

Jesus and Money*

When possessions become more important than God or people, your perspective in life is backwards. It is God who gives us all things to enjoy. Without Him, we would have nothing. He puts such a value on us as people that He sent His Son to die in our place.

That's why, I think, that when Jesus was asked what the greatest commandment is, He replied, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.'" This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'" (Matthew 22:37-39).

Obedying this commandment enables us to view life the way God intended. Giving Him first place in your life does not rid you of anything. Instead, it enriches you.

Those who are truly rich are those who can love - they can receive love and they can give love.

JESUS AND MONEY

"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9).

Jesus demonstrated how to prioritize.

His choice of earthly status was deliberate. The Son of God chose to be born in a humble stable with a manger for His crib. He did not choose a princess to give Him an earthly body, but a young peasant girl. The man who raised Him as a child was not a lawyer, a teacher or a rich man. He was an ordinary carpenter.

Jesus mingled with both rich and poor. He did not

condemn the rich, nor accuse the poor. His teachings, especially the Sermon on the Mount, address attitudes toward money - always emphasizing that a person's heart will be bound to what he treasures.

The group of twelve disciples that followed Him throughout His ministry came from all walks of life. Most were fishermen. One was a tax collector. Some of their occupations were unknown, but once committed to following Jesus, they left behind their old lives. They lived as their Teacher lived - without dependence on worldly goods.

At one point, Jesus appointed seventy other disciples to go to cities ahead of Him. His instructions were specific. They were to go out two by two carrying no supplies with them. The willingness of those they visited to supply their needs with an open home and shared possessions would be evidence of their reception to the message of the disciples.

Jesus often spoke about material things and money, knowing that was always an issue on the minds of men. Many of His parables were about money, property or wealth.

He wanted to drive home the point that what you do with the material resources you have been given is very important and has consequences.

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