

Let's Talk About Money

Study Pages

In this series, we'll do our best to cover the basics. Yet, the bulk of our time may end up being spent on preparing our hearts for something that might be relevant to end-times.

And in that respect, I'll throw in this disclaimer: IF we talk about those things we can't be dogmatic it. In some circles a strong case can be made for the possibility of what could be termed as an End-time Transfer of Wealth. And if that's true, there's a lot we need to know in order to be prepared for it

To those who have ears to hear, let it be said and let them hear what the Lord is speaking to our hearts regarding the days directly ahead of us.

Right here at the transition of the age, the body of Christ could be on the verge of a huge influx of finances. Given the current state of our economy Those words are almost hard to hear and almost beyond the realm of imagination. But if this is true, then I, personally, have a deep concern for *the church* as we know it. Are we really prepared for such a thing?

Yes, there are many great and precious promises regarding the days directly ahead us. And yes, I firmly believe that God wants each one of His children to walk in the fullness of all His blessings, including, but not limited to finances. Yet, if we do not judge ourselves, many in the church as we know it could stumble under the weight of it of such a blessing. Deceitfulness of riches or, even, all-out greed are standing at the door waiting to pounce

In the Word of God there is one parable of Jesus that stands above all others. It is the parable of the Sower. Jesus used it to explain how things work in the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 13:22 [NLT]– The seed that fell among the thorns represents those who hear God's word, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life and the lure of wealth, so no fruit is produced.

The worries of this life are screaming loudly in the heads of nearly every person on the face of the planet these day and the promise of great wealth might be considered a lure of Biblical proportions. Yet, we've got to be watchful that we don't throw the baby out with the bathwater. If a transfer of wealth is coming, it will surely be for God's glory and His purposes and He would intend for it to bear much fruit.

The days ahead could be wonderful for those who live in pursuit of God. There is coming a move of His Spirit that will cause every other outpouring to pale in comparison. Days of awakening are upon us! The Lord has promised that the earth will be filled with His glory. He has promised that His church, His beloved bride will be glorious. God watches over His word to perform it. It shall surely come to pass. Even now, there is a remnant of believers who still hunger and thirst for righteousness. In fact, there are many who still chase after the fire of God as if it were the most precious commodity on earth.

But, how do we get from the point *where we are now* to the point of *glorious*? In many cases, the answer would be *only by the grace of God*.

No doubt we are living in the last of the last days. End-time events are stacking up and standing at the door. Right in the middle of what seems to be the beginning of a global meltdown, there are deep rumblings about something major about to transpire in the realms of money – the likes of which have not been seen before.

Proverbs 13:22 – A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, but the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous. (NKJV)

In the context of that wealth transfer, what many anticipate to be the answer to all of their troubles could end up being the beginning of a great falling away. Our money system is so deeply buried in cycles of debt, most of us would not know what to do if we were suddenly released from the bondage of it.

And in the context of churches, think about it: There is nothing more brutal than whole church congregations fighting for control over money; and nothing so sad as to see a powerful man or woman of God overtaken by greed.

The only way to navigate such new territory would be based in an intimate relationship with the Lord and His Word, keenly tuned-in to the Holy Spirit's wisdom and direction for this hour. If we thought weathering a global pandemic was bad, wait until the body of Christ has more money than it knows that to do with. We've not seen anything yet!

If these things are true. If there really is coming a great influx of money into the hands of God's people, then let us be found preparing our hearts by fully immersing ourselves in the Word of God. There are volumes of scripture on the topic of money, the surface of which we can only begin to scratch in this series and we're gonna take some time to dig it out to see if there is really a promise of such an end-time event.

But before we can go there, let's take a quick look at a few scriptures:

Mark 4:18-20 [NLT] The farmer plants seed by taking God's word to others. The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message, only to have Satan come at once and take it away. The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. But since they don't have deep roots, they don't last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God's word. The seed that fell among the thorns represents others who hear God's word, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life, the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things, so no fruit is produced. And the seed that fell on good soil represents those who hear and accept God's word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!

Psalms 119:11 [NKJV] I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

Ecclesiastes 2:26 [NKJV] God gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy to those who please him. But if a sinner becomes wealthy, God takes the wealth away and gives it to those who please him...

Now there's a thought that few believers ever take into consider when they find fault with those whom God has blessed.

Why do a series called "Let's Talk About Money?" A healthy perspective of wealth is:
To never really take ownership of it.

In the context of God and what belongs to Him:

Psalm 24:1 – ...The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to Him.

Psalm 89:11 –The heavens are Yours, and the earth is Yours; everything in the world is Yours--You created it all.

Psalm 50:10 – For all the animals of the forest are Mine, and I own the cattle on a thousand hills.

So, as we pass through this life on earth, we step into the Lord's pasture and He is the Shepherd of it. I think it's important for all us to understand that when we depart this life, we take nothing with us. The wealth of this world remains here long after we move into eternity.

At best, we are to be caretakers and stewards, servants of the Father and His dear Son, our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. There really are those whom God has entrusted with wealth. He needs those who will be good stewards for the sake of the kingdom. And we would be wise not to judge

If we have a problem with those who are blessed with wealth, then, we should perhaps check up on ourselves. Are we jealous? Is there envy? Those are real things. Let's judge ourselves, lest we be judged... and leave the rest in the hands of the Lord.

Jesus talked about money a lot. In order to teach His disciples, He taught them in parables. Here's one to consider: it's about being good and faithful servants

Matthew 25:14-30 [NLT] ...the Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. He called together his servants and entrusted his money to them while he was gone. He gave five bags of silver to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last--dividing it in proportion to their abilities. He then left on his trip. The servant who received the five bags of silver began to invest the money and earned five more. The servant with two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more. But the servant who received the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and hid the master's money. After a long time their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they had used his money. The servant to whom he had entrusted the five bags of silver came forward with five more and said, 'Master, you gave me five bags of silver to invest, and I have earned five more.' The master was full of praise. 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate

together!' The servant who had received the two bags of silver came forward and said, 'Master, you gave me two bags of silver to invest, and I have earned two more.' The master said, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!' Then the servant with the one bag of silver came and said, 'Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn't plant and gathering crops you didn't cultivate. I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.' But the master replied, 'You wicked and lazy servant! If you knew I harvested crops I didn't plant and gathered crops I didn't cultivate, why didn't you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.' Then he ordered, 'Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver. To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away. Now throw this useless servant into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Each one of these servants had his own perspective of the master. Two proved themselves trustworthy and diligent – each a good manager. The third servant had a skewed idea of the master and proved himself to be unwise in the choices he made about the assignment.

Regardless of their success, regardless of their perspective, in the end, none of it was their money. Every resource at their disposal belonged their master. He simply asked them to put it to work and bring increase in his domain. They were given responsibility and were tested as to the effectiveness of their stewardship.

It was not their money. It belonged to their Master.

So, the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof and there are those that have been or are going to be entrusted with wealth for God's purposes. What is the purpose of that?

Deuteronomy chapter 8 verses 11-20 talks a lot about wealth and how the Lord intends to use it:

Deuteronomy 8:18 [NKJV] And you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day. (NKJV)

This passage is clear. The purpose for wealth - is so that *God* may use it to establish His kingdom; And to fulfill the promises He has made in covenant.

How will God do that? Even today, even in this the transition of the age, He will do it through those who are found good and faithful. And maybe, just maybe, He might chose someone you know or maybe even you!

Money doesn't just fall out of the heavens. No. He puts resources into our hands for His purpose and His plan. That same passage is also carries a warning:

Deuteronomy 8:11 [NKJV] Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God...

The context is clear. Don't forget Who gave you these wonderful things; don't forget why He brought you to this place in time.

Furthermore, it carries a charge to remember the journey of those who came before. In other words, don't forget what previous generations went through to bring us into the blessings of God.

Again, in our current economy, it's hard to see past where we are today but there are many who have gone before to bring this nation to the place where it stands today; and if we are the brink of breakthrough, we don't want to forget those who gave it all, those who paid the price for us to receive what comes next.

The old-timers used to say, "*Wouldn't take nothing for the journey.*"

The challenge with generational wealth is that younger generations have not endured the journey. Figuratively speaking, they have not wandered in the wilderness for 40 years... or 250 years.

The test is very seldom multi-generational – only the blessing.

If this nation truly is about to step into what is being termed as a golden age, we did not get there by chance. Many have paid a price we could not pay, endured much suffering for the sake of future generations. Yet, because tests are not multi-generational. Sometimes character development and education are lacking, which leaves a door gaping open for corruption.

This is why the children of Israel were commanded to tell it to their children and their children's children. If they wanted to continue to walk in the blessings of God, the lessons of the previous generations could not be lost. If we, as a nation, want to walk in the blessings that have been prepared for us. We need to walk with the character required to retain it and understand the history that brought us to this place, and to preserve it, telling it to our children and our children's children.

Forgetfulness is has been the downfall of many civilizations. The Israelites were strongly admonished not to forget the journey and the experiences that taught them along the way. It's good to remember the price paid by previous generations and learn from their mistakes.

A modern-day proverb comes to mind: *Those who fail to learn from history are destined to repeat it.*

There is no way to retain blessing without thoroughly engaging the next generation in the previous journey. And equally important is thoroughly examining the covenant that governs it

And in all these things, we must develop and maintain a heavenly perspective:

Matthew 6:20-21 [NKJV] but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Matthew 12:35 [NKJV] A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.

Jesus said it best: laying up heavenly treasure is far more important than the riches of this world. We must keep an eternal perspective. Wealth in this life is fleeting and corruptible. Yes, we can do good with money. In many respects it is good to have money in this life... as long as money does not control us.

No matter how much we possess, if we do not know the Lord Jesus Christ, we are spiritually bankrupt. To know the Lord means to have an intimate, personal relationship with Him; To know Him is to love Him.

Matthew 6:33 [NKJV] But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

We must keep these things in perspective if we want to be effective for God. And if there is indeed coming a great transfer of wealth Here at the end of the age these things are super important to remember

The Corruption of Money

As previously stated, we must not allow future generations to forget the journey of those who have gone before. If the past is forgotten, the door is wide open for corruption to sneak in like a thief. In our society today, money equals power. And this type of power can be quite addictive. If we want to keep corruption in check, it is so important to remind ourselves and future generations that *It's not our money*. Everything belong to God

1 Timothy 6:10 [NLT] For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.

It's not money that is evil. It is the LOVE of money that corrupts. We've got to keep our motives under constant scrutiny or lust for power can quickly spiral out of control. Greed, envy and all sorts of evil rush in to overtake. And thus, far too often, sorrow upon sorrow comes next.

Seriously, wealth is not the answer – just ask the rich about the poor state of their children. Not everyone who is wealthy has problems with their kids, but the challenges seem to get more complicated as the generations pass. Most people long to leave riches to their children so they won't have to endure the hardships their parents or grandparents went through. Nevertheless, in order to retain the blessing, the subsequent generations must understand the trials and mistakes, the suffering and the sorrow.

There is no testimony without a test; no preservation without perseverance.

The journey must be remembered – not just by the elders, but by those who come after.

We must teach our children to love and honor God. Elsewise they will love money more than the One from Whom the blessings come.

Proverbs 11:28 [NLT] Trust in your money and down you go! But the godly flourish like leaves in spring.

Only God and the relationship we have with Him will keep us on a sure path.

One of the most powerful illustrations Jesus tells is the one most commonly known as "*The Prodigal Son*." It is a wonderful story about the love of a father and his willingness to forgive his son regardless of his mistakes. Most people seldom think about the root cause, but it's worth noting right here.

The wayward son was enticed into a life of sin when he was granted his inheritance. Apparently, there was a secret desire to sin hidden deep in his heart. That, coupled with a lack of maturity and an inability to handle what was granted, made for a devastating scenario.

Luke 15:11-13, 17-24 [NLT] ...A man had two sons. The younger son told his father, 'I want my share of your estate now before you die.' So, his father agreed to divide his wealth between his sons. A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money in wild living... When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, 'At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger! I will go home to my father and say, "Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant."' So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him. His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son.' But his father said to the servants, 'Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. Get a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet. And kill the calf we have been fattening. We must celebrate with a feast, for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found...'

Thank God for the redemptive work of Christ and a loving Father who receives us with open arms, even when we've made a mess of things. That all being said, we should seek God diligently when it comes to granting an inheritance. Are they ready for it? Can they handle the responsibility, or will they be tempted to squander it?

A word to the wise should be sufficient. Yes, there is forgiveness available, but let's do everything we can to avoid heart-breaking circumstances. With sin abounding these days, we'll need to be super-vigilant to protect the next generation, to teach them the way they should go

Proverbs 22:6 [NKJV] Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

- Will they make mistakes? Likely.
- Did we make mistakes? Absolutely.
- Is forgiveness available? Most assuredly.

Again, thank God for His mercy and His great love!
A word to the wise should be sufficient.

There's plenty of negative stuff out there these against prosperity and some of it, is for good reason. So, let's ask this question: Why Prosper?

3 John 2 [NKJV] Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.

Proverbs 10:22 [NKJV] The blessing of the LORD makes one rich, and He adds no sorrow with it.

If we truly believe that God intends for us to prosper, what should be our motive?
The simple answer would be: For the Good

- For the good of others
- For the good of God's kingdom

It's hard to be a blessing to others if there is no provision within our reach. If we live on "barely get along street" how can we be a blessing? Maybe with our time; Maybe with our devotion, but we're talking about money today,

1 John 3:16-19 [NLT] We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So, we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion--how can God's love be in that person? Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. Our actions will show that we belong to the truth, so we will be confident when we stand before God.

Proverbs 11:25 [NKJV] The generous soul will be made rich, and he who waters will also be watered himself.

Why prosper? I suppose there are many reasons. But "Blessed to be a blessing" is right at the top of the list. If wealth is coming, and we are asked by God to do good to all, we'll need wisdom even in our generosity.

Proverbs 4:5 [NLT] Get wisdom; develop good judgment. Don't forget my words or turn away from them.

Proverbs 16:16 [NLT] How much better to get wisdom than gold, and good judgment than silver!

Proverbs 23:23 [NLT] Get the truth and never sell it; also get wisdom, discipline, and good judgment.

Why prosper? So, we can give to the poor, lend to those in need, and do good. If wealth is coming, we must learn now how to put action to our faith by making a willful choice to be a blessing.

As we've said before: "It's not our money."