person to become a member of your church. But he was disqualified for Jesus' church. Because even though he had all these good qualities, and he sought for eternal life, he had one big disqualification.

He loved money. How many churches are there today that would turn away a person from membership because he loved money? Jesus did. He told him, Yeah, you've got all these good qualities, and I appreciate them, but you've got one thing lacking.

If you want to follow me, in other words, if you want to be a member of my church, you can be a member of the church of the Pharisees without disqualification. But if you want to be a member of my church, you need this also in addition to those. You should not love money.

I'm paraphrasing his words. In his case, why did Jesus tell him to give up everything he had? He said, Go and sell all that you have, Luke 18, verse 22, and give it to the poor. And you'll have treasure in heaven.

And then, follow me. He wasn't like many today, pastors and preachers who say, Come and give me all your money and follow me. No.

Or come and put it in our church. No. He loved him so much, he said, I want you without your money.

I'm more interested in you. Go and give your money to somebody else and you come and follow me. I wish there were more Christian leaders like Jesus Christ today, who are interested in people, in their souls, not in their money.

It's so obvious that Jesus was not at all interested in this person's money or how that would help him in his ministry. No, he was interested in that he had a pure, sincere, genuine interest in the person's soul. And he knew that he'd never be what God wanted him to be until he broke free from the love of money.

And in his case, this cancer, I want to call it a cancer, the love of money, was so deeply rooted that, like a doctor says, there's only one way we can treat this cancer. We've got to cut out the whole organ. Now, when a cancer is not so deep, a doctor may say, Well, you don't need to cut out the organ in your case, because it hasn't spread so much.

We can just do a little bit of treatment, chemotherapy or something, and preserve your organs. We read in the next chapter of another man called Zacchaeus, who also loved money, and he only gave away half his money to the poor. And the Lord said, That's fine.

Why this difference? This man had to give away 100%. Zacchaeus had to give away only 50%, because the cancer was not so deep in Zacchaeus. In the case of Mary and Martha, the Lord didn't tell them to give away anything.

There was hardly anything there was. This cancer is in all of us, but it's extended to different levels in different people. And if it's very deeply rooted, then only radical surgery will solve the problem.

So, it's not that Jesus tells everybody to give up everything. No. It's a question of how deeply rooted this cancer is.

It's the detachment from money that the Lord was seeking to emphasize here. Keep money under your feet. And Jesus was inviting this man to be an apostle, as it were.

It's the same words he said to Peter, James, and John, Come and follow me. This man could have been an apostle, but he missed it, because of one foolish decision he took. He refused to do what Jesus told him to do.

Think of how Peter and James and John, as soon as Jesus said drop everything, they dropped it and followed him. But not this man. I don't know where he is today, but wherever he is, if you were to go and ask him, I'm not here to determine whether he went to hell or heaven.

He could be in either place. If he repented at the last minute, after wasting his life in the pursuit of money, he may have got to heaven, but even then, he would have so much regret. Let's assume he did go to heaven and repented on his deathbed.

And you ask him today, well, you managed to get to heaven. Are you happy with that decision you took when you were a young man, 50 years before you died? He'd say that is the worst decision I ever took in my life.

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