

Faith For Finances

(ARE WE PLACING IT ON GOD?)

S431R 0917 25W

“Whoever loves money never has money enough; the one who loves wealth is never satisfied with his income.” How easy it is to relate to those words in (Ecc. 5:10). And we are reminded that Jesus Words in (Matt.6:24) warned everyone who will listen, that “No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.”

People of the Christian world in general will say that they trust God and have faith in Him to provide, but that is not proven by their very apparent actions and decisions. Every human plan imaginable is followed — ‘savings accounts’ with a multitude of names attached to them, financial supplies made available from many sources of man’s laid-up money, along with financial insurance coverage plans designed to protect people from lawsuits that are so common place today, and so many other plans or people or places where people place their trust instead of following God’s divine plan to place all trust on Him.

(I Tim.6:10 warns us very plainly), “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.” Then Hebrews 13:5 admonishes us, to “Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.’”

What a valuable position for a person to be in, and what a price-less privilege we must trust on God alone (and to have faith in Him) for our financial supplies as needed each day (the Pastor said). It is a most rewarding place for a learning Christian (or family) to be in.

The world in general has a never-ending appetite for money, and they never seem to have enough. (Ecc. 5:10 admonishes) “He who loves

money shall never have enough. That foolishness of thinking that wealth brings happiness!”

The carnal mind focuses on obtaining more and more money and craves more and better things (without even considering being “content with what you have” as Scriptures teach us to be). The mindset of the worldly-minded person is to acquire expensive material goods, stylish clothing, the best food, and the latest household appliances.

Jesus told us not to lay up treasure or money or possessions on earth. He said not to take one anxious thought for tomorrow, because our Heavenly Father would always be there to supply what we need.

Jesus (who lived a perfect life of faith in His heavenly Father) told us (Matt.6:19-24) “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 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.” “The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!” “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” (25) “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?”

We need to see and to recognize the distinct contrasts; ‘treasure on earth’ instead of ‘treasure in Heaven’; ‘Outward, visible treasure’ to depend on, instead of ‘inner, invisible treasure on God’; If one’s ‘spiritual eye’ is clear, or whether the ‘spiritual eye’ is not clear,” and “If we have divine light, or if we are in spiritual darkness.”

In those verses mentioned, Jesus communicated to us what true faith and trust in God actually is, in saying “Do not ‘lay up treasure’ because you cannot serve two masters.” Contrasts like these are given to make things very clear to us.

Jesus emphasized the foolishness of our choosing the wrong way (the ‘world’s way’), and the wisdom of choosing the right way (God’s way). He is telling us that it is impossible for

us to have both; that it is an 'either/or' proposition—we are either trusting God, or we are not trusting Him.

So, what are these laid up 'treasures' that can be accumulated on which to misplace our trust? Generally speaking it is anything we can depend on for our daily living and future needs, like saved money in a bank or trust account, or insurance policies designed by Satan and his agents to protect us from financial loss, or the value of a house or real estate that can be used as a collateral and depended on, instead of a daily trust on God as His verses of Scripture command us to do. Or an automobile (which now can cost in the high 5-digits) (many thousands of dollars, and so become a 'treasure' to a person) or pension funds that draw on stored up money or other resources, and then all Government plans such as Social Security, 'unemployment compensation', 'welfare payments' and 'food stamp programs', all of which would take the place of a daily trust on God's Word and His many Promises. (But Jesus commanded everyone (John 14:1) "Let not your hearts be troubled. Trust in God: trust in me also." (and He promised) "I am going to make a place for you!"

So, these laid up 'treasures' could be any possession that is tangible and has a price tag, and which could be considered an "asset." If we can see it, touch it, value it, and hold onto it, then we could treasure it, and look to it (or depend on it) as some type of security. Almost anything of value could possibly and easily become a "treasure" to an individual (to be trusted on when needed).

Jesus is telling us to trust only in God (as He did while He was here on earth), and He is also telling us not to accumulate treasures, or possessions, or other things to the point that enough is never enough. His teaching is clear and saying do not strive for extravagant living and ignore the needs of others; do not set our hearts on earthly things (so that they own us). 'How easy Satan makes it' (as one had said it), to be "lured into a lesser loyalty." How easy the devil can get us to fix our attention on some things that have price tags.

A quick self-analysis can be helpful for a Christian wanting to be within God's 'plan of trust'; "Why do we own such an item? Is there a right (or

Scriptural) purpose in having it? Is our mind too focused on a certain thing or a person or a possession? Have I considered the poor (or those less fortunate) as the Bible tells me to do? Have I deliberately placed the family, church attendance, and other truly important things in life, on hold, while I play the game of 'greed of gain'?"

Also, am I (actually) trying to serve two masters, when Jesus says, "No one can serve two masters?"—no one can say they trust in God to supply what is needed day-by-day, and at the same time have everything imaginable 'placed aside' for future use?" These "things" are not only financial resources but can be almost anything at all that we hold on to (so as to have this "extra supply" in readiness) just in case we need it.

Jesus went on to explain (vs. 25-34) "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?"

Jesus is telling us not to have "security supplies" of food stored up in a freezer (with meat, vegetables, and other foods). We are not to have far more extra clothing than would be needed. Anything that is not being used, but simply placed aside (in a box) until we just might need it (would be worrying about the future.) (Phil.4:6) "Do not be over-anxious about anything, but by prayer and earnest pleading, together with thanksgiving, let your request (needs) be unreservedly made known in the presence of God."

(Jesus continued vs.27) "Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much clothe you, O you of little faith?"

(vs.31-33) "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."

Jesus called those who worry about money, food supplies, and clothing, "pagans." (A pagan is a "heathen" or an "idolater.") Anyone who runs after these things, who worries and is anxious about those things, He classified as an "idolater." And we are told (1 Cor.5:11) that "You must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother (that would mean a church member) but is immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer."

If a person truly gives their life to God right, and if they allow Him to teach them how to trust for needed supplies in the true Bible way, they will not take one anxious thought for tomorrow or even the next hour (the Pastor stated). They will come to the place where there is perfect contentment and peace, regardless of the amount of money they have in their possession—whether fifty dollars or fifty cents—it will not make any difference.

The Apostle Paul (who had graduated from God's training course) had arrived at the place in his life when he wrote to the Philippians. He told them they were the only ones who communicated with him during his imprisonment in Rome. They had sent some money via Epaphroditus. He said that they were the only church that did that (chapter 4: vs.15), "Not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only."

It was at Philippi where he spoke to Lydia and her family by the riverside. Later, he was sent to prison, but he was freed in a miraculous earthquake. He said (vs.18) "I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God."

He told them (vs.10-12) "I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation."

The Apostle wasn't worried, as he knew that his needs would be met (in one way or another)(within God's plan of trust on Him); he was confident that the words he wrote to them would always be fulfilled for him;(vs 19) "And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus." That is a wonderful Bible promise, (that can be trusted on by every true believer in Jesus Christ).

(Jesus continued to explain for us to understand and take heed), "After all these things, do the Gentiles seek." Jesus meant anyone who is not a true believer, those who really do not have their faith and trust in God (including all professed believers), they are not true followers of Christ.

That is why people buy houses and real estate. They think it is very foolish to rent homes and church meeting halls. They believe that it is money thrown away. If they own the house and property, they are safe (they think), in that they have financial security. In reality, they have taken their trust away from God and placed it somewhere else. Any time that is done, it is not a scriptural move or decision—for we have proven that our 'faith and trust in God' is only words.

It is just as unscriptural to buy a house and the real estate it is built on, as it is to place money in a saving's account in some bank (the Pastor said). Both are treasures (financial security) laid up on earth. But, Jesus said, "Do not store up for yourselves 'treasures on earth'."

If we do not lay aside 'financial resources', then we have the great opportunity of trusting only in God to supply what is needed each day (financially and in other things). Every true Christian is a rightful heir to God's financial wealth, and they have an Atonement right to make their claim to receive it from God. God has fabulous sums of money in His control. He has an inexhaustible treasury, for God controls every penny on earth.

www.fcgchurch.org

PO Box 24283

Philadelphia, PA 19120

fcgchurch1@gmail.com

S431R 0917 25W

The First Century Gospel Church/Philadelphia