

NORTHEAST HOUSTON COMMUNITY CHURCH

SERMON – Stewardship Pt 3

Topic: What is God's Purpose for Money?

Scripture: 1 Tim 6:6-10

02/19/2006

“The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, but expecting a different result.”

1 Tim 6:6-10 6 Now godliness with contentment is great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. 8 And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. 9 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. NKJV

I heard it said that if all the money was taken from everyone and we all started over again from zero that the majority of the same people would accumulate wealth and the same people would find themselves in the same state they were before. Unless they changed their habits.

You have heard it said that we who ignore history are bound to repeat it.

One more – **Quote of the day** – “The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, but expecting a different result.”

What does all this have to do with our series on Stewardship? Every one of these statements can be applied to stewardship. If we as individuals and as a people continue to make bad decisions then we will continue to have bad results.

As we mentioned in another message, most of us will initially feel that money and more of it will solve all or most of our problems. If that were totally true then we would have to say that money in some way is the cause of all our problems.

So, if we learn how to manage the cause we will be able to manage the effect.

The most direct scripture about money is found in:

*1 Tim 6:9-10 9 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 **For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows NKJV***

Most of you know that it is not money that is the root of all evil but the love of money. We all think we know that verse pretty well but none of us recite the whole verse. We don't continue on with what the scripture says it causes. **(GIVE SHORT EXAMPLES)**

1 Falling into temptation and snares

- a. If some people do not have it, they are tempted to get it anyway they can.

Prov 30:8-9 Give me neither poverty nor riches — Feed me with the food allotted to me; 9 Lest I be full and deny You, And say, "Who is the LORD?" Or lest I be poor and steal, And profane the name of my God. NKJV

2 Foolish and harmful lust (desires)

- a. Recently a man got stuck in a chimney trying to get into a store to steal. I would call that foolish. We see people trying to live a champagne life style with only a beer budget. I call that foolish. We call it living above our means.
- b. The most harmful of the Ten Commandments is the sin of covertness. That sin will cause you to steal, murder, commit adultery, dishonor your parents, dishonor the Sabbath today not worship with God to satisfy your lust) and worshipping the dollar (which I heard called the “almighty” dollar) (All because of the sin of covetousness.

Heb 13:5-6 5 Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." KJV

3 Leads to destruction and Perdition (ruin)

- a. People lose homes, credit worthiness, their freedom, friends and family relations all for the lust for money usually quick money.
- b. People will lie, steal, and sell drugs, themselves, their pride, character and family for the love of money

4 Straying from the faith

- a. The things of God become less important when money enters the scene. They need to earn more money either because of in-debtedness or greed will get between our need to spend time with God and give service to God.
- b. The lust for money can cause us to make compromises in order to get it.

5 Greediness

- a. I have seen two types of people when it comes to money. Those that don't have it and want it and those that have it and want more of it. Greediness is never being satisfied, content with what you have.
- b. A greedy person will most likely never share. Praise God that is not the case at NEHCC. A greedy person or church is always asking for money they never have enough. A greedy person consumes it on themselves. Greed spurs more lust for money,

6 Self-inflicted sorrows

- a. In nearly all the cases of financial trouble the trouble was self-inflicted. We made the decision to get it now and not wait. We made the decision to co-sign; we made the decision to borrow that money to have a good time. We did so because we are deceived. The world has trapped us and brainwashed us so that we spend money into big time debt and have nothing to show for it. This is not what Gods intended for a good steward.

Money itself is not immoral it is AMORAL – neither moral or immoral. But one thing it is and that is, it is the most influential item in our society. Money will make a judge or policeman look the other way. Money will cause politicians to promote a bill or idea or to kill it.

Of all the thing in the world, money itself is one of the most useless items. If you were on a deserted island you could not eat it, you could not drink it, it would not make a good shelter. But in the right environment you could buy all those things.

Which bring me to what money truly is. **It is a medium of exchange in our current society.**

In the bible money was not common and the measure of wealth was associated with cattle, livestock and land. When we read Job and his wealth is measured by cattle, sheep, camels and so on. Later we are introduced to gold and precious stones as an indication of wealth.

God has allowed this thing we call money to become so prominent in our lives it is appropriate for us to try and understand God's purpose for money. We know man's purpose, which is to consume in on his/her own lust. But as stewards of God we must use His resources to accomplish His goals or bring Him an increase.

1 Money in any form is a medium of exchange and can often be used as a channel of blessing from God through those that God has given it, to those that are poor to provide assistance in living.

2 **To grow us spiritually in faith.**

In the OT there was always a question to the people as to whom they were going to trust or serve. (*Josh 24:15*) God warned them about the idol gods in the promise land. We read about the famous challenge on Mount Carmel between Elijah the prophet of God and the prophets of Baal.

The battle continues between God almighty and Satan for the worship of men. Remember his temptation of Christ?

Luke 4:6–8 (NKJV) ⁶ *And the devil said to Him, “All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.”* ⁷ *Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.”* ⁸ *And Jesus answered and said to him, “Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’”*

Today it is money. We may think if we have enough, we can handle anything. There are too many examples where that has been proven false yet the thought still attracts people every day.

God wants us to depend on Him and so often He has to take away money for us to grow our faith.

3 **To finance His earthly ministry through His people.**

Luke 8:1-3 *Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him, 2 and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities — Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, 3 and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance. NKJV*

Even in the OT money or the common medium of exchanges was used to provide for Gods ministers (priest) and for the poor.

Among Paul's missions he was to take the financial gifts from one church to help another church.

1 Cor 16:1-2 Now about the money being collected for the Christians in Jerusalem: You should follow the same procedures I gave to the churches in Galatia. 2 On every Lord's Day, each of you should put aside some amount of money in relation to what you have earned and save it for this offering. NKJV

The resources of God that He has entrusted to you and it is to be used in a portion to provide financial aid to HIS cause. Not to consume it all upon our own lust.

The members of NEHCC have always been a compassionate and giving congregation. I am so proud of all the member here.

4 To unite Christians that have needs with those that have surplus

We mentioned how Paul was involved in doing this between churches. I hope you remember the message I gave about the church having all in common.

Acts 4:32 Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. NKJV (and Acts 2:44)

In the body of Christ, a member may be in need of financial assistance, another in need of a skill, another in need of medical help, another in a need of comfort. Money as a common medium of exchange can help provide those needs.

NEHCC again has been blessed to be able to lend at least some assistance to its member who at times may need it.

It is no shame to find yourself in need. And unexpected car problem, an illness, a job loss or unexpected home repairs. There is shame if you let your pride keep you from letting the church know.

Assistance must be given with the utmost discernment and discretions.

Be it known here and now that no member of this church should ever be without food, or necessary utilities. How can God help you if you don't ask Him or His people?

James 4:2 ...ye have not, because ye ask not.

If you let pride keep you from accepting Gods help, then He will let you continue in it. Don't get mad at Him and stay away from Him. Denying His help is like telling Him I can do it myself. (pride) Remember the characteristic of the Laodicean church or church members. They could do it all themselves.

Revelation 3:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—

We here at NEHCC and as a family hold much in common. We care for one another and we help one another. God cannot use us as a channel of His blessings if we are not blessing anyone.

God views money as a tool that can bring glory to him. It is not necessary to be rich in money but to be rich in the things of God. I know that money and wealth can be a wonderful blessing when used for those things that are pleasing to God.

Giving to God and His work with the right motive is really a good feeling. Every one cannot give as much as others for God has blessed us all differently. But God has given us all something to be good stewards of and to use for His increase and glory.

It is not the amount that you have it is what you do with it that God will judge. It is true that to whom much is given much is required, but brothers and sisters that is a good thing.

Luke 12:48 48 But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more. KJV

That passage is not talking about money but money is certainly an application of this verse.

Money may be man's measuring stick for success but it is not God's. The teachings of Jesus prove that point again and again. Stewardship, motive and faithfulness are far more important.

I am burdened and responsible for the stewardship of the resources God has blessed NEHCC with. That stewardship goes far beyond the offering and money. It includes the talent that is in this body, the time invested in this body and the treasure.

I cannot claim outstanding wisdom or even good stewardship on my own, but it is God that guides me, some time while I am kicking and screaming (not really).

If it is your heart's desire to be a good steward of God's resources, then ask Him to help you and follow His instructions.

It begins with turning away from fleshly lust and looking at every decision and ask the question, "will this bring about an increase for the glory of God?"

The scriptures prove that God wants us to have a good time, but not for the good time to have us. We cannot party hearty every weekend, we cannot splurge at every occasion. With stewardship come responsibility and accountability.

NEHCC, you are great. Together we are trying to do that which is right in the sight of God as good stewards. It all begins in the heart and this church has a good heart.

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