

Day 3: Biblical Hope for Lasting Financial Freedom

What is financial freedom?

Well, the world's idea is simple: lots of money. We are inundated in our culture with ads and marketing about retirement, income, investment, and planning, not to mention riches, goods, lifestyle, fame, and of course the "happiness" money buys.

But what does the Lord have to say about it?

Well firstly, that **we aren't to worry about our financial future**. Let's meditate on this:

So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. - Matt 6:31-33

God has many things to say about money and where to place our trust

- Riches are fleeting: Proverbs 23:5
- They can't be trusted (the bigger barns guy): Luke 12:18
- Following money causes us to wander from the faith: 1 Tim 6:10
- Seeking after money takes away life: Proverbs 1:19
- Doing God's will trumps making money: James 4:13
- You can't trust in two masters – it's either God or the money: Matthew 6:24

Let's debunk some of the mythology surrounding money:

First, money is not all-powerful. It has failed in the past and will most certainly fail again. So money is not as strong as we might imagine. Like a mighty kingdom that ultimately comes to ruin, so too, money is not such a strong tower in times of a storm.

Now, what is money anyway? It's just a convenience representing an exchange of value among people. So, *money is just a convenience tool that helps foster relationship*. We help each other through an exchange of value.

Really, what are these transactions? If there were no money, we would have to work with one another in community where each person provides part of what is needed for all. Hmm. Sounds a bit like the Kingdom of God and a unified body of Christ, doesn't it? Each body part has a unique contribution to the whole body functioning well. There indeed lies our future hope.

If money is simply a convenience tool to help foster relationship, how has it attained god-like status in our minds? A major culprit is **the depersonalization of finance**. It's a strategy from hell.

Perhaps the false "ideal" today is having enough money where you can sit in the privacy of your own home, pay bills, manage investment strategies, take care of business, defend the fort, and make more money. You can shop with anonymity, even on the internet - without much need for relationship - just shop and buy while paying with cards, phones and electronic transfers. It's

tragic if you think about it. Not the convenience or the technology, but the depersonalization. And what's worse is that by buying into these forms of depersonalized finance, we're being set-up.

How? If money failed tomorrow, all that would remain are our relationships with God and with people. If convenience collapses, banking collapses and corporations collapse, are we conditioned for thriving in Christ or setup for fear and failure? More importantly, have we been conditioned to trust our Lord with our daily needs, or are we used to trusting our bank balance. The words of Moses give us something to think about:

He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every Word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. - Deuteronomy 8:3

What is our future hope: The promises and promised-land of God. Of the increase of the Kingdom - ruled by King Jesus together with his Bride - there is no end. It is all about relationship. Love for God. Love for our neighbor. This is where the re-personalization of our finances comes in. Because it's not really finances we need but Jesus and one another. Jesus, His Kingdom, and the body of Christ are the only path to true financial freedom - now and in eternity. The Prince of Peace and the Bride of Christ. For God so loved the world that he gave His only son, such that we would not perish (even in the present - even when what we trusted in collapses). God will save us! He is worthy of our trust.

Let's pray.

Father, thank you that you care for us more than the sparrow. Thank you that our lives are in your hands - every day. We repent for worrying about money or seeking it first. Help us understand your love for us transcends all things, even our earthly needs and our daily bread. Let us stick close to you. You will always provide and never forsake us. You will bring us into a wide and expansive space, even setting a table for us to eat before our enemies.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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