

The Love of Money

Series 1-15

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VerseQuest Ministries





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The Love of Money: A 15-Part KJV Bible Study Series

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Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version of the Holy Bible.

This work is written from a King James Bible-believing, dispensational, rightly divided perspective. It is designed to teach, warn, correct false assumptions, and help believers examine the biblical doctrine of money, stewardship, covetousness, religious corruption, betrayal, justice, and the heart.

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Introduction to the Series: The Love of Money

The Bible never treats money lightly, and it never treats the human heart lightly either. That is why this series, **The Love of Money**, was built by tracing the word “**money**” through the King James Bible and allowing the verses themselves to expose the pattern. This is not a shallow sermon series built around one misquoted phrase. It is not a rant against people having money, earning money, saving money, doing business, buying land, paying laborers, supporting ministry, or providing for their families. The Bible is too balanced for that kind of childish thinking. This study begins with the Bible’s own language and follows the trail from Genesis to 1 Timothy, watching how money appears in trade, household order, redemption arrangements, temple repair, famine, usury, bribery, betrayal, religious corruption, false witness, and finally Paul’s doctrinal conclusion: “**For the love of money is the root of all evil**” (1 Timothy 6:10, KJV).

The key to the entire series is reading that verse exactly as written. The Bible does **not** say money is the root of all evil. It says **the love of money** is the root of all evil. That distinction matters. Money can sit in the hand without ruling the heart. Money can be used as a tool without becoming a god. Abraham used money to buy a buryingplace. Jacob bought a parcel of ground. Joseph handled money in the famine. Moses dealt with redemption money. The temple was repaired with money gathered and delivered to faithful workmen. The problem is not that money exists. The problem is when money becomes master, idol, motivator, manipulator, and substitute for God. The problem is when money moves from the hand to the heart, from stewardship to worship, from servant to throne.

This study shows that money in the Bible is a revealer. It reveals what a man trusts. It reveals what a man fears. It reveals what a man will sell. It reveals whether he is faithful, covetous, generous, oppressive, honest, corrupt, fearful, or bought. Money does not always create the evil in a man; often it exposes what was already growing beneath the surface. Judas did not become a devil because silver was offered. The silver revealed the thief who had already been holding the bag. Delilah did not betray Samson because she loved truth. She sold access to a man’s secret. Felix did not delay Paul because justice was unclear. He hoped money would be given him. The chief priests did not pay the soldiers because the resurrection was uncertain. They paid them because the truth was too dangerous to their system. Again and again, money walks into the room and shows who is really sitting on the throne.

The series also corrects two dangerous extremes. On one side is the hypocrite who acts as though money has no place in practical life or the work of God. That is not Bible. The house of God had breaches, and money was gathered to repair them. Workmen needed to be paid. Materials needed to be purchased. Families need to be fed. The poor need to be

helped. The work of truth in this world often involves real expenses and real stewardship. On the other side is the hireling who turns everything spiritual into merchandise. He sees sheep as customers, guilt as a sales opportunity, worship as a market, doctrine as content, and ministry as a brand. The Bible rebukes both. Money may serve the work of God, but money must never rule the work of God.

The opening essays establish the foundation. **Money Is a Tool, Not a God** lays down the basic distinction between lawful use and idolatrous love. **When Money Fails** shows the frightening truth of Genesis 47, where money failed in Egypt and Canaan. Men spend their lives trusting something that can collapse in a famine, sickness, war, judgment, or grave. **Bought With Money** examines ownership, bondage, service, and the greater truth that the believer has been bought with a price by the blood of Christ. These essays set the stage by showing that money has a real function in the world, but it has limits. It cannot give life. It cannot satisfy the soul. It cannot redeem the sinner. It cannot replace God.

The middle of the series presses into the moral corruption that money exposes. **Usury and the Grinding of the Poor** deals with God's hatred of financial oppression, especially when a man sees poverty as an opportunity to tighten the noose. **Redemption Money and the Limits of Silver** examines the Old Testament passages where money had a legal or ceremonial role, but then draws the sharp line: no sinner is finally redeemed by corruptible things such as silver and gold. **Money in the House of God** gives balance by showing that money can be gathered and used faithfully for the work of God, but only when faithful men handle it and the Book rules the house. **The Prophet for Hire** exposes Micah 3:11, where judges judge for reward, priests teach for hire, and prophets divine for money. That passage alone names the whole religious marketplace.

From there, the series moves into some of the most powerful narrative warnings in Scripture. **Naboth's Vineyard and the Price of Covetousness** shows how a polite financial offer can hide a wicked desire. Ahab offered money, but when Naboth's conviction said no, covetousness brought in Jezebel, false witnesses, murder, and theft. **Delilah's Price** shows how silver can buy access through relationships, flattery, pressure, and betrayal. **Judas and the Price of Betrayal** brings the warning into its darkest form: a man close to Christ, close to preaching, close to miracles, and close to ministry still sold the Lord because his heart loved the bag. These accounts prove that money often does not attack from a distance. It gets close. It comes through affection, power, religion, opportunity, and private weakness.

The last major section of the series exposes money's role in public deception, religious merchandising, spiritual ambition, and corrupt justice. **Large Money Unto the Soldiers** shows that when the religious rulers could not stop the resurrection, they paid men to lie

about it. Some lies survive not because they are reasonable, but because somebody funds them. **The Changers of Money Sitting in the Temple** shows Christ overthrowing the tables when worship became commerce and the house of God became a house of merchandise. **Simon the Sorcerer and the Gift That Cannot Be Purchased** shows that the Holy Ghost, spiritual power, and divine authority cannot be bought with money. **Felix, the Bribe, and the Sale of Justice** shows a man trembling under preaching about righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, yet still hoping for a bribe. Truth was in the room, conviction was in the conscience, but greed was still on the throne.

The final essay, **The Root of All Evil**, gathers the entire study into 1 Timothy 6:10. By that point, Paul's words do not sound like a detached proverb. They sound like the summary of the entire biblical record. The love of money is the root that feeds betrayal, oppression, false witness, temple corruption, bribery, religious hirelings, spiritual merchandising, and apostasy. Paul says some coveted after it, erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. That is the final picture: not a satisfied man, not a free man, not a secure man, but a pierced man. A man full of sorrows because he chased what could not save him.

This series matters because every generation has to face the same question: **Do you use money, or does money use you?** Can God tell you what to do with it? Can He tell you to give it? Can He tell you to refuse it? Can He tell you to lose it rather than disobey Him? Can He tell you to walk away from an opportunity that comes with sin attached to it? Can He tell you to preach truth even if it costs support? Can He tell you to help someone who cannot repay you? Can He tell you to keep your convictions when someone offers you the worth of them in money? If He cannot, then money has become more than a tool. It has become a god.

The warning is not just for the rich. A poor man can love money he does not have. A rich man can use money faithfully without worshipping it. The issue is the heart. The covetous poor man and the covetous rich man are bowing to the same idol from different sides of the altar. The love of money can grow in a mansion or a rented room, in a pulpit or a business office, in a church treasury or a government courtroom, in a disciple holding the bag or a soldier holding a lie. That is why the Bible warns so strongly. The love of money is not a small blemish. It is a root, and roots work underground before the fruit appears.

The purpose of this series is to put money back in its proper place: under God, under Scripture, under stewardship, under conscience, and under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Money may be earned honestly, spent wisely, saved prudently, given generously, used faithfully, and refused courageously. But it must never be loved, worshipped, feared, obeyed, or trusted as God. It must never be allowed to buy truth, silence conviction,

corrupt judgment, exploit poverty, purchase spiritual things, or put a price tag on the believer's testimony.

The believer has already been bought. Not with silver. Not with gold. Not with corruptible things. He has been bought with the precious blood of Christ. That means mammon has no right to own him. The devil may offer silver, influence, security, platform, comfort, opportunity, or approval, but the answer must be settled before the offer comes: **I am not for sale.** Money can serve. Money can help. Money can be used. But money must never reign. The Lord Jesus Christ gets the throne, and everything else belongs under His feet.

1 of 15: The Love of Money - Money Is a Tool, Not a God

Introduction

The Bible never begins its doctrine of money with the childish nonsense that money itself is wicked. That is not Bible. That is not balanced. That is not rightly dividing anything. The first thing a Bible believer has to do is get the verse straight and not repeat what the world, the religious crowd, and the careless preacher keep misquoting. The Bible does not say, "money is the root of all evil." It says, "For the love of money is the root of all evil" (1 Timothy 6:10, KJV). There is the difference between light and darkness. Money is an object. The love of money is an affection. Money is a tool. The love of money is an idol. Money may sit in the purse, the bank, the chest, the treasury, the hand, or the sack, but the love of money sits in the heart, and that is where the Lord always aims His knife. God is not fooled by the size of the wallet. God looks straight through the wallet and finds the throne inside the man.

When the word "money" first shows up in the Bible, it is not introduced in some filthy gambling den, some crooked temple market, some Judas bargain, or some bribe under a Roman governor. It appears in ordinary life. Men are bought with money in Abraham's household under the old order of things. Abraham buys the cave of Machpelah for a buryingplace. The Bible says, "And Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant" (Genesis 23:16, KJV). There is no rebuke there. There is no thunder from heaven there. There is no angel with a drawn sword telling Abraham, "How dare you use money." Abraham is buying land honestly, publicly, and lawfully. Later Jacob buys a parcel of ground. Joseph handles corn, famine, sacks, payment, and restored money in Egypt. The Bible is not afraid of money. The Bible is afraid of what fallen men do when money becomes their god.

That is why this series has to begin with the right foundation. Money is not God, but plenty of people treat it like God. They trust it like God. They obey it like God. They fear losing it like God has left them. They sacrifice their families to it. They sacrifice their conscience to it. They sacrifice their doctrine to it. They sacrifice the truth to it. They sacrifice their calling to it. They let money tell them where to live, what to preach, who to please, what to hide, what to ignore, and when to keep their mouth shut. That is not stewardship. That is worship. A hammer can build a house or smash a skull. Fire can warm a room or burn it down. A knife can cut bread or murder a man. Money can feed children, repair the house of God, help a widow, print truth, support a missionary, and relieve distress, or it can buy betrayal, fund lies, corrupt judgment, purchase false religion, and turn a man's soul into a marketplace. The problem is not the silver in the hand. The problem is the throne in the heart.

Chapter 1: Money Is a Lawful Instrument in a Fallen World

The first thing to settle is that the Bible does not present money as a forbidden thing. It appears in the practical realities of life after man's fall. Men have property. Men buy. Men sell. Men make agreements. Men bury their dead. Men feed their households. Men travel. Men trade. Men owe. Men pay. Men restore. Men compensate. If a man cannot understand that, he will end up inventing some fake holiness where poverty is automatically spirituality and prosperity is automatically sin. That is not Bible. Job was rich and righteous. Abraham was rich and faithful. Joseph controlled the food economy of Egypt and did not become a devil because he handled resources. The issue is never whether money exists. The issue is whether money is under God or over man.

Abraham's purchase of the cave of Machpelah is one of the cleanest examples in Scripture. Sarah has died. Abraham needs a buryingplace. He does not steal it. He does not manipulate for it. He does not use his calling as an excuse to demand it for free. He conducts business in the audience of the people of the land, and the transaction is weighed out in "current money with the merchant" (Genesis 23:16, KJV). That phrase is important because it shows recognized value, lawful exchange, and public accountability. Abraham is a pilgrim and a stranger, but he still conducts himself honorably in financial matters. There is a lesson there that many loud religious talkers never learn. A spiritual man should not be a financial crook. A Bible believer should not hide behind prayer language while cheating people in business.

Jacob also buys a parcel of a field in Genesis 33:19, and later the Bible repeats that Abraham bought a sepulchre for a sum of money in Acts 7:16. The Holy Ghost does not erase those transactions as if they were stains. He records them. Why? Because lawful ownership, honest purchase, and fair exchange are not enemies of God. They are part of ordered life. The devil's trick is always to push men to one ditch or the other. On one side, a

man worships money and thinks gain is godliness. On the other side, a man pretends money is unclean and then still depends on somebody else to pay his bills. The Bible puts money in its place. It may be used. It may be counted. It may be weighed. It may be exchanged. But it may not be worshipped.

Chapter 2: Money Becomes Dangerous When It Moves From the Hand to the Heart

The danger begins when money stops being a servant and becomes a master. A man can hold money without loving it, and a man can love money without having much of it. That is the thing many people miss. The love of money is not limited to rich men. A poor man can be eaten alive with covetousness. A broke man can worship money he does not even possess. A rich man may use money as a tool, while a poor man dreams all day about serving mammon. The Lord Jesus said, “No man can serve two masters... Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Matthew 6:24, KJV). He did not say, “No man can have money.” He said no man can serve mammon. That is the line. The question is not merely what you possess. The question is what possesses you.

Money is a strange thing because it promises security, but it can never give the kind of security the soul needs. It promises liberty, but men become slaves chasing it. It promises power, but it often exposes weakness. It promises satisfaction, but the man who loves it always needs more. Solomon said, “He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity” (Ecclesiastes 5:10, KJV). That is not a poor man whining about rich men. That is a king talking with more experience than most men will ever have. Silver cannot satisfy the man who loves silver. Abundance cannot satisfy the man who loves increase. Why? Because the appetite is spiritual, and the object is material. You cannot fill an eternal hole with temporal dirt.

This is why Paul’s wording in 1 Timothy 6:10 is exact. “For the love of money is the root of all evil” (KJV). Not the handling of money. Not the earning of money. Not the saving of money. Not the giving of money. The love of it. That love becomes a root, and roots work under the surface. Before the visible fruit appears, something has been growing down in the dark. A man does not wake up one morning and betray Christ for silver without something already being wrong below ground. A preacher does not sell the truth for a salary unless a root has been feeding on his soul. A judge does not pervert justice for a bribe unless the root is already there. A prophet does not divine for money unless the root has already wrapped itself around his conscience. The root is hidden, but the fruit eventually shows.

Chapter 3: Money Can Be Used for Duty, Decency, and Provision

The Bible gives many examples where money is connected with ordinary duty and proper responsibility. Deuteronomy speaks of buying meat and water for money. Jeremiah buys a

field for money and takes witnesses. Men use money for food, land, labor, offerings, tribute, and necessary arrangements. That is life in a fallen world where men must eat, work, trade, travel, build, repair, and provide. There is nothing spiritual about being irresponsible. A man who refuses to provide and then calls it faith is not walking in Bible spirituality. Paul said, “But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel” (1 Timothy 5:8, KJV). That verse does not sound like God hates provision. It sounds like God expects it.

Money can put bread on the table. Money can keep the lights on. Money can help a child. Money can care for an aging parent. Money can relieve a brother in distress. Money can print Scripture. Money can help send a preacher. Money can buy materials, pay laborers, repair damage, and support honest work. In 2 Kings 12, money was brought into the house of the LORD and used to repair the breaches. “And they gave the money, being told, into the hands of them that did the work” (2 Kings 12:11, KJV). That is a righteous use of resources. There is no virtue in having a broken wall if God has supplied the means to repair it. There is no holiness in letting things decay while pretending neglect is spirituality.

But even there, the Bible does not praise the money itself. It praises faithfulness. “Moreover they reckoned not with the men, into whose hand they delivered the money to be bestowed on workmen: for they dealt faithfully” (2 Kings 12:15, KJV). There it is. Money in the hands of faithful men can be put to holy use. Money in the hands of crooked men becomes bait, leverage, and corruption. The same coins can repair the temple or purchase a lie. The same silver can bury Sarah or betray Jesus Christ. The difference is not in the metal. The difference is in the man. When money is subject to God, it can serve duty. When a man is subject to money, he becomes the duty, and money becomes the lord.

Chapter 4: Money Cannot Replace God, Wisdom, or Life

Ecclesiastes says something that shallow readers often mishandle: “For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence” (Ecclesiastes 7:12, KJV). That is true. Money can defend a man from certain earthly troubles. It can provide options. It can shield from some hardships. It can solve practical problems. A man with money may be able to obtain medicine, shelter, food, counsel, transportation, tools, and protection in ways a poor man cannot. The Bible is realistic. It does not pretend money has no earthly usefulness. Ecclesiastes 10:19 even says, “money answereth all things” (KJV), meaning in the practical affairs of life, money has an answering power. It can open many doors in this present world.

But Ecclesiastes 7:12 does not stop with money. It says, “but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it” (KJV). Money may be a defence, but wisdom gives life. There is the difference. Money can help a man survive circumstances, but

wisdom teaches him how to live before God. Money can buy medicine, but not eternal life. Money can buy a Bible, but not understanding. Money can buy a seat in a church, but not regeneration. Money can pay tuition, but not give spiritual discernment. Money can buy a house, but not make a home. Money can buy food, but not produce contentment. Money can buy a ring, but not create love. Money can buy an audience, but not an anointing. Money can buy applause, but not approval from God.

Genesis 47 shows the limitation in a terrifying way. The Bible says, “And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan” (Genesis 47:15, KJV). That phrase ought to haunt every man who trusts in his bank account. Money failed. The thing men trusted ran out of answer. The thing that had purchasing power lost its ability to meet the need. First the money went, then the cattle, then the land, then the bodies. That is the world’s system when the famine gets bad enough. It keeps taking. God gives bread from heaven, but Egypt eventually takes everything you have. Money may answer many things, but it cannot answer the famine of the soul. It cannot answer the grave. It cannot answer the judgment seat. It cannot answer God.

Chapter 5: Money Reveals Whether a Man Is Honest

Money has a way of bringing truth to the surface. It reveals whether a man is honest, careful, faithful, generous, covetous, fearful, or corrupt. In Genesis, when Joseph’s brethren find their money restored in their sacks, their hearts fail them. They are afraid and say, “What is this that God hath done unto us?” (Genesis 42:28, KJV). That is an interesting reaction. They did not rejoice first. They feared. Why? Because money in the wrong place creates suspicion. Money where it should not be raises questions. Money out of order brings pressure on the conscience. That whole scene becomes a test of their honesty, their fear, and their dealings before Joseph.

Later they bring the money back and say, “we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks” (Genesis 43:22, KJV). There is a practical lesson there. Honest men want money handled cleanly. Honest men do not want confusion around payment. Honest men do not want gain that looks like theft. That is why Abraham weighed out the silver publicly. That is why the temple repair money was counted and delivered responsibly. That is why restitution laws appear in Exodus. God’s people should not be slippery with money. They should not be vague, evasive, manipulative, or careless. If money reveals that a man cannot be trusted, then money has done the man a favor by exposing him before greater damage is done.

The Lord Jesus put it this way: “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much” (Luke 16:10, KJV). Then He says, “If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit

to your trust the true riches?” (Luke 16:11, KJV). That is a knife in the ribs of religious phonies. A man talks about revelation, calling, ministry, burden, doctrine, sacrifice, and truth, but he cannot be faithful with money. He cannot pay what he owes. He cannot keep his word. He cannot handle offerings cleanly. He cannot do business uprightly. He cannot be trusted with a dollar, and yet he wants to be trusted with souls. The Lord says faithfulness in lesser things reveals fitness for greater things.

Chapter 6: Money Becomes an Idol When It Commands Obedience

The surest way to know whether money has become a god is to ask whether it commands obedience. When money tells a man to disobey Scripture and he obeys money, money is his god. When money tells a preacher to soften the message and he softens it, money is his god. When money tells a businessman to cheat and he cheats, money is his god. When money tells a woman to compromise purity and she compromises, money is her god. When money tells a man to neglect his wife, neglect his children, neglect prayer, neglect church, neglect his Bible, neglect his conscience, and neglect the Lord’s work, and he does it, he can call himself whatever he wants, but mammon is sitting on the throne.

This is why Christ did not say, “Ye should not serve God and mammon.” He said, “Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Matthew 6:24, KJV). Cannot. Not should not. Cannot. The two masters issue contrary commands. God says give, mammon says hoard. God says tell the truth, mammon says protect the profit. God says trust Me, mammon says panic. God says seek ye first the kingdom of God, mammon says seek ye first the paycheck, the promotion, the platform, the deal, the donor, the customer, the sponsor, the partnership, the numbers, and the account balance. God says one thing. Mammon says another. The man in the middle eventually proves whom he serves.

That is where many men find out they are not nearly as spiritual as they claimed. It is easy to shout when nothing costs you. It is easy to take a stand when the stand does not threaten your income. It is easy to preach hard when nobody important is offended. It is easy to say God provides while secretly bowing to every financial fear that whispers in the night. But when truth costs money, the idol starts speaking. When obedience threatens income, the idol demands sacrifice. When conviction risks opportunity, the idol asks for blood. That is why the love of money is so deadly. It does not merely sit in the heart as an emotion. It begins to issue commandments.

Chapter 7: Money Must Be Kept Under the Lordship of God

The only safe place for money is under God. Not above God. Not beside God. Not as a substitute for God. Under God. That means money must be earned honestly, handled faithfully, given obediently, spent wisely, saved prudently, and refused when it comes with

strings tied to sin. A Bible believer has to learn not only how to receive money, but how to reject money. Some money is not worth touching. Some opportunities are traps. Some gifts are hooks. Some partnerships are chains. Some offers are Judas silver with a nicer envelope. Gehazi should have known that when he chased Naaman for silver and garments. Elisha asked him, "Is it a time to receive money?" (2 Kings 5:26, KJV). That question still preaches. There is a time when taking money proves the man has no discernment.

The believer must remember that God owns everything. "The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Psalm 24:1, KJV). That includes the fields Abraham bought, the silver he weighed, the sacks Joseph filled, the money in the temple chest, the coin in the fish's mouth, the widow's two mites, and every dollar a man thinks he owns today. Stewardship begins when ownership is settled. The man who thinks everything belongs to him will become either proud when he has much or bitter when he has little. The man who knows everything belongs to God can be faithful with much or little because he is not the owner. He is the steward.

Paul gives the proper command to those who have riches: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches" (1 Timothy 6:17, KJV). Notice the phrase "uncertain riches." That is the Holy Ghost's description. Men call riches secure. God calls them uncertain. Men call them power. God calls them uncertain. Men call them success. God calls them uncertain. Therefore the charge is not necessarily to throw everything away, but not to trust in it. The rich are told to do good, to be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate. In other words, money must be made to serve God's purposes, not command the believer's heart.

Conclusion

The first essay in this series has to nail down the foundation before the rest of the warnings come rolling in. Money is a tool, not a god. The Bible shows money used in lawful purchase, family provision, public transaction, temple repair, restitution, redemption arrangements, and ordinary life. A man who says all money is evil is not preaching the Bible. He is preaching confusion. But a man who says money is harmless is also blind. Money is not harmless once it gets into the human heart and begins demanding worship. A snake in a cage is one thing. A snake in the bed is another. Money in the hand can be useful. Money in the heart can be deadly.

The Lord does not condemn Abraham for buying a buryingplace. He does not condemn Jacob for buying a field. He does not condemn Joseph for managing payment in a famine. He does not condemn the repair of the house of God with counted money delivered to

faithful workmen. But He does condemn covetousness. He condemns usury against the poor. He condemns prophets who divine for money. He condemns bribery. He condemns turning worship into merchandise. He condemns trying to purchase the gift of God. He condemns serving mammon. The issue is not whether money passes through your fingers. The issue is whether it has wrapped itself around your soul.

So the question at the beginning is not, “Do you have money?” The question is, “Does money have you?” Can God tell you what to do with it? Can God tell you to give it? Can God tell you to refuse it? Can God tell you to lose it rather than disobey Him? Can God tell you to be honest when dishonesty would profit you? Can God tell you to preach truth when truth may cost support? Can God tell you to help someone who cannot repay you? Can God tell you to walk away from silver that comes with sin attached to it? If He cannot, then money is no longer a tool. It is a god. And if money is your god, then sooner or later it will fail you, because every false god eventually leaves its worshippers pierced through with many sorrows.

2 of 15: The Love of Money - When Money Fails

Introduction

There are some phrases in the King James Bible that are so plain, so sharp, and so loaded with judgment that a man can read right over them for years and never feel the blade until the Holy Ghost slows him down and makes him look at the words. One of those phrases is found in Genesis 47:15: “And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan.” There it is. Four words that can bankrupt every human philosophy on earth: “when money failed.” Not when religion failed. Not when sentiment failed. Not when politics failed. Not when education failed. Money failed. The very thing men spend their lives chasing, guarding, counting, loving, fearing, trusting, and serving came to a place where it had no more answer. It had buying power yesterday, but not today. It could fill a sack yesterday, but not today. It could negotiate yesterday, but not today. The famine kept moving, and the money ran out of voice.

That is a fearful truth because money does answer many earthly things. The Bible does not deny that. Ecclesiastes 7:12 says, “For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence.” Ecclesiastes 10:19 says, “money answereth all things.” A man has to be dishonest to pretend money has no usefulness in this world. It can buy bread, land, medicine, transportation, tools, shelter, clothing, protection, and opportunity. It can get a man through a hard week, pay a bill, repair a house, and feed a family. But Genesis 47 stands in

the middle of the Bible like a great warning sign over the road of human confidence. Money may answer all sorts of things in ordinary weather, but there is a famine coming where money has no answer. There is a sickness coming where money has no answer. There is a grave coming where money has no answer. There is a judgment coming where money has no answer. There is a thirst in the soul that money cannot quench, and there is a hunger in the heart that money cannot feed.

That is why this essay has to go deeper than the cheap little moral lesson that says, “Do not be greedy.” Any decent man already knows greed is ugly. The deeper issue is that money creates the illusion of sufficiency. It whispers to a man that if he can just get enough, stack enough, save enough, earn enough, invest enough, control enough, and insure enough, then he will finally be safe. But the Bible says there comes a day when “money failed.” That phrase should shake the rich man and the poor man. The rich man needs it because he thinks he has enough money to answer the next crisis. The poor man needs it because he may spend his whole life thinking more money would solve the emptiness that only God can fill. Both men can be deceived by the same god. One bows to what he has, and the other bows to what he wants. The Lord exposes both with one famine.

Chapter 1: Money Fails When the Famine Is Greater Than the Supply

Genesis 47 does not present a small inconvenience. It presents a famine so severe that normal economic confidence collapses. Joseph has gathered corn. Egypt has storehouses. Men come to buy food. At first, money still functions. Genesis 47:14 says, “And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought.” Money still has a voice at that stage. It can still buy corn. It can still move through the system. It can still bring something home. But famine does not care how confident men felt at the beginning. Famine keeps eating. Famine keeps draining. Famine keeps reducing a man’s options until all the pretty talk about financial security sounds like a fool whistling in a graveyard.

Then comes the next verse: “And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan.” The famine was greater than the supply. That is the first lesson. Money has usefulness only as long as the thing needed can still be obtained by it. If there is no bread, silver cannot become bread by magic. If there is no health, money cannot create health by command. If death has entered the room, money cannot bribe death to leave. Men talk about net worth, but famine reveals true worth. When the pressure grows greater than the system, the system fails. That is why no man should build his soul on a thing that depends on markets, weather, governments, health, strength, buyers, sellers, and time.

The world acts as if every problem is a money problem. Get more funding. Get more income. Get more investors. Get more credit. Get more assets. Get more leverage. But Genesis 47 shows a problem so deep that money itself became empty. The Egyptians did not come to Joseph saying, “We have a better investment strategy.” They came saying, “Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence? for the money faileth” (Genesis 47:15, KJV). Death made accountants sound like beggars. Hunger made wallets irrelevant. Need reduced the proud to pleading. That is what famine does. And there are more famines than a shortage of corn. There is a famine of truth. There is a famine of righteousness. There is a famine of spiritual discernment. There is a famine of love. There is a famine of peace. There is a famine of God’s words. When that famine comes, money will not feed the soul.

Chapter 2: Money Fails Because It Cannot Give Life

The Egyptians were not merely looking for luxury. They were looking for life. “Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence?” That is not the language of people wanting comfort. That is the language of people facing death. Money had served them up to a point, but now the issue was life itself, and money could not give it. That is one of the main reasons the love of money is so deadly. It convinces a man to trust in something that cannot meet the final need. Money can decorate a dying man’s room, but it cannot keep his spirit from departing. Money can put the best doctors around the bed, but it cannot command the soul to stay in the body. Money can buy a casket, a stone, flowers, music, and a polished obituary, but it cannot buy resurrection.

The Lord Jesus told of a rich man in Luke 12 whose ground brought forth plentifully. The man had more than enough. He said, “I will pull down my barns, and build greater.” He said to his soul, “Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.” That man made the same mistake millions make. He thought goods could talk to the soul. He thought barns could preach peace. He thought abundance could purchase time. But God said unto him, “Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?” (Luke 12:20, KJV). One night with God’s summons made his financial planning look ridiculous. His barns were full, but his soul was required. His goods were many, but his time was finished.

That is why money fails. It cannot give life. It can support the body for a season, but it cannot create life in the soul. The Bible says, “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (Matthew 16:26, KJV). That verse does not need a scholar. It needs a conscience. Gain the whole world. Not just a paycheck. Not just a promotion. Not just a little increase. The whole world. Lands, houses, kingdoms, accounts, investments, applause, fame, influence, comfort, luxury, and power. Then lose the soul. The Lord asks, “what is a man profited?” The answer is nothing. A man who dies without

Christ is not a successful man who had a bad ending. He is a bankrupt fool who mistook temporary purchasing power for eternal life.

Chapter 3: Money Fails Because It Cannot Satisfy the Soul

One of the great lies of the world is that if a man had enough money, he would finally be satisfied. The Bible says otherwise. Ecclesiastes 5:10 says, “He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity.” That is a perfect diagnosis. The man does not merely have silver. He loves silver. Therefore silver cannot satisfy him. Love turns possession into appetite. The more he has, the more he wants. He does not arrive. He enlarges the craving. That is the insanity of covetousness. It promises satisfaction by increase, then punishes the man by making increase feel insufficient.

This is why money fails even before it runs out. Sometimes money fails while the account is still full. A man may have enough to buy what he wants and still be hollow. He may have enough to eat well and still have no joy. He may have enough to sleep in comfort and still have no rest. He may have enough to impress people and still hate himself when the room is quiet. He may have enough to travel the world and still not know where he is going when he dies. That is not poetic exaggeration. That is Bible truth. The soul was made for God, and anything less than God becomes weariness when it is asked to do God’s job.

Isaiah 55:2 asks one of the greatest questions ever aimed at a spending man: “Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not?” That question sounds like it was written over the entrance of the modern world. Men spend money on things that are not bread. They spend labor on things that do not satisfy. They keep feeding appetites that never become content. They buy distractions, pleasures, identities, decorations, experiences, and vanities, and still the soul is hungry. Then God says, “hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.” There is the contrast. Money can buy many things, but only God can feed the soul.

Chapter 4: Money Fails When God Turns the Economy Into a Test

In Genesis 47, the famine was not accidental chaos. It had already been revealed by God through Pharaoh’s dream and interpreted by Joseph. There were seven years of plenty and seven years of famine. God knew the famine before Egypt felt the hunger. God knew the failure of money before men counted the last coin. That is important because financial collapse, famine, lack, and pressure often become tests that reveal where men have placed their confidence. The famine did not merely reveal that Egypt lacked corn. It

revealed that Egypt's life depended on something outside itself. All its gods, temples, rivers, systems, magicians, and treasures could not feed the land when the famine took hold.

God has a way of taking the thing men trust and showing them how fragile it really is. Nebuchadnezzar trusted his kingdom and lost his mind. Pharaoh trusted his power and drowned his army. The rich fool trusted his barns and lost his soul that night. Israel trusted Egypt and found Egypt to be a broken reed. Men trust money and then one event strips the confidence bare. It may be famine, war, sickness, betrayal, lawsuit, market collapse, theft, inflation, family disaster, or death. God does not need much to prove a false god false. One sentence from heaven can turn a fortune into a memory. One breath leaving the body can make the wealthiest man in town unable to spend another dime.

This is not meant to make the believer fearful. It is meant to make him sober. There is a vast difference between prudence and trust. A man should work. A man should provide. A man should plan. A man should avoid foolish debt. A man should not waste what God gives him. But planning is not worship, and prudence is not panic. The believer must not put his trust in uncertain riches. Paul says in 1 Timothy 6:17, "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches." There is the phrase: "uncertain riches." God labels them before they fail. Men call them secure. God calls them uncertain. Men call them dependable. God calls them uncertain. Men call them their future. God calls them uncertain. The famine simply proves the label was right all along.

Chapter 5: Money Fails Because It Cannot Redeem the Soul

One of the strongest truths in the Bible is that money cannot redeem the soul. Psalm 49 says, "They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." Then the passage says, "For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever." That is the end of all religious financial pride. A man may buy land, food, servants, influence, titles, lawyers, doctors, buildings, and votes, but he cannot buy redemption. When the soul is in question, silver goes silent.

This is where the love of money becomes especially blasphemous. It trains men to think in terms of price instead of grace. It makes everything negotiable. It says every man has a number, every institution has a pressure point, every door has a fee, every favor has a cost, and every outcome can be arranged if the payment is large enough. But God puts salvation outside that filthy marketplace. Isaiah 52:3 says, "Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money." Isaiah 55:1 says, "he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." That is God

mocking the pride of human transaction. The best thing God gives cannot be purchased by the richest man on earth.

Peter says it plainly: “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold... But with the precious blood of Christ” (1 Peter 1:18-19, KJV). Silver and gold are corruptible things. Men call them precious, and compared to paper and dirt, they are. But when redemption is the subject, silver and gold are corruptible things. The blood of Christ is precious. There is the Bible scale of value. A man who thinks money is ultimate has never stood at Calvary long enough. The Son of God did not hang on a cross because heaven was short on currency. He died because sin required blood, and no amount of money could redeem a sinner from the wrath of God.

Chapter 6: Money Fails Because It Cannot Bribe God

Men are so accustomed to bribing, bargaining, flattering, tipping, buying access, paying fees, greasing palms, and manipulating systems that they carry the same rotten instinct into religion. They imagine God can be handled. They imagine offerings can cover rebellion. They imagine donations can purchase indulgence. They imagine giving money to a religious cause can silence conviction. They imagine that because men can be bought, God can be bought. That is the spirit of Simon the sorcerer in Acts 8. He saw that through laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Ghost was given, and he offered them money. Peter answered, “Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money” (Acts 8:20, KJV).

That rebuke needs to be nailed over every religious cash register in the world. “Thy money perish with thee.” Not “thank you for your generous seed.” Not “God sees your heart, Simon.” Not “sow into this anointing.” Peter did not ask him to increase the amount. Peter did not put him in a partner program. Peter did not sell him a certificate of spiritual authority. Peter told him his money could perish with him. Why? Because the gift of God cannot be purchased with money. The Lord is not impressed with a man who offers cash while his heart is not right. Peter says in the next verse, “Thy heart is not right in the sight of God.” There is the issue again. Not the hand. The heart.

This exposes a mountain of modern religious wickedness. Men sell blessings. Men sell healing lines. Men sell prophecies. Men sell religious influence. Men sell prayer cloths, miracle oil, spiritual covering, titles, platforms, and access. They may not use Simon’s exact words, but they operate by Simon’s spirit. They think money can purchase the things of God. It cannot. Money can pay for a building, but it cannot purchase the presence of God. Money can buy a microphone, but it cannot purchase unction. Money can buy airtime, but it cannot purchase truth. Money can buy a crowd, but it cannot purchase

spiritual authority. Money can buy robes, degrees, and offices, but it cannot purchase the Holy Ghost.

Chapter 7: Money Fails at the Judgment Seat and the Great White Throne

There is coming a day when every financial distinction men worshipped down here will be stripped away. The rich man and the beggar both die. The king and the servant both die. The millionaire and the pauper both die. The celebrity preacher and the unknown saint both stand before God. Death is a great equalizer in the flesh, but judgment is the great revealer before God. Hebrews 9:27 says, “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” No account balance is mentioned. No portfolio is mentioned. No property deed is mentioned. No earthly title is mentioned. Death, then judgment. That is the appointment men keep trying to ignore.

At the judgment seat of Christ, the believer’s works will be tried. Not his net worth. Not his earthly fame. Not the applause he received. Not the size of his platform. First Corinthians 3 says every man’s work shall be made manifest, and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. Gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble. The issue is not merely how much there was. The issue is what sort it was. A man may have used money faithfully for the glory of God, and that will not be forgotten. Another man may have used money to build a religious monument to himself, and the fire will tell the truth. The judgment seat will not be fooled by branding, numbers, buildings, or polished reports.

At the Great White Throne, the lost will stand before God, small and great. Revelation 20 shows the books opened and the dead judged according to their works. No man buys his way out. No man negotiates. No man says, “Lord, look at what I accumulated.” No man says, “I funded religious causes.” No man says, “I was important.” Death and hell are cast into the lake of fire, and whosoever is not found written in the book of life is cast into the lake of fire. That is where money finally fails in the most absolute sense. It cannot silence the books. It cannot erase sin. It cannot open the book of life. It cannot purchase one drop of mercy after a man has rejected the blood of Christ.

Conclusion

The phrase “when money failed” is not just an economic note in an old famine story. It is a doctrinal warning. Money failed in Egypt and Canaan because money is limited, temporal, uncertain, and powerless before the deepest needs of man. It can buy corn for a while, but it cannot stop famine forever. It can buy medicine, but not immortality. It can buy pleasure, but not satisfaction. It can buy comfort, but not peace. It can buy religious machinery, but not the Holy Ghost. It can buy influence with men, but not favor with God. It can buy a grave

plot, but not resurrection. It can buy a Bible, but not faith. It can buy a sermon book, but not obedience. It can buy a church building, but not the presence of God.

This is why the love of money is such a deadly root. It attaches a man's trust to something that is guaranteed to fail him when he needs it most. It may not fail him on payday. It may not fail him when the market is strong. It may not fail him when the barns are full, the table is spread, the body is healthy, and the future looks manageable. But it will fail. It will fail at death. It will fail at judgment. It will fail when the soul needs redemption. It will fail when the conscience needs cleansing. It will fail when God asks for obedience. It will fail when the famine is not in the field but in the heart. The man who trusts money is leaning on a staff that will break and pierce his hand.

The answer is not to pretend money has no use. That is foolish. The answer is to put money where God put it. Under the hand, not in the heart. Under stewardship, not worship. Under obedience, not command. Under the Lord, not on the throne. Let money serve. Let God rule. Let money be spent, given, saved, earned, and used as God directs, but never trusted as saviour, never followed as master, never adored as provider, and never feared as though its loss means God has failed. The world says, "Get more money." The Bible asks, "What will you do when money fails?" The only safe answer is this: trust the God who never fails, believe the Book that never fails, rest in the blood that never fails, and lay up treasure where famine, thieves, rust, moth, death, and judgment cannot touch it.

3 of 15: The Love of Money - Bought With Money

Introduction

One of the most repeated and sobering phrases connected with money in the early books of the Bible is the language of being "bought with money." A modern reader may hurry past that phrase because it makes him uncomfortable, or he may stop in the wrong place and turn it into a shallow political lecture, but the Bible believer has to do something better than that. He has to read the words, keep the context, believe the Book, and let the Holy Ghost show the doctrine buried underneath the transaction. In Genesis 17, the phrase is repeated in connection with Abraham's household and the covenant sign of circumcision. "He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised" (Genesis 17:13, KJV). That is not a small statement. It shows household order, covenant responsibility, ownership language, and the way a man's money could bring another man under his authority, his roof, his obligation, and his religious administration in that dispensation.

The Bible is not afraid to talk plainly. It does not flatter man's imagination about freedom. It does not pretend human society is clean, fair, gentle, and harmless. It shows money buying land. It shows money buying food. It shows money buying servants. It shows money being paid for ransom, restitution, dowry, tribute, labor, and temple repairs. Money moves through human life like a current, and wherever it moves, it reveals authority. Somebody owns. Somebody owes. Somebody serves. Somebody commands. Somebody is under obligation. That is why the phrase "bought with money" matters. It forces the reader to face a truth modern men hate: the question of life is not whether you are owned, but who owns you. The natural man imagines himself free because he does what he wants, but the Bible says his wants are already chained to something. He is either under sin, under the world, under the devil's system, under his belly, under his lusts, under his pride, under his debts, under his fears, under his appetites, or under the Lord Jesus Christ.

That is where this subject turns from economics to doctrine. Money can purchase labor and service, but sin purchases the man. The world purchases the man. The love of money purchases the man. The devil purchases the man by finding what he values more than God. A man says, "Nobody owns me," while his bills own his schedule, his lusts own his eyes, his pride owns his mouth, his fears own his silence, his reputation owns his convictions, and his money owns his decisions. That man is not free. He is just blind to the master holding the chain. The New Testament comes in with a thunderclap and tells the saved man something the world cannot understand: "ye are bought with a price" (1 Corinthians 6:20, KJV). That price was not silver. That price was not gold. That price was the blood of Jesus Christ. If Christ bought the believer, then money has no right to own him. If Christ purchased the man, then mammon has no right to command him. If the body belongs to the Lord, then no dollar, no debt, no offer, no bribe, no employer, no government, no religious system, and no devil has the right to sit on the throne.

Chapter 1: "Bought With Money" Reveals Authority and Responsibility

The first place to begin is Genesis 17, where the Lord gives Abraham the sign of circumcision in connection with His covenant. The command does not apply merely to Abraham as an isolated individual. It reaches into his whole household. "And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed" (Genesis 17:12, KJV). The Bible then repeats it: "He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised" (Genesis 17:13, KJV). Then Abraham obeys, and the Holy Ghost records that all the males in his house, including those "bought with money," were circumcised that same day. That repetition is not accidental. God is showing that ownership language creates responsibility before Him.

A shallow man only sees the economic side. A Bible believer sees the doctrinal side. If a man was under Abraham's house, he was under Abraham's covenant administration. Being bought with money did not place him outside spiritual responsibility. It brought him under household authority. Abraham did not say, "That servant was purchased from a stranger, so God's command has nothing to do with him." No, the Lord included him. That is a powerful thing. Money brought the servant into Abraham's household, but God's word governed what happened inside that household. That means Abraham's ownership was not absolute. It was accountable. He could not say, "I bought him, therefore I can do whatever I please." God had spoken. Abraham's money did not outrank God's command.

That is a lesson desperately needed in every age. Ownership is not lordship over God. A man may own a business, but he does not own the right to cheat. A man may own property, but he does not own the right to oppress. A man may own resources, but he does not own the right to ignore the Lord. A father may provide for his household, but he does not own the right to lead it into sin. Money may place things under a man's hand, but it never places God under the man's foot. Abraham had people in his house who were bought with money, but Abraham himself was under the word of God. That is the proper order. When money gives a man authority, the first question is not, "What can I do with what I bought?" The first question is, "What has God commanded me to do with what is under my hand?"

Chapter 2: Money Can Buy Service, But It Cannot Create Human Worth

The old world was filled with household service, bondmen, hired servants, and legal arrangements that modern readers often flatten into slogans. But the Bible does not flatten it. It regulates. It distinguishes. It commands justice. It deals with wrongs, ransoms, restitution, release, debt, poverty, inheritance, and responsibility. Exodus 12:44 says, "But every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof" (KJV). That verse connects the Passover setting to household inclusion under the law given to Israel. Again, the servant bought with money is not treated as invisible to God. He is not outside divine concern. He is included under a rule, and that rule is not invented by the purchaser. It is given by the Lord.

Exodus 21 also shows that money and service create legal responsibility, not lawless power. The passages in that chapter are hard for modern ears because they belong to a world of servants, damages, ransoms, oxen, pits, and restitution, but the doctrine underneath is plain enough: God watches what men do with power. A man cannot hide cruelty behind ownership. A man cannot hide negligence behind property. A man cannot hide abuse behind money. When one man has power over another man, God steps in and speaks. The Bible never teaches that because money was paid, conscience can be

dismissed. It teaches the opposite. If money brought something or someone under your authority, you answer to God for how that authority is used.

This matters because human worth never comes from market value. A man may be bought with money in an earthly arrangement, but his soul is not priced by the buyer. The world is always trying to put price tags on people. How much can he produce? How much can she attract? How much can they earn? How much influence do they have? How useful are they to the system? That is the devil's ledger. God does not calculate worth that way. A poor man may be more precious in God's sight than a room full of kings. A servant may have more righteousness than his master. A hired laborer may have more fear of God than the man signing the check. Money can buy service, but it cannot create value, and it cannot erase the image of God in a man.

Chapter 3: Financial Power Easily Turns Into Human Control

The phrase "bought with money" also reveals how quickly financial power becomes control over another life. That is why the Bible speaks so much about justice, mercy, debt, servants, usury, and oppression. Money is never just math once people are involved. It can become leverage. It can become a chain. It can become pressure. It can become a master's voice in another man's ear. Proverbs 22:7 says, "The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender" (KJV). There is no sentiment in that verse. It is reality. Borrow enough, and the lender has a voice in your future. Owe enough, and your choices shrink. Need enough, and people with money begin to look like deliverers even when they are building cages.

That is why God repeatedly warned Israel about usury and oppression. Exodus 22:25 says, "If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer." Leviticus 25:37 says, "Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase." Nehemiah 5 shows the people losing lands, vineyards, houses, and liberty under debt pressure, and Nehemiah rebukes it. This is not God attacking lawful business. This is God attacking financial predation. The love of money looks at a desperate man and sees opportunity. God looks at a desperate man and demands mercy. The love of money says, "How much can I squeeze out of his trouble?" God says, "Restore."

When money controls people, the rich man is tempted to think he is more than a steward. He begins to think he is lord. That is when the corruption deepens. The man with money can start to buy silence, buy loyalty, buy influence, buy affection, buy votes, buy praise, buy religious approval, buy access, and buy the appearance of importance. He may not call it control. He may call it generosity, networking, leadership, or strategy. But if the money is being used to bend conscience, manipulate decisions, or make men dependent on his

favor, it is control. And the man being controlled is also in danger, because dependency can turn into fear. He stops asking, “What is right?” and starts asking, “What will happen to me if I lose the money?” That is how mammon builds its kingdom.

Chapter 4: The Love of Money Makes a Man Think Freedom Is Found in Possession

One of the great lies of money is that freedom is found in having enough of it. Men say, “If I had enough money, I would be free.” But the Bible keeps showing the opposite. The more a man loves money, the more money owns him. If he has little, he is anxious to get more. If he has much, he is anxious to keep it. If he gains, he fears loss. If he loses, he mourns like his god has died. That is not freedom. That is bondage with nicer furniture. Ecclesiastes 5:10 says, “He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase.” The man who loves silver is not liberated when he gets silver. He is enlarged in his appetite.

That is why a man can be poor and still be owned by money. He may not have much, but his imagination is chained to it. He dreams about it, envies those who have it, resents those who keep it, and believes every problem in his soul would disappear if only more money came in. That is the poor man’s version of mammon worship. The rich man may bow before the pile he has. The poor man may bow before the pile he wants. Both are worshipping the same idol from opposite sides of the altar. The love of money is not measured by how much is in the account. It is measured by how much command money has over the heart.

True freedom is not found in possession. It is found in belonging to the right Master. That sounds offensive to the modern mind because the modern mind has been trained to worship autonomy. But Bible freedom is not the absence of a master. Bible freedom is deliverance from the wrong master and surrender to the true one. Romans 6 says, “Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness” (Romans 6:18, KJV). Notice that. Free from sin, servants of righteousness. The question is not whether you will serve. You will. The question is whether you will serve sin unto death or obedience unto righteousness. Money lies and says, “Own enough and you will serve nobody.” Christ says, “Follow me, and I will make you free.”

Chapter 5: Sin Buys Men Cheaper Than They Think

The doctrine now has to move beyond money in the hand to bondage in the soul. Every lost man is already under sin. He may imagine himself independent, but the Bible says otherwise. John 8:34 says, “Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin” (KJV). That verse should knock the pride out of any man who thinks freedom means doing whatever his flesh demands. If sin commands and you obey, you are not free. If lust commands and you obey, you are not free. If bitterness commands and you obey, you are not free. If pride

commands and you obey, you are not free. If money commands and you obey, you are not free. You are a servant.

The devil often buys men cheaper than they expected. Esau sold his birthright for one morsel of meat. Judas sold the Lord Jesus Christ for silver. Delilah sold Samson for money. Balaam loved the wages of unrighteousness. Gehazi chased Naaman for garments and silver and walked away with leprosy. Ahab wanted a vineyard he had no right to possess. Felix kept calling for Paul because he hoped money would be given him. These are not isolated stories. They are windows into human nature. The price may differ, but the root is the same. Somewhere in the heart there is a thing valued more than obedience to God, and the devil knows how to put an offer in front of it.

That is a fearful thought. Many men boast loudly about what they would never do. They would never betray truth. They would never compromise doctrine. They would never sell out. They would never be bought. Maybe. But has the right price been named yet? Has the right fear been pressed yet? Has the right opportunity been dangled yet? Has the right relationship applied pressure yet? Has the right loss threatened the bank account yet? Peter said he would die with Christ, and then denied Him before the night was over. A man had better be careful boasting in his flesh. The love of money exposes the price tag on the soul, and the wise man asks God to burn that tag off before the devil reads it.

Chapter 6: Christ Bought the Believer With a Price

Now the doctrine turns upward into glory. The believer is not his own. That sentence cuts against the entire spirit of the age. First Corinthians 6:19-20 says, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you... and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price." That is plain. The saved man is purchased property. Not purchased by corruption. Not purchased by silver. Not purchased by gold. Purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ. The world says, "It is my body." God says to the believer, "No, it is not." The world says, "It is my life." God says, "No, it is not." The world says, "It is my money, my future, my career, my pleasure, my will." God says, "Ye are not your own."

That truth is not bondage in the evil sense. It is deliverance. The believer was not bought out of freedom into slavery. He was bought out of slavery into belonging to Christ. He was under sin. He was under death. He was under condemnation. He was under the present evil world. He was under the power of darkness. Then Christ bought him. The price was not negotiated with the devil like some foolish cartoon theology. The price satisfied the righteousness of God. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Colossians 1:14, KJV). Redemption means a purchase has been made. A transfer has occurred. The man who was lost is now Christ's.

That means money has no lawful claim to rule the believer. Mammon can tempt him, but it cannot own him unless he yields himself to it. The saved man may use money, earn money, give money, save money, spend money, and handle money, but he must never let money command what Christ purchased. The body belongs to Christ. The mind belongs to Christ. The tongue belongs to Christ. The hands belong to Christ. The future belongs to Christ. The wallet belongs under Christ's authority. If Christ bought the whole man, then money has no right to rent a room in the heart and start issuing orders. A believer who says, "I belong to Christ," and then lets money tell him when to obey is living in contradiction to his redemption.

Chapter 7: If Christ Owns the Believer, Money Must Become a Servant

The final practical point is simple: if Christ owns the believer, money must become a servant. Not a master. Not a counselor. Not a god. Not a fear machine. A servant. Money must be told where to go by a conscience submitted to Scripture. It must be used for provision, generosity, honesty, responsibility, ministry, mercy, and necessary duty. It must not be permitted to purchase compromise, silence, pride, lust, oppression, or false peace. That is stewardship. A steward does not own the estate. He manages what belongs to another. The believer is managing what belongs to the Lord.

This changes how a man earns. He cannot earn by wickedness and call it blessing. It changes how he spends. He cannot feed sin and call it liberty. It changes how he gives. He cannot give to be seen of men and call it worship. It changes how he saves. He cannot hoard from fear and call it prudence. It changes how he refuses. He cannot accept money tied to disobedience and call it opportunity. There are some checks a Bible believer should not cash. There are some offers he should not accept. There are some partnerships he should not enter. There are some promotions that cost too much because they demand the soul's quiet surrender. The question is not merely, "How much does it pay?" The question is, "What does it own once I accept it?"

That is where the phrase "bought with a price" becomes daily doctrine. A believer wakes up already owned by Christ. He goes to work already owned by Christ. He handles money already owned by Christ. He faces opportunity already owned by Christ. He meets temptation already owned by Christ. He suffers loss already owned by Christ. He gives already owned by Christ. He refuses already owned by Christ. His identity is not for sale because it has already been purchased. His convictions are not for sale because they belong to the Lord. His body is not for sale because it is the temple of the Holy Ghost. His testimony is not for sale because Christ paid for it with blood. Money may talk, but it does not get the final word.

Conclusion

The phrase “bought with money” opens a door into one of the deepest truths in the Bible: ownership. In the old passages, money could bring a servant into a house, purchase labor, settle obligations, buy land, or create legal responsibility. Those facts are there, and a Bible believer should not pretend they are not. But the doctrine does not stop in the ancient household. It points to a larger question. Who owns the man? Who has the right to command him? Who governs his body, his labor, his choices, his worship, and his future? The world says self. Sin says flesh. Mammon says money. The devil says appetite. The Lord says Christ.

The love of money convinces a man that possession is freedom, but the Bible shows that possession can become bondage. A man can own things and still be owned by the desire for more. A man can have money and still be a servant to fear. A man can gain wealth and lose peace. A man can purchase labor and still be a slave to lust. A man can command others and still be commanded by sin. That is the deceitfulness of riches. It lets a man feel powerful while his soul is wearing chains. The greatest bondage is not always visible. Sometimes it wears a suit, owns a house, signs checks, and speaks confidently while inwardly bowing to mammon.

The believer’s answer is not poverty worship or money worship. It is redemption. “Ye are bought with a price” (1 Corinthians 6:20, KJV). That settles the issue. Christ owns what He bought. The saved man does not belong to money, sin, the world, the devil, public opinion, religious hirelings, political pressure, business threats, or personal ambition. He belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore money must stay in its place. It may serve, but it may not rule. It may be used, but it may not be loved. It may pass through the hand, but it may not sit on the throne. If Christ bought the believer with His blood, then no amount of money has the right to buy him back.

4 of 15: The Love of Money - Usury and the Grinding of the Poor

Introduction

The Bible has a great deal to say about money, and one of the clearest patterns running through the King James Bible is that God hates financial oppression. He does not hate honest labor. He does not hate lawful business. He does not hate wise stewardship. He does not hate a man buying, selling, saving, building, repairing, investing, providing, or conducting himself faithfully in the affairs of this life. That is not the issue. The issue is

when money becomes a weapon in the hand of a man who sees another man's poverty as an opportunity. The issue is when lending becomes a noose, when profit becomes predatory, when increase is built upon another man's desperation, and when a man with resources looks at a brother in trouble and says, "Here is my chance." That is where the love of money turns from private covetousness into public cruelty.

The Lord gave Israel repeated commands about this matter because He knew what was in man. Exodus 22:25 says, "If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury" (KJV). Leviticus 25:37 says, "Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase" (KJV). Deuteronomy 23:19 says, "Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury" (KJV). Those verses are not hard to understand. God is dealing with His people in covenant relationship, and He is forbidding them from turning a poor brother's need into a profit machine. A hungry man does not need a trap. A desperate man does not need a chain. A poor man does not need a religious-looking predator explaining terms and conditions while tightening the rope.

This essay is not a childish attack on business, profit, interest in every possible modern context, or the lawful operation of a functioning economy. A man can be honest in business. A man can charge for labor. A man can sell goods. A man can lend responsibly. A man can manage property. A man can provide for his own house and not be guilty of oppression. But the Bible is looking at the heart and the effect of the transaction. Is the man helping, or is he feeding? Is he relieving distress, or is he multiplying it? Is he dealing faithfully, or is he using another man's weakness to enrich himself? That is where usury becomes a moral issue. It is money breeding upon misery. It is gain grown out of grief. It is a man who can quote Scripture while devouring his brother's vineyard, house, field, and future. God sees that, and God does not admire it.

Chapter 1: God's Law Put Limits on Financial Power

When God gave Israel commandments about money, lending, debt, restitution, and usury, He was not merely arranging a national economy. He was revealing His moral judgment about how men treat one another when money is involved. Money gives a man power. A lender has power over a borrower. A rich man has power over a poor man. A creditor has power over a debtor. A landowner has power over a laborer. A man with full barns has power over a man with empty hands. The Bible does not pretend that power is harmless. It regulates it. It rebukes it. It places God above it. That is one of the great differences between Bible righteousness and worldly economics. The world asks, "Can I get away with it?" God asks, "What are you doing to your brother?"

Exodus 22:25 is direct: “If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer.” Notice the wording. “My people.” “Poor by thee.” God identifies the poor man in relation to Himself and in relation to the lender. He is not just a borrower. He is one of God’s people. He is poor by thee. He is close enough for mercy. His need is visible enough for action. The lender is not dealing with an abstract account. He is dealing with a man God sees. The sin is not that the lender has money. The sin is becoming “as an usurer” to the poor man. That means the lender’s posture has changed. He is no longer a neighbor helping a needy brother. He has become a financial predator.

Leviticus 25:35-37 expands the same spirit. “And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him.” That is the command. Not exploit him. Not calculate how much can be squeezed out of his decline. Not turn his decay into a business model. “Then thou shalt relieve him.” Then the Lord says, “Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee.” There is the heart of the matter. “Fear thy God.” A man who oppresses the poor does not fear God properly. He may fear losing profit. He may fear missing opportunity. He may fear not expanding his own pile. But he does not fear God as he ought. The fear of God would make him see the poor man as a brother to relieve, not a carcass to pick over.

Chapter 2: Usury Is the Love of Money Wearing a Legal Face

One of the most dangerous things about financial oppression is that it often looks legal. It has paperwork. It has witnesses. It has terms. It has agreements. It has percentages. It has signatures. It can be defended by custom, policy, procedure, market practice, and the cold language of “that is just how business works.” But legal form does not automatically equal righteousness before God. Jezebel got false witnesses against Naboth. Judas had a covenant for money. The chief priests gave large money to the soldiers and arranged the story. Felix wanted a bribe under the cover of political custody. Sin is often very good at finding official clothes.

Usury, in the oppressive sense condemned in these passages, is the love of money putting on a respectable face while doing something rotten underneath. It is not a masked robber in an alley. It is a man at a table, calmly explaining why the poor man’s misery must now produce increase for the lender. That is what makes it so vile. It does not always look violent, but it is violent in result. It may not break the poor man’s jaw, but it can break his household. It may not stab him in the street, but it can bleed him over time. It may not steal his land in one night, but it can arrange circumstances where his vineyard, field, house, and inheritance gradually move into the hands of the stronger man.

That is why God's word cuts through the technicalities and goes straight to the moral reality. Deuteronomy 23:19 says, "Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury." The Lord is not confused by categories. Money, food, goods, anything lent upon usury to the brother is under His eye. The wicked heart always looks for loopholes. God closes them. "Usury of any thing." That phrase catches the man who says, "Well, it is not exactly money." God says, "Any thing." The law of God is wiser than the lawyer's mouth. The Lord knows that greed changes vocabulary when it wants to keep the sin and lose the guilt.

Chapter 3: The Poor Man's Need Is Not a Rich Man's Feeding Trough

The love of money becomes especially wicked when a man's gain depends upon another man staying needy. That is one of the ugliest features of oppressive systems. A merciful man wants the poor man restored. A covetous man wants the poor man dependent. A righteous lender wants the burden lifted. An oppressive lender wants the burden extended because the burden produces increase. That is where the lender stops being a helper and becomes a farmer of misery. He is planting interest in another man's trouble and expecting a harvest from his distress.

The Bible never permits God's people to view poverty as a feeding trough. Proverbs 14:31 says, "He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor" (KJV). That is a stunning verse. Oppressing the poor is not merely an offense against the poor. It is a reproach against the Maker. Why? Because God made the poor man too. The poor man may have less property, but he does not have less humanity. He may have fewer resources, but he does not have less accountability before God or less claim upon righteous treatment. To oppress him is to insult the God who made him. To show him mercy is to honor that same God.

This is where modern religious talk often becomes disgusting. A man will say "God bless you" while he writes terms that ensure the poor man cannot breathe. He will speak of faith while arranging profit from another man's fear. He will quote verses about diligence while ignoring verses about mercy. He will say, "I am just being wise," when he is really being hard. He will say, "It is not personal, it is business," as though God somehow goes blind when the conversation moves from the church house to the office. That phrase may work with men, but it will not work at the judgment seat. God does not have a secular corner where greed becomes clean because it used a calculator.

Chapter 4: Nehemiah Rebuked Financial Oppression Among God's People

Nehemiah 5 is one of the strongest passages in the Bible on this subject because it shows financial oppression happening among the people of God during a time when the work of

God was being rebuilt. That is important. They were not in a season of luxury. They were not lounging around in ease. They were rebuilding Jerusalem under pressure. Enemies were outside. Labor was heavy. The people were burdened. And in the middle of that, some of the Jews were exploiting their brethren. The poor cried out because they had mortgaged lands, vineyards, and houses. They had borrowed money for the king's tribute. Their sons and daughters were being brought into bondage. Their fields and vineyards were in other men's hands.

Nehemiah did not respond like a politician. He did not say, "Let us form a committee to examine market conditions." He did not say, "Well, both sides have a point." He did not hide behind economic jargon. The Bible says, "And I was very angry when I heard their cry and these words" (Nehemiah 5:6, KJV). That is righteous anger. Not fleshly tantrum. Not envy of the wealthy. Not a lazy man mad at successful men. Righteous anger. Why? Because brethren were devouring brethren. The nobles and rulers were exacting usury. Nehemiah says, "Ye exact usury, every one of his brother" (Nehemiah 5:7, KJV). He then set a great assembly against them. Public sin that harms the people sometimes requires public rebuke.

Then Nehemiah presses the matter home: "We after our ability have redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen; and will ye even sell your brethren?" That is a scorching rebuke. He is saying, in effect, "We have been trying to redeem our brethren from bondage to outsiders, and now you are putting them back into bondage yourselves." That is exactly what the love of money does. It can make a man work against the very thing he claims to stand for. He can talk about restoration while causing bondage. He can talk about the work of God while crushing the workers. He can talk about Jerusalem while devouring the people of Jerusalem. Nehemiah's rebuke exposes the hypocrisy of men who want the city built but do not care if their brethren are broken.

Chapter 5: Biblical Righteousness Demands Restoration, Not Just Regret

Nehemiah did not stop with emotional concern. That is one of the strongest parts of the passage. Religious people love to feel bad for a moment and then change nothing. They love tears without restitution, apologies without repair, concern without cost, and confession without obedience. Nehemiah was not playing that game. He said, "Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their oliveyards, and their houses, also the hundredth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them" (Nehemiah 5:11, KJV). That is not vague sympathy. That is restoration.

The guilty men answered, "We will restore them, and will require nothing of them; so will we do as thou sayest" (Nehemiah 5:12, KJV). Then Nehemiah called the priests and took an

oath of them. He even shook his lap and said, “So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise.” That is serious. Nehemiah understood something that soft modern religion often forgets: oppression is not corrected by words alone. If a man has taken wrongly, he must restore. If he has exacted wrongly, he must release. If his gain came from another man’s misery, repentance must touch the money, not just the mouth.

That principle runs all through the Bible. Zacchaeus, when salvation came to his house, said, “if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold” (Luke 19:8, KJV). That does not mean restitution saved him, but it showed something had happened in him. Grace does not make a thief comfortable with stolen goods. Grace does not make an oppressor comfortable with unjust increase. Grace does not teach a man to sing louder so he can ignore the person he defrauded. Bible righteousness has hands and feet. It does not merely feel. It restores where restoration is due.

Chapter 6: Psalm 15 Shows the Character of the Man Who Will Not Be Moved

Psalm 15 asks, “LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?” The answer includes a description of a man whose character is upright before God. He walks uprightly. He works righteousness. He speaks the truth in his heart. He does not backbite. He does not do evil to his neighbor. Then verse 5 says, “He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent.” Then the psalm ends, “He that doeth these things shall never be moved” (Psalm 15:5, KJV). That is a powerful placement. The Holy Ghost places usury and bribery right inside a passage about the character of the man who can abide before God.

That means financial conduct is spiritual conduct. The man who separates money from holiness is fooling himself. A man’s checkbook may preach louder than his mouth. His business practices may reveal more than his Sunday testimony. His lending may expose his theology. His treatment of the poor may show whether he fears God. His refusal to take reward against the innocent may prove that justice matters more to him than gain. The Bible does not allow a man to be holy in worship and filthy in finances. Psalm 15 does not say, “He that shouteth loudly shall never be moved.” It says the man who refuses usury and bribes, along with the other marks of uprightness, shall never be moved.

Notice that Psalm 15 links usury with taking reward against the innocent. Both are ways money corrupts righteousness. Usury crushes the needy. A reward against the innocent corrupts justice. One devours the weak through debt. The other condemns the innocent through payment. In both cases, money has stepped into a place where righteousness should have ruled. That is the common root. The love of money is not content to sit quietly

in a purse. It wants to influence judgment, mercy, truth, relationships, and worship. It wants to become the deciding factor. Psalm 15 says the man who will abide with God refuses to let money decide what only righteousness should decide.

Chapter 7: The Love of Money Turns Brotherhood Into Merchandise

The ugliest thing about usury among brethren is that it turns brotherhood into merchandise. A brother becomes an account. A neighbor becomes a revenue stream. A family in distress becomes a chance for increase. A man's field, vineyard, house, and children become items on a ledger. That is what Nehemiah saw, and that is why he was angry. The nobles and rulers were not merely making money. They were forgetting what those people were to them. These were not heathen enemies. These were brethren. Yet the love of money can blind a man so thoroughly that he no longer sees a brother. He sees collateral.

The New Testament raises the issue even higher. Galatians 6:10 says, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (KJV). The household of faith is not a marketplace for exploitation. It is a family where mercy should be especially visible. First John 3:17 says, "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" That is not complicated. A man has this world's good. He sees his brother have need. He shuts up compassion. The Holy Ghost asks how the love of God dwells in him. That question should trouble a lot of religious people.

This does not mean every request for help is wise, every borrower is honest, every poor man is righteous, or every financial problem is caused by oppression. The Bible is not stupid. Proverbs has plenty to say about sloth, waste, folly, surety, and bad decisions. But those truths do not erase the commands against oppression. A lazy man is wrong for refusing work. A greedy lender is wrong for grinding the poor. A foolish borrower is wrong for folly. A rich oppressor is wrong for cruelty. The Bible can condemn all of them at the same time because the Bible is balanced. The danger in this essay is not responsible discernment. The danger is a hard heart using discernment as a mask for greed.

Conclusion

Usury and the grinding of the poor reveal that the love of money is not merely a private sin hidden in one man's chest. It can become a system. It can become a culture. It can become policy. It can become paperwork. It can become respectable cruelty. It can become a way for strong men to feed on weak men while still appearing orderly and lawful. That is why God spoke so plainly to Israel about lending to the poor, taking no usury of a brother, relieving the man who had fallen into decay, and restoring what had been exacted.

God's concern was not merely that money exist. His concern was what men did with power when another man was in need.

Nehemiah shows the matter with unusual force. The people were rebuilding, but some were devouring. They were laboring on the wall, but crushing their brethren in the fields. They were concerned about Jerusalem's outward restoration while tolerating inward oppression. Nehemiah did not excuse it. He was angry. He rebuked the nobles and rulers. He demanded restoration. He brought the priests in. He put the matter under oath. He treated financial oppression like a spiritual offense, because that is exactly what it was. A man who has wronged others financially should not hide behind soft words. He should restore what he can, cease from the oppression, and fear God.

The lesson is simple enough for any honest man to understand. Money must never be used to crush the needy. Business must never become an excuse for cruelty. Profit must never become a god. Lending must never become a noose. A brother's poverty must never become another man's feeding trough. The man who fears God will not look at the poor and ask, "How much increase can I make from his distress?" He will ask, "What is righteous before the Lord?" The love of money grinds the poor. The fear of God relieves them. The love of money turns brethren into merchandise. The love of God remembers that a man in need is still a soul God sees, and God is not blind to the hand that helps him or the hand that tightens the chain.

5 of 15: The Love of Money - Redemption Money and the Limits of Silver

Introduction

There is a place in the Bible where money is connected with redemption, atonement, valuation, sanctuary shekels, offerings, and legal restoration, and a shallow man can get himself into trouble if he does not read the passage carefully. The Bible does not treat money as useless. It does not treat silver as meaningless. It does not treat valuation as wicked. Under the Old Testament economy, there were times when money was counted, weighed, assigned, received, offered, and connected with certain ceremonial and legal matters that God Himself appointed. That is the first thing to get clear. Money had a place because God gave it a place. But that is also the very point. Money had a place. It did not have every place. It functioned within boundaries set by God, and the moment a man tried to make silver do what only blood, obedience, mercy, faith, or God Himself could do, he crossed from stewardship into blasphemy.

This is where the love of money becomes especially wicked. It does not merely want to buy food, land, tools, or labor. It wants to believe everything has a price. It wants to believe the soul has a price. It wants to believe God has a price. It wants to believe judgment has a price. It wants to believe guilt has a price. It wants to believe spiritual authority has a price. It wants to believe a man can buy his way into what God only gives by grace through blood. That is the spirit of every corrupt religious system that has ever put a price tag on forgiveness, blessing, prayer, power, indulgence, anointing, access, or peace. The sinner wants a payment plan that does not require repentance. The religious merchant wants a customer instead of a convert. The devil wants men thinking in terms of silver when God is speaking in terms of blood.

The Bible draws the line with perfect clarity. Land may have a price. Labor may have a price. Restitution may have a price. A vow may involve valuation. A house or field under the law may be estimated. The firstborn under the law had redemption money connected with the sanctuary shekel. The atonement money of Exodus 30 had an appointed place in Israel's national and tabernacle order. But when the final redemption of the soul is in view, silver collapses. Gold is exposed as corruptible. Human wealth becomes dust. The conscience cannot be cleansed with coins. Sin cannot be washed away with metal. Hell cannot be bribed shut. God cannot be paid off. The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins in finality, and money certainly could not. The sinner is not redeemed from eternal ruin by the coin of Caesar, the silver of Abraham, the gold of Solomon, or the treasury of Rome. He is redeemed by "the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:19, KJV).

Chapter 1: God Gave Money a Legal and Ceremonial Place

The Bible believer has to be honest with the text. There are passages where money is connected to holy things because God placed it there under His law. Exodus 30 speaks of "atonement money" connected with the numbering of the children of Israel and the service of the tabernacle. The Lord says, "And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation" (Exodus 30:16, KJV). Numbers 3 speaks of "redemption money" for the firstborn who were over and above those redeemed by the Levites. Numbers 18 gives the price connected with redemption from a month old, "for the money of five shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary" (Numbers 18:16, KJV). Leviticus 27 gives valuations of persons, houses, fields, and things sanctified unto the Lord. Those passages are not accidental. God is teaching order, substitution, valuation, accountability, and the difference between what is common and what is holy.

But notice carefully that in all those passages, money only works because God assigned its function. Money did not invent its own holiness. Money did not redeem because silver has magic in it. Money did not atone because metal can satisfy God's righteousness. It functioned in a prescribed legal and ceremonial arrangement because the Lord commanded it. There is a world of difference between money used where God placed it and money worshipped where man enthroned it. The law did not allow a man to walk into the tabernacle and make up his own transaction. He could not say, "Here is extra silver, so ignore my rebellion." He could not say, "I will pay more and obey less." He could not say, "I will purchase my own terms with God." God regulated the matter because God owned the matter.

That is where modern religious corruption always gets exposed. The sinner wants the benefits of God's order without submitting to God's word. He wants to turn the holy into a marketplace and the marketplace into a substitute for holiness. But in Scripture, the money connected with tabernacle service, redemption arrangements, and valuation never makes man the master of God. It makes man accountable to God. The shekel is measured by the sanctuary, not by the sinner's mood. The valuation is determined by divine law, not emotional bargaining. The offering belongs under commandment, not human invention. God will allow money in its assigned place, but He will not let money climb into His seat.

Chapter 2: The Sanctuary Shekel Shows That God Sets the Standard

When Numbers 18:16 says, "after the shekel of the sanctuary," it gives a principle that reaches beyond the immediate law of that passage. The standard is not private. It is not whatever a man happens to carry in his pocket. It is not adjusted by greed, panic, sentiment, or convenience. It is "the shekel of the sanctuary." God sets the measure. God defines the terms. God determines what is acceptable in His order. That may look like a small phrase, but it is a major rebuke to religious man. Men are always trying to bring God their own scale. They want to weigh sin lightly and weigh their works heavily. They want to discount guilt and inflate merit. They want to give God the currency of their choosing and demand full credit.

The sanctuary shekel teaches that divine matters are measured by divine standards. That is true in the law, and the principle remains true in doctrine. A man does not get to tell God what sin is worth. He does not get to tell God what redemption requires. He does not get to determine the value of obedience, sacrifice, blood, holiness, or truth. God's scale is not crooked. God's balances are not adjustable. Proverbs 11:1 says, "A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight" (KJV). Men may cheat one another with false weights, but they cannot cheat God. His sanctuary has its own shekel, and His throne has its own righteousness.

That is why the love of money is such a corrupting force. It teaches men to think they can negotiate standards. In the marketplace, men bargain. In politics, men trade. In business, men adjust. In human courts, men may settle. But when a man brings that spirit into the things of God, he becomes a fool. God is not haggling over sin. God is not running a booth in a bazaar. God is not lowering the price of redemption because the sinner has a confident personality. When the matter concerns the soul, the standard is not set by man's purse but by God's holiness. The soul is not redeemed because man found a discount. The soul is redeemed because Christ paid the price God's righteousness required.

Chapter 3: Atonement Money Had a Place, But It Was Not Final Cleansing

Exodus 30 speaks of atonement money, and the passage has to be treated honestly. The children of Israel were numbered, and each man was to give a ransom for his soul unto the Lord when they were numbered, that there be no plague among them. The rich were not to give more, and the poor were not to give less than the half shekel. That money was appointed for the service of the tabernacle, "that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls" (Exodus 30:16, KJV). That is Bible language, and a Bible believer must not dodge it. Under that dispensation and in that context, God appointed that money for a specific purpose connected with atonement and memorial before Him.

But no one who reads the whole Bible honestly can turn that into final soul redemption by silver. The same Bible that speaks of atonement money also speaks of blood atonement. Leviticus 17:11 says, "for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (KJV). The money in Exodus 30 belongs to a particular ordinance connected with numbering and tabernacle service, not a universal doctrine that coins can wash away sin. The blood principle is deeper. Hebrews 9:22 says, "without shedding of blood is no remission" (KJV). That shuts the door on every system that imagines money can erase guilt before God. Money could serve the tabernacle. Blood was required for remission.

Even the blood of animals under the law pointed beyond itself. Hebrews 10:4 says, "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (KJV). If the blood of bulls and goats could not finally take away sins, then silver certainly could not. The entire Old Testament system points forward to Christ. The sacrifices, ordinances, priesthood, tabernacle, mercy seat, and blood all preach a coming fulfillment. Money may appear in certain arrangements, but it never becomes the saviour. It never becomes the cleanser. It never becomes the mediator. It never becomes the Lamb. The law can assign atonement money for an appointed national and ceremonial function, but only Christ can purge the conscience and redeem the sinner eternally.

Chapter 4: Redemption Money Teaches Substitution, But Silver Has Limits

Numbers 3 gives a remarkable passage where the Levites are taken instead of the firstborn of the children of Israel. The Lord says the Levites are His, and the excess number of firstborn beyond the Levites required redemption money. Moses took the redemption money and gave it to Aaron and his sons according to the word of the Lord. This is not random accounting. It is substitutionary language in a national, covenant, and ceremonial setting. One is taken in place of another. A number is reckoned. A price is assigned. A redemption is enacted according to God's command. The passage is loaded with order and doctrine.

But again, the limits are built into the arrangement. The money redeemed in that legal and ceremonial context because God appointed it to do so. It did not redeem from hell. It did not wash away sin. It did not regenerate the heart. It did not give eternal life. It did not make the giver born again. It belonged to Israel's sanctuary order and the redemption of the firstborn in relation to the Levites. A man who cannot distinguish that from New Testament salvation is not rightly dividing. He is just grabbing words and dragging them across dispensations without understanding the context. The Bible's use of redemption language must be believed, but it must also be placed where God put it.

The New Testament then reveals the greater redemption. Galatians 3:13 says, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (KJV). Ephesians 1:7 says, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (KJV). Colossians 1:14 says, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (KJV). Notice the price changes when eternal redemption is in view. It is not five shekels. It is not a half shekel. It is not an estimation by age or field or house. It is blood. More specifically, it is Christ's blood. Silver can function in a shadow, but blood fulfills the substance. Silver can mark an ordinance, but Christ accomplishes redemption.

Chapter 5: Valuation Under the Law Proves That Not Everything Is Priceless in the Same Sense

Leviticus 27 contains a detailed system of valuation for persons, beasts, houses, fields, and things sanctified unto the Lord. This chapter bothers people who want every Bible doctrine reduced to a slogan, but it is a sober reminder that God's law dealt with practical realities. Vows, sanctified property, redemption of houses and fields, additions of a fifth part, priestly estimation, and the year of jubilee all appear in the chapter. Money is involved. Estimation is involved. Reckoning is involved. That does not make the chapter unspiritual. It shows that God governs the practical world as well as the devotional world.

He owns the altar and the field. He speaks to the priest and the property. He rules worship and valuation.

This matters because some people become foolish in both directions. One man thinks money can buy everything. Another man pretends nothing can have a price. The Bible corrects both. Land can have a price. A field can have an estimation. A house can be redeemed under appointed conditions. Labor can have wages. Damage can require restitution. A debt can be calculated. An offering can be counted. A man who refuses to acknowledge practical valuation is not more spiritual than the Bible. He is just sentimental. God is not against numbers. God wrote an entire book called Numbers. God is not against counting. God counts. God weighs. God measures. God estimates. God records.

But valuation under the law also proves the limits of valuation. If a house is sanctified, it may be valued. If a field is sanctified, it may be reckoned according to the years unto jubilee. But when the soul stands guilty before God, no priestly estimate of silver can settle the matter. The value of the soul rises beyond all earthly price. The Lord Jesus said, “what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matthew 16:26, KJV). That question destroys the entire fantasy that everything can be bought. A man may exchange money for land, but he cannot exchange money for his soul. He may redeem a field according to Leviticus, but he cannot redeem himself from hell with a sanctuary shekel. The soul’s debt requires what no sinner possesses.

Chapter 6: Silver and Gold Are Corruptible Things

The Holy Ghost gives the final word on silver and gold in redemption when Peter writes, “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold” (1 Peter 1:18, KJV). There is the Bible’s description of what men worship. Corruptible things. Men call silver precious. God calls it corruptible when compared to the blood of Christ. Men call gold security. God calls it corruptible. Men call wealth power. God calls it uncertain riches. Men call money the answer. God calls the love of it the root of all evil. The difference is perspective. Men judge value under the sun. God judges value from eternity.

Silver and gold are useful in the earth, but they are powerless before sin. They cannot cleanse the conscience. They cannot satisfy divine justice. They cannot open heaven. They cannot close hell. They cannot remove one stain from the record of a sinner. A rich man and a poor man are equally helpless at Calvary unless they come by faith to the blood. The rich man cannot pay extra for a better salvation. The poor man does not receive a cheaper one. The same Saviour died. The same blood redeems. The same grace saves. The same gospel is preached. Romans 3:24 says believers are “justified freely by his grace through

the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (KJV). Freely by grace, but not cheaply accomplished. It cost Christ His blood.

That is the offense of the cross to the money-loving heart. The cross says the richest sinner is bankrupt before God. The cross says the most religious donor cannot purchase forgiveness. The cross says the most generous philanthropist still needs blood. The cross says the man who writes the biggest check and the beggar with empty hands must come the same way. No flesh glories at Calvary. The love of money wants hierarchy, preference, access, privilege, leverage, and bargaining power. The cross strips all that away. There is no VIP line at the blood. There is no premium redemption package. There is no silver level, gold level, and platinum level salvation. There is Christ, and there is condemnation. There is blood, or there is judgment.

Chapter 7: Religious Merchants Corrupt Redemption by Putting a Price on Grace

Once a man believes everything has a price, he is ready for religious corruption. That is why the love of money has always loved religion. Religion gives greed holy vocabulary. It lets covetous men sell forgiveness, blessing, protection, status, prayers, relics, indulgences, anointings, prophecies, deliverance, access, miracles, and spiritual authority. The labels change from age to age, but the spirit remains the same. Men take the things of God and put them on a table. Then Christ comes in and overthrows the tables. John 2:15 says He “poured out the changers’ money, and overthrew the tables” (KJV). The Son of God was not confused about religious merchandising.

Simon the sorcerer is another clear case. He saw that through laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Ghost was given, and he offered them money. Peter answered, “Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money” (Acts 8:20, KJV). That verse should be preached until every religious salesman on earth trembles. The gift of God cannot be purchased with money. Spiritual power cannot be bought. The Holy Ghost cannot be bought. Apostolic authority cannot be bought. Salvation cannot be bought. Forgiveness cannot be bought. Peace with God cannot be bought. Any man who sells what God gives by grace is closer to Simon than to Peter.

The love of money becomes most damnable when it teaches sinners to trust payment instead of Christ. That payment may be literal money, religious works, church loyalty, sacramental confidence, institutional obedience, donations, penance, priestcraft, or self-improvement. The form may differ, but the root is the same: man wants to bring something in his hand and avoid coming empty to Christ. But the gospel strips the sinner bare. “Nothing in my hand I bring” is not just a hymn idea. It is Bible truth. Isaiah 55 says, “he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat... without money and without price” (KJV). Why

without money? Because the price has already been paid by another. Grace is free to the sinner because it was purchased by the Saviour.

Conclusion

Redemption money, atonement money, valuations, sanctuary shekels, and legal estimations all have their place in the Old Testament because God gave them that place. They teach order. They teach accountability. They teach substitution. They teach that holy things are not handled casually. They teach that God governs the practical affairs of His people. They teach that a man cannot invent his own measure and expect God to accept it. But they also teach limits. Money works only where God appoints it to work. Silver may function in an ordinance, but it cannot cleanse the conscience. Gold may be weighed in the balances, but it cannot outweigh sin. A field may be valued, but the soul cannot be purchased out of hell by coins.

The love of money hates that boundary. It wants everything to be purchasable. It wants salvation to be purchasable. It wants authority to be purchasable. It wants forgiveness to be purchasable. It wants God's favor to be purchasable. It wants the soul to have a market value. But the Bible says no. "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold" (1 Peter 1:18, KJV). That one sentence topples every altar ever built to religious money. The soul's redemption is too high for man's treasury. The sinner's guilt is too deep for metal. The holiness of God is too pure for bribery. The wrath of God is too righteous for negotiation. The blood of Christ alone answers the need.

So money must stay where God puts it. Let it buy land if it must. Let it pay laborers honestly. Let it restore damage. Let it support the work of God faithfully. Let it relieve the poor. Let it feed a family. Let it repair what is broken. Let it be used under the Lord's authority. But never let it climb onto the cross. Never let it sit on the mercy seat. Never let it pretend to wash sin. Never let it replace the blood. Silver has limits. Gold has limits. The bank has limits. The treasury has limits. But the blood of Jesus Christ has no such limit. The sinner is not redeemed by corruptible things. He is redeemed by the precious blood of the Lamb, and that is why money may serve the believer, but it must never become his god.

6 of 15: The Love of Money - Money in the House of God

Introduction

There is a dangerous kind of religious thinking that only knows how to fall into ditches. One ditch says money has no place anywhere near the work of God, as though buildings repair

themselves, laborers eat air, materials fall from heaven fully cut and fitted, and practical needs are somehow unspiritual because they involve counting, giving, receiving, and paying. The other ditch is worse. It turns the house of God into a money machine, turns ministry into merchandise, turns giving into manipulation, turns preaching into fundraising theater, and turns the offering plate into a cash register. The Bible corrects both errors. Money can be used in the work of God, but money must never rule the work of God. Money may repair breaches, supply materials, support labor, and serve what God has commanded, but it must never become the voice that tells the preacher what to say, the elders what to tolerate, the church what to value, or the people what to worship.

The temple repair passages in Kings and Chronicles are some of the most balanced money passages in the Bible. In 2 Kings 12, King Jehoshaphat commands that the money brought into the house of the LORD be used to repair the breaches of the house. The priests had failed to hasten the matter, the breaches remained, and the king finally orders a more accountable handling of the funds. A chest is made. A hole is bored in the lid. The money is gathered, counted, bagged, delivered to the men who oversee the work, and laid out to the carpenters, builders, masons, and hewers of stone. The same pattern appears in 2 Chronicles 24, where money is gathered in abundance, and after the work is finished, the rest is used for vessels for the house of the LORD. Later, in Josiah's day, money is again gathered and delivered to the workmen repairing the house, and in the middle of that recovery, the book of the law is found. That is not accidental. When God's house is being set in order, money, labor, faithfulness, and the word of God all come into view.

The key phrase in these passages is not "much money," although there was much money. The key phrase is not "the king's commandment," although leadership mattered. The key phrase is not even "repair the breaches," although that was the visible work. The key phrase is this: "for they dealt faithfully" (2 Kings 12:15, KJV). That is the whole matter. Faithful men can handle money without worshipping it. Faithful men can receive funds without becoming thieves. Faithful men can pay laborers without turning the work into a racket. Faithful men can repair the house without padding the bill, skimming the chest, manipulating the people, or pretending that every practical need is a crisis from heaven. But crooked men can corrupt anything. They can turn an offering into a performance, a ministry into a brand, a pulpit into a sales desk, and the people of God into donors to be managed. The problem is not money touching ministry. The problem is money ruling ministry.

Chapter 1: Money Was Gathered for a Real Work, Not a Religious Show

The money in 2 Kings 12 was gathered because there were actual breaches in the house of the LORD. The building needed repair. This was not imaginary. This was not a preacher

inventing a crisis to stir people emotionally. This was not a religious salesman creating urgency so he could keep a machine running. The text says, “let the priests take it to them, every man of his acquaintance: and let them repair the breaches of the house, wheresoever any breach shall be found” (2 Kings 12:5, KJV). The need was visible, practical, and connected with the proper care of the house of God under that dispensation. God’s work in this world often has material needs. That is not carnal. That is reality.

A Bible believer should never be more “spiritual” than the Bible. The tabernacle required materials. The temple required stones, timber, vessels, craftsmen, and gold. The workmen in Joash’s day needed payment. Ezra 3:7 says, “They gave money also unto the masons, and to the carpenters.” There is no rebuke there. The people of God gave money to the men doing the work. The masons did not build with good intentions alone. The carpenters did not eat invisible bread. Practical work requires practical provision. The idea that money is automatically unspiritual when attached to God’s work is foolishness. It sounds humble, but it often becomes an excuse for neglect, irresponsibility, and disorder.

But the money was gathered for a real work, not a religious spectacle. That distinction matters. The work of God has needs, but not every emotional appeal is the work of God. Not every building project is holy. Not every fundraising letter is spiritual. Not every urgent offering is urgent. Not every religious campaign is directed by the Lord. The Bible gives no cover to religious manipulation. It shows money gathered for a definite need, applied to a definite work, and handled in a definite manner. That is the difference between stewardship and showmanship. God’s people should be generous, but they should not be gullible. They should support the work, but they should also care whether the work is real.

Chapter 2: Neglect in the House of God Often Shows Up as Breaches

The phrase “breaches of the house” is more than an architectural note. In the passage, it refers to literal damage and needed repairs, but it also preaches. Breaches show that something has been neglected. A breach does not usually appear because one stone felt unappreciated and walked away. Breaches form through pressure, age, attack, carelessness, weathering, failure to maintain, and leadership that does not address problems when they are small. The house of the LORD had breaches, and the money that had come in was not being properly applied to the repairs. Jehoash finally confronts the priests and says, “Why repair ye not the breaches of the house?” (2 Kings 12:7, KJV). That question still has teeth.

Many churches and ministries have breaches, though not always in the walls. There are breaches in doctrine. Breaches in prayer. Breaches in accountability. Breaches in holiness. Breaches in leadership. Breaches in family order. Breaches in giving. Breaches in

preaching. Breaches in discipline. Breaches in evangelism. Breaches in truth. And sometimes money has come in, people have sacrificed, offerings have been given, but the breaches remain because the men responsible did not do what they were supposed to do. They received, but did not repair. They counted, but did not build. They talked about the house of God, but the damage stayed visible.

That is where money becomes a revealer again. The presence of money does not automatically mean the work is being done. A ministry can have funds and still have breaches. A church can have a budget and still have doctrinal rot. A religious organization can have buildings, staff, programs, branding, technology, and polish, and still be full of holes. Jehoshaphat did not merely ask, "Was money received?" He asked, "Why repair ye not?" That is the issue. Money was supposed to serve the work. If the work is not being done, then someone needs to ask hard questions. The people of God are not wrong to ask whether the money given for repair is actually repairing anything.

Chapter 3: Accountability Is Not Carnality

One of the most important parts of 2 Kings 12 is the introduction of a better process. Jehoiada the priest takes a chest, bores a hole in the lid, and sets it beside the altar. The priests that kept the door put therein all the money brought into the house of the LORD. When they saw much money in the chest, the king's scribe and the high priest came up, put it in bags, and told the money. Then the money was delivered into the hands of them that did the work. That is order. That is accountability. That is practical wisdom. Nobody with sense should call that unbelief. Nobody with Bible understanding should call that a lack of faith.

There is a kind of religious manipulation that treats accountability as an attack. Ask where the money went, and suddenly you are "touching the Lord's anointed." Ask whether the work was done, and suddenly you are "causing division." Ask why the breaches remain, and suddenly you are "carnal." That is nonsense. In the Bible, money connected with God's work was counted, bagged, delivered, and applied. The king's scribe and the high priest were involved. The work had overseers. The laborers were paid. The materials were purchased. The money had a path. A man who refuses accountability while handling God's people's giving is not more spiritual than Jehoiada. He is more suspicious.

Accountability protects both the work and the worker. It guards the people from abuse and guards faithful men from accusation. Paul understood this principle when handling the collection for the saints. In 2 Corinthians 8:20-21, he says, "Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us: Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men." That is New Testament

wisdom. Paul knew he was honest before God, but he still cared about honest handling in the sight of men. That is not unbelief. That is integrity. A faithful ministry does not fear clean books, clear communication, and visible fruit.

Chapter 4: Faithful Men Can Handle Money Without Worshipping It

The greatest phrase in the temple repair passages is found in 2 Kings 12:15: “Moreover they reckoned not with the men, into whose hand they delivered the money to be bestowed on workmen: for they dealt faithfully.” The reason the system worked was not merely the chest, the counting, the bags, or the process. It was the character of the men. “They dealt faithfully.” Money in the hands of faithful men can be a servant of righteousness. Money in the hands of unfaithful men becomes a temptation, a weapon, and a snare. The difference is not the coin. The difference is the character.

Faithful men do not see God’s money as their private opportunity. They do not skim. They do not manipulate. They do not exaggerate needs. They do not create emotional pressure to maintain a lifestyle. They do not use the ministry as a cover for greed. They do not turn the people into a mailing list to be milked. They do not talk piously about sacrifice while living like kings off the sacrifices of others. They deal faithfully. That means the work is more important than their ego. The house is more important than their image. The Lord’s command is more important than their comfort. The people’s trust is not something to exploit, but something to guard.

Faithfulness is stronger than greed because faithfulness fears God. Greed asks, “What can I get?” Faithfulness asks, “What has God required?” Greed says, “No one will know.” Faithfulness says, “God knows.” Greed says, “I deserve this.” Faithfulness says, “This belongs to the work.” Greed says, “Use the ministry to build yourself.” Faithfulness says, “Use yourself to serve the ministry.” That is why faithful men are rare and precious. Talent is not enough. Charisma is not enough. Knowledge is not enough. A man can preach hard and still steal soft. A man can quote verses and still mishandle money. The Bible says the men dealt faithfully. That is the qualification that kept money in its place.

Chapter 5: Crooked Men Can Turn the Offering Plate Into a Cash Register

Now the other side has to be said plainly. Money in the house of God is dangerous when crooked men handle it. A crooked man does not need a casino to be greedy. Give him a pulpit, and he will make the pulpit pay. Give him a ministry, and he will turn it into merchandise. Give him an offering plate, and he will turn it into a cash register. Give him a congregation, and he will see customers. Give him a mailing list, and he will see revenue. Give him suffering people, and he will sell them promises. Give him spiritual hunger, and he

will package it. Give him fear, and he will monetize it. That is not ministry. That is religious burglary.

The Lord Jesus found money changers sitting in the temple and those selling oxen, sheep, and doves. He did not gently suggest a better arrangement. He made a scourge of small cords, drove them out, poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables. John 2:16 says He told them, "Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise" (KJV). There is the line. Money may serve the house, but the house must not become merchandise. Sacrifices had a place under the law, but religious men turned the place of worship into a marketplace. They took what was connected to God and made it a system of profit. Christ overturned it.

That same spirit is alive wherever men use God-talk to cover greed. It appears in prosperity rackets, paid prophecies, miracle merchandise, guilt-driven fundraising, manipulative seed-faith gimmicks, spiritual status sold for donations, and religious brands that treat doctrine like a product line. It also appears in more respectable clothing when churches become corporations with sermons attached. The language may be softer, the lighting may be better, and the music may be smoother, but the principle is the same when money rules. The question becomes, "Will it sell?" instead of "Is it true?" "Will donors like it?" instead of "Did God say it?" "Will it grow the brand?" instead of "Will it please the Lord?" That is the house of merchandise with modern paint.

Chapter 6: Money in God's Work Must Never Silence the Word of God

One of the most striking things about the repair of the house in Josiah's day is that while money is being gathered and delivered for the work, Hilkiah finds the book of the law. 2 Chronicles 34:14 says, "And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiah the priest found a book of the law of the LORD given by Moses." That scene is powerful. They are dealing with money and repairs, and suddenly the Book appears. That is exactly the right order for God's work. Money may repair the house, but the Book must rule the house. If the building is repaired and the Bible is lost, the work is still ruined.

Josiah does not say, "Wonderful, we found the Book, but let us focus on the building campaign." He hears the words of the law, rends his clothes, and seeks the Lord. That is the correct response. The word of God takes authority over the king, the priest, the people, the money, the building, and the entire nation. That is what must happen in any true work of God. Money must never silence the Book. Money must never outrank doctrine. Money must never soften preaching. Money must never decide which verses are acceptable. Money

must never tell the preacher to avoid unpopular truth because donors may leave. If the Book is found and the money is threatened, the Book stays and the money can go.

That is where many ministries fail. They can gather money but cannot endure Scripture. They can fund programs but cannot handle rebuke. They can repair buildings but cannot repair doctrine. They can polish the sanctuary but not tremble at the Book. They can count offerings but not count the cost of obedience. Josiah's day shows something better. The money was used for the practical repair, but the discovered Book brought spiritual conviction. A ministry that has money without the Book is just a religious business. A church that has financial order without biblical authority is just an organized shell. The house of God is not truly repaired until the word of God is back in command.

Chapter 7: The Right Use of Money Requires the Right Heart

The temple repair passages rebuke both the hypocrite and the hireling. The hypocrite pretends money is unnecessary for the work of God. He wants the benefits of preaching, buildings, materials, missions, helps, printing, maintenance, and service, but he acts like any mention of practical provision is worldly. That man is not spiritual. He is often just cheap, irresponsible, or unrealistic. The hireling is the opposite. He sees every spiritual thing as a financial opportunity. He can preach on giving until the wallpaper peels, but he cannot preach truth that might cost him supporters. He is not a shepherd. He is a salesman in religious clothes. Both men are wrong.

The right position is Bible stewardship. Money is useful but subordinate. Giving is good but not saving. Support is necessary but not sovereign. Laborers may be paid, but they must be faithful. Needs may be presented, but not manipulated. Offerings may be received, but not worshipped. The house may be repaired, but not turned into merchandise. The Book must rule the work. The Lord must rule the money. Faithful men must handle what God's people give. That is not complicated. It only becomes complicated when greed or pride enters the room.

The heart is the issue because the same money can be holy or filthy depending on how it is handled. Money placed in the chest for temple repair can serve the house of God. Money placed in Judas' hand can purchase betrayal. Money brought by Barnabas and laid at the apostles' feet can help the needy. Money offered by Simon can reveal a corrupt heart that thinks the gift of God may be purchased. Money given to soldiers can spread a lie about the resurrection. Money given to faithful workmen can repair breaches. The coin does not change. The heart does. That is why the love of money is so dangerous in religious places. It can stand close to holy things and still remain devilish.

Conclusion

Money in the house of God is not automatically evil, and it is not automatically righteous. It must be judged by Scripture, purpose, handling, accountability, and heart. In the days of Joash and Josiah, money was gathered and used to repair the house of the LORD. The workmen were paid. Materials were purchased. The breaches were repaired. The money was counted, bagged, delivered, and applied. That is good order. That is practical stewardship. That is not carnality. The house of God had real needs, and faithful men used real resources to meet those needs.

But the same Bible that shows money used rightly in God's work also shows Christ overthrowing the tables of the money changers. That means the line is real. Money can serve the work, or money can corrupt the work. Money can repair breaches, or it can create them. Money can support faithful laborers, or it can enrich hirelings. Money can be laid at the apostles' feet in sincerity, or offered by Simon in wickedness. Money can help the needy, or buy a lie from soldiers. The deciding issue is not whether money is present. The deciding issue is whether God rules it, whether truth governs it, and whether faithful men handle it.

The phrase still stands as the standard: "for they dealt faithfully." That is what God's work needs. Not merely more money. Faithful men. Faithful handling. Faithful preaching. Faithful oversight. Faithful labor. Faithful stewardship. Faithful obedience to the Book. Let money come if God supplies it. Let it go where God directs it. Let it repair what is broken, support what is true, help what is needy, and serve what is righteous. But never let it rule the house. Never let it buy the pulpit. Never let it silence the Book. Never let it turn the sheep into customers. Money can be in the house of God, but God help the man who lets money become god in the house.

7 of 15: The Love of Money - The Prophet for Hire

Introduction

Micah 3:11 is one of those verses that does not need much explanation before it starts cutting. The Bible says, "The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us" (Micah 3:11, KJV). That verse is a loaded gun pointed at every religious marketplace in history. It names the whole filthy system in one shot: judges for reward, priests for hire, prophets for money, and then all of them leaning on the LORD with sanctimonious confidence as if God is obligated to bless the racket. That is the real horror of it. They are not atheists. They are not pagans standing

outside the religious order mocking the name of God. They are inside the system, using the language of God, claiming the presence of God, while money is ruling the judgment seat, the priesthood, and the prophetic voice.

This is what happens when the love of money gets into religious leadership. Truth becomes a paid performance. Spiritual authority becomes a career ladder. Doctrine becomes a product. Preaching becomes branding. The pulpit becomes a platform. The congregation becomes a customer base. A prophet for hire does not ask, “What saith the LORD?” He asks, “Who is paying?” A priest for hire does not feed the flock. He manages religious customers and keeps the machinery running. A judge for reward does not care about righteousness. He cares about the hand that greases the scale. When money sits on the throne, every office becomes corrupt. The judge sells justice. The priest sells teaching. The prophet sells revelation. Then the whole crowd wraps itself in religious language and says, “Is not the LORD among us?” That is not faith. That is presumption with a price tag.

The frightening thing about Micah 3:11 is that it does not describe a rare disease. It describes a recurring plague. Every age has its prophets for hire. Every age has its priests for hire. Every age has its judges for reward. Sometimes they wear robes. Sometimes they wear suits. Sometimes they sit in denominational offices. Sometimes they build television empires. Sometimes they run conference circuits. Sometimes they preach prosperity while extracting money from desperate people. Sometimes they soften doctrine because the donors are nervous. Sometimes they chase celebrity access because applause pays better than truth. Sometimes they use Bible words, prayer language, worship music, and polished media to hide the same old sin. The Bible already named the system. The only question is whether a man has enough discernment to recognize it when it smiles at him from a stage.

Chapter 1: Judges for Reward Corrupt Righteousness at the Gate

The first group named in Micah 3:11 is “the heads thereof.” These are rulers, leaders, those responsible for judgment and civil order. The charge is that they “judge for reward.” That means judgment is no longer governed by righteousness. It is governed by payment. The verdict bends toward the man with the gift. The scale tips toward the hand with the reward. The innocent may suffer, the guilty may escape, and truth may be buried because someone found the price of the judge. This is one of the oldest corruptions in human society. When justice is for sale, the poor man trembles, the wicked man smiles, and the land rots from the top down.

The Bible repeatedly condemns this. Exodus 23:8 says, “And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous” (KJV). Deuteronomy 16:19 says, “Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift.” A

gift in that context is not innocent generosity. It is influence money. It is a bribe. It blinds. It perverts. That is exactly what money does when it enters judgment. It does not merely add a financial factor. It attacks the eyesight of the judge. It makes a wise man blind. It twists the speech of a righteous man. He may still use moral vocabulary, but the reward is now writing the conclusion.

This applies far beyond the ancient gate. Any man who changes his judgment because of financial pressure is standing in the shadow of Micah 3:11. A preacher who knows what the Book says but refuses to say it because wealthy supporters might leave has judged for reward. A ministry leader who protects a donor while crushing a poor member has judged for reward. A religious institution that disciplines the weak and excuses the profitable has judged for reward. A man who can discern error in people who cannot help him, but suddenly loses discernment when the offender has influence, money, or status, has judged for reward. The love of money does not merely steal dollars. It steals judgment.

Chapter 2: Priests for Hire Turn Teaching Into a Profession Without Fear

The second group named is the priests: “the priests thereof teach for hire.” Teaching is not wrong. Support for labor is not wrong. Paul says, “the labourer is worthy of his reward” (1 Timothy 5:18, KJV), and “they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel” (1 Corinthians 9:14, KJV). A Bible believer has no business pretending that every paid minister is automatically a hireling. That would be dishonest. The issue in Micah is not that teaching involved support. The issue is that teaching was being governed by hire. The priest did not teach because God’s truth burned in his bones. He taught because the arrangement paid. He was not feeding sheep. He was performing a paid religious service.

There is a world of difference between a supported servant and a hired religious professional. A supported servant can preach truth when it costs him. A hired professional calculates how truth affects the contract. A supported servant answers to God first. A hired professional answers to the market. A supported servant may receive provision while remaining faithful to the Book. A hired professional trims the Book to preserve provision. A supported servant has a burden. A hired professional has a career. The words may sound similar from a distance, but the spirit is entirely different. One is ministry. The other is merchandise with religious vocabulary.

This is where much of modern religion stinks. Men are trained to manage religious consumers, not feed the flock of God. They learn how to avoid offense, protect the brand, manage donors, craft safe sermons, package inspiration, and keep the machinery moving. They teach, but not with fear of God. They teach for hire. The Bible becomes content. The pulpit becomes a performance space. The congregation becomes an audience. The

sermon becomes a product. The man becomes a careerist. He may be educated, polished, funny, sincere-sounding, and admired, but if hire governs the teaching, Micah 3:11 has already named him. God did not call men to turn truth into a salary-preservation strategy.

Chapter 3: Prophets for Money Sell the Voice That Should Belong to God

The third group is the most direct for this essay: “the prophets thereof divine for money.” A true prophet was supposed to speak what God gave him, whether men liked it or not. He was not a weather vane. He was not a consultant. He was not a paid encourager. He was not hired atmosphere. He was not a spiritual entertainer. He was a mouthpiece under divine authority. The prophet’s great question was not, “What will this crowd pay to hear?” It was, “What hath the LORD spoken?” The moment money governs the prophet’s message, the prophet has ceased functioning as a prophet and has become a religious vendor.

The Old Testament is full of warnings about false prophets who speak peace when there is no peace, who strengthen the hands of evildoers, who run when God did not send them, and who speak visions out of their own heart. Jeremiah 23 exposes them. Ezekiel 13 exposes them. Micah exposes them. A false prophet does not always sound harsh and wicked. Often he sounds comforting, positive, affirming, and safe. That is the point. He knows what sells. He knows what keeps invitations coming. He knows what donors like. He knows what rulers prefer. He knows that repentance does not sell as well as reassurance. He knows judgment does not fill the room as easily as blessing. So he divines for money and baptizes greed in spiritual language.

Modern religion is filled with the same spirit. Paid prophecies, prosperity predictions, platformed “words,” conference-circuit revelations, spiritual hype, and charismatic salesmanship all run on the idea that people will pay to be told what their flesh wants to hear. But the spirit is not limited to one camp. Any preacher who alters truth for profit is functioning as a prophet for money. Any teacher who knows better but stays quiet because controversy might reduce support is divining for money in principle. Any man who presents himself as a voice from God while listening first to the wallet of the crowd has sold the prophetic office. The Bible already named the system. It is not new. It is just better lit now.

Chapter 4: The Prophet for Hire Still Knows How to Lean on the LORD

The most sickening part of Micah 3:11 is the ending: “yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us.” These men are corrupt, but they are not irreligious in speech. They still know how to lean on the LORD. They still know how to invoke His name. They still know how to talk about divine presence. They still know how to assure themselves that judgment will not touch them. That is religious presumption

at its worst. They use God's name as a shield for conduct God hates. They mistake office for approval, tradition for holiness, and religious language for spiritual safety.

This is a warning against the kind of religious confidence that ignores obedience. A man can say, "The Lord is with us," while the Lord is against what he is doing. Israel had the temple and still faced judgment. The priests had office and still corrupted teaching. The prophets had titles and still divined for money. The heads had authority and still judged for reward. The presence of religious structures did not cancel the corruption. The name of the LORD on their lips did not sanctify the greed in their hands. Saying "God is with us" does not make it true. The question is not whether a man can talk about God. The question is whether he fears God enough to obey Him when money pulls the other direction.

This same spirit thrives today. A ministry can say, "God is blessing us," because numbers are high, money is flowing, buildings are expanding, and crowds are cheering. But growth is not always blessing. Revenue is not always approval. Visibility is not always anointing. Ahab had prophets. Nebuchadnezzar had power. Rome had religion. Laodicea said, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing," while Christ said it was "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Revelation 3:17, KJV). A religious system can be rich and still be spiritually bankrupt. It can lean on the LORD in speech while leaning on money in practice.

Chapter 5: Balaam Shows the Heart of the Hired Religious Man

No study of the prophet for hire can ignore Balaam. Balaam is one of the great Bible examples of a man who knows spiritual language, has real encounters with divine communication, and yet is rotten with covetousness. Peter says he "loved the wages of unrighteousness" (2 Peter 2:15, KJV). Jude speaks of those who "ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward" (Jude 11, KJV). Revelation 2:14 connects Balaam with teaching Balac to cast a stumblingblock before Israel. Balaam is not just an odd historical character. He is a type of religious corruption for reward. He is the prophet whose mouth can say right things while his heart keeps looking at the money.

That is a terrifying combination. A man may be doctrinally accurate in moments and still covetous. Balaam said some true things. He could not curse Israel when God would not permit it. He spoke words that sounded magnificent. But his heart was not right. He wanted the reward. He wanted the honor. He wanted the arrangement to work out in his favor. He tried to walk as close to disobedience as possible while still maintaining the appearance of submission. That is exactly how hired religion operates. It wants God's vocabulary and Balac's payment. It wants the appearance of spiritual restraint and the benefits of

compromise. It wants to say, “I can only speak what God gives me,” while still lingering around the reward.

The Balaam spirit did not die in Numbers. It lives wherever religious men know the truth but keep negotiating with the world. It lives where men cannot directly curse what God blessed, so they find a sideways method to corrupt it. It lives where preachers speak carefully enough to maintain credibility with Bible believers and softly enough to keep access to money and influence. It lives where a man does not openly deny truth, but he positions himself so he never has to suffer for it. Balaam is the patron saint of the religious compromiser who wants wages without appearing wicked. The Book calls it what it is: the wages of unrighteousness.

Chapter 6: The Hireling Flees Because the Sheep Are Not His

The Lord Jesus gives the New Testament contrast in John 10. He says, “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep” (John 10:11, KJV). Then He says, “But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth.” That is the hireling. He may occupy a shepherd’s place. He may stand where a shepherd stands. He may use shepherd language. But when the wolf comes, the truth appears. He runs because the sheep are not his. He was there for hire, not for love.

This is the deepest test of ministry. What happens when protecting the sheep costs something? What happens when preaching the truth risks income? What happens when wolves are profitable, popular, connected, or influential? What happens when warning the flock would anger donors? What happens when naming the danger would reduce invitations? The shepherd stays. The hireling flees. The shepherd bleeds. The hireling calculates. The shepherd values the sheep. The hireling values the arrangement. The shepherd answers to God. The hireling answers to the paycheck. A man can pretend for a long time, but wolves reveal him.

Many religious leaders are exposed not by what they say in calm times, but by what they refuse to say when danger appears. They avoid controversy, not because they are wise, but because they are hired. They refuse to identify false doctrine, not because they are gracious, but because they are protecting relationships. They will not rebuke sin, not because they are patient, but because they fear the financial consequences. They call cowardice “balance” and compromise “love.” But John 10 already named them. The hireling flees because he is an hireling. That is not a personality flaw. That is a ministry identity.

Chapter 7: The Cure Is Fear of God, Not Better Branding

The cure for prophets for hire is not better branding, better training, better lighting, better platforms, or better donor management. The cure is the fear of God. A man who fears God can handle support without being bought. A man who fears God can receive provision without selling truth. A man who fears God can preach to rich men and poor men with the same Book. A man who fears God can lose invitations and sleep at night. A man who fears God can offend the profitable sinner and still stand. A man who fears God is not careless, cruel, or foolish, but he is also not for sale.

Paul provides a clean contrast. He says in Galatians 1:10, “for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ” (KJV). There it is. A man cannot be governed by pleasing men and still function as the servant of Christ. That does not mean a preacher should be obnoxious for sport or careless with souls. It means his final loyalty cannot be human approval. If pleasing men rules him, Christ does not. If money rules him, Christ does not. If invitations rule him, Christ does not. If platform access rules him, Christ does not. The servant of Christ may serve people, love people, teach people, and help people, but he cannot be owned by their approval.

Paul also says, “we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts” (1 Thessalonians 2:4, KJV). That is the opposite of Micah 3:11. The prophet for hire speaks as pleasing paying men. The servant of God speaks as one entrusted with the gospel before the God who tries the heart. That is the difference. The issue is not whether people approve, support, reject, praise, or attack. The issue is whether God tried the heart and found faithfulness. The man who remembers that will not sell the message. The man who forgets that will eventually find a buyer.

Conclusion

Micah 3:11 names the disease with perfect accuracy: heads judging for reward, priests teaching for hire, prophets divining for money, and all of them leaning on the LORD as if religious language can protect them from judgment. That is the anatomy of religious corruption. Justice becomes purchasable. Teaching becomes professionalized without fear. Prophecy becomes a paid service. Then the whole system claims God’s presence while God’s word condemns its practice. It is not enough for a ministry to say “Lord, Lord.” It is not enough for a preacher to quote verses. It is not enough for a religious institution to have history, buildings, degrees, ceremonies, crowds, and money. If reward, hire, and money govern the message, Micah has already exposed the system.

The prophet for hire is dangerous because he looks religious enough to deceive people who do not love truth. He may be polished. He may be gifted. He may be popular. He may be

invited everywhere. He may know how to stir a crowd, comfort donors, flatter rulers, and keep the machine running. But his question is wrong. He does not ask, “What saith the LORD?” He asks, “What will keep this arrangement alive?” That is why he cannot be trusted. When truth and money collide, he will protect the money. When wolves and sheep collide, he will protect himself. When doctrine and donors collide, he will adjust the doctrine. When the Book and the brand collide, he will preserve the brand.

The answer is not to despise every man who receives support in ministry. That would contradict Scripture. The answer is to discern whether money serves the ministry or rules it. A faithful servant may be supported without being sold. A hireling may be paid and still be spiritually bankrupt. The difference is the fear of God. The man of God must not be for sale. His judgment must not be for reward. His teaching must not be governed by hire. His message must not be divined for money. Let the world buy its influencers, celebrities, experts, and religious performers. The Bible believer’s charge is simple: preach the word, fear God, feed the flock, refuse the bribe, despise the wages of unrighteousness, and never let mammon write the sermon.

8 of 15: The Love of Money - Naboth’s Vineyard and the Price of Covetousness

Introduction

Ahab’s offer to Naboth sounds harmless if a man only reads the surface. “Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money” (1 Kings 21:2, KJV). There it is. Polite language. A business proposal. An offer of exchange. A better vineyard, or money. On paper, that sounds reasonable. Ahab is not storming in with a sword at first. He is not threatening Naboth at first. He is not openly demanding blood at first. He simply wants the vineyard and offers payment. But the Bible is never fooled by polite language when the heart underneath is rotten. Ahab does not merely want land. He wants what God had not given him. He wants an inheritance that belongs to another man. He wants convenience near his house, and he is willing to pressure conviction with money.

Naboth’s answer is one of the strongest little statements of conviction in the Old Testament: “The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee” (1 Kings 21:3, KJV). Naboth did not say, “Your offer is too low.” He did not say, “Come back with more money.” He did not say, “Let me think about it.” He did not say, “I am emotionally attached to the property.” He brought the Lord into it. “The LORD forbid it me.”

That is the part Ahab could not handle. The issue was not market value. It was inheritance. Under the law, land inheritance in Israel was not to be treated like a piece of disposable real estate that could be permanently surrendered just because a king wanted a herb garden. Naboth was not stubborn. He was not unreasonable. He was not being difficult. He was refusing to sell what God had placed in his family line. His answer was conviction, not preference.

That is where this account becomes a deadly lesson about the love of money and the price of covetousness. Covetousness often starts with a polite offer. It begins with, "I will pay for it." It begins with respectability. It begins with negotiation. It begins with a smile and an option. But when conviction says no, the mask comes off. Ahab goes home heavy and displeased, lays down on his bed, turns away his face, and refuses to eat. That is not leadership. That is a spoiled covetous man pouting because another man would not sell his inheritance. Then Jezebel steps in and reveals what was already in Ahab's heart. If money will not buy it, manipulation will take it. If negotiation will not get it, false witnesses will frame it. If Naboth will not sell, Naboth will die. That is the path of covetousness. It may begin by offering money, but if it is not judged, it ends by taking blood.

Chapter 1: Covetousness Often Hides Behind Reasonable Language

The first thing to notice in 1 Kings 21 is that Ahab's words sound reasonable enough to a careless ear. He says the vineyard is near his house. He wants it for a garden of herbs. He offers a better vineyard in exchange, or money if Naboth prefers. There is nothing outwardly wild about the opening offer. That is exactly why covetousness is so dangerous. It does not always begin with foam at the mouth. It often begins with calm words, practical arguments, and respectable proposals. "It is near my house." "I can make better use of it." "I will pay you." "I will give you something better." The language sounds clean, but the desire underneath is not clean.

Ahab is a king. He already has more than Naboth. He has power, property, influence, palace access, servants, and the machinery of government. But one vineyard near his house becomes the thing he cannot stop looking at. That is covetousness. It is not satisfied with what it has because it has fixed its eye on what belongs to another. The tenth commandment says, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house... nor any thing that is thy neighbour's" (Exodus 20:17, KJV). Naboth's vineyard was his. It was his inheritance. Ahab's desire crossed a line long before Jezebel wrote letters. The murder began in the heart before the stones flew.

That is how sin works. It dresses the first motion in respectable clothing. A man says, "I am just making an offer," when inwardly he has already decided he must have the thing. He

says, “Everything has a price,” because he cannot understand conviction that is not for sale. He says, “I will compensate you,” as if payment cleanses entitlement. But money does not make covetousness holy. An offer does not purify a lust. The fact that a man is willing to pay does not mean he is right to desire what God has not given him. Some things should not be pursued, even if a man can afford them. Some doors should not be opened, even if the key is made of silver. Some inheritances should not be touched, even if the offer sounds generous.

Chapter 2: Naboth’s Refusal Was Conviction, Not Stubbornness

Naboth’s answer is the righteous center of the passage. “The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.” That statement shows a man whose conscience is governed by God’s word, not by the king’s desire. Naboth does not treat the vineyard as a mere asset. He treats it as an inheritance. That is the word that matters. In Israel, tribal and family inheritances were tied to God’s allotment of the land. The land was not merely a commodity. It was connected to covenant, family, tribe, and divine order. Naboth understood that. Ahab either did not care or did not want to be bothered by it.

There are times when a simple “no” is one of the most spiritual words a man can say. Naboth’s “no” was not rude. It was not rebellious. It was not anti-authority. It was not a refusal to be reasonable. It was submission to the higher authority of God. Ahab was king, but he was not God. Ahab had a palace, but he did not have the right to overrule the Lord. Ahab had money, but he did not have the right to purchase another man’s obedience. Naboth knew that if the Lord forbade it, the king’s offer was irrelevant. That is conviction. Conviction says, “I cannot sell what God told me to keep.”

That lesson reaches straight into the present. Every believer has something he must not sell. He must not sell the truth. He must not sell his conscience. He must not sell his testimony. He must not sell his family. He must not sell his calling. He must not sell his Bible. He must not sell his convictions. The world will offer a better vineyard or the worth of it in money. It will say, “You can have more if you will just give up that narrow thing God gave you.” It will say, “You can advance if you will stop being so difficult.” It will say, “You can have comfort if you will surrender that inheritance.” Naboth stands as a witness that some things are not for sale.

Chapter 3: Ahab’s Pouting Revealed the Heart of Entitlement

After Naboth refuses, Ahab goes home “heavy and displeased.” The Bible says he laid him down upon his bed, turned away his face, and would eat no bread. That is a pathetic scene. This is the king of Israel acting like a spoiled child because a man would not sell him a vineyard. He has power, privilege, wealth, and position, but one righteous refusal ruins his

mood. That is entitlement. Entitlement says, “If I want it, I should have it.” Entitlement cannot bear being told no. Entitlement treats another man’s conviction as an insult. Ahab was not grieving over sin. He was sulking over denied covetousness.

That reaction is important because it shows what the polite offer was hiding. If Ahab had truly respected Naboth’s right and conviction, he would have accepted the refusal. He might have been disappointed, but he would have moved on. Instead, he collapses into childish resentment. That is how you know the desire had become an idol. When denial produces bitterness, the thing desired has moved from preference to worship. Ahab’s heart had already bowed before that vineyard. Naboth’s refusal did not create Ahab’s sin. It exposed it.

Many people reveal themselves the same way. They sound gracious while they are asking, but they become hateful when they are refused. They are kind as long as there is a chance to get what they want. The moment conviction says no, their face changes. They accuse. They manipulate. They sulk. They punish. They withdraw. They make themselves the victim. That is Ahab in a modern coat. A man who cannot accept a righteous “no” is not a victim of someone else’s stubbornness. He is a servant of his own covetousness. The refusal did not wrong him. It revealed him.

Chapter 4: Jezebel Turned Covetousness Into a System

Jezebel enters the account and immediately shows the difference between Ahab’s weak covetousness and her organized wickedness. She asks him why his spirit is so sad, and when he explains, she says, “Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite” (1 Kings 21:7, KJV). That sentence is poison. Jezebel does not care about the Lord’s prohibition. She does not care about Naboth’s inheritance. She does not care about righteousness. She cares about power. In her mind, if Ahab is king, he should get what he wants. That is government without God. That is authority divorced from righteousness.

Jezebel then writes letters in Ahab’s name, seals them with his seal, and sends them to the elders and nobles in Naboth’s city. She proclaims a fast, sets Naboth on high among the people, and arranges two false witnesses to accuse him of blaspheming God and the king. Then Naboth is carried out and stoned. That is what covetousness becomes when it is given a system. It uses official documents. It uses public procedure. It uses religious language. It proclaims a fast. It invokes God while murdering an innocent man. It uses false witnesses. It hides theft under legal form. It makes murder look like justice.

That is one of the most frightening parts of the passage. Jezebel does not merely kill Naboth in secret. She builds a public religious-legal performance to justify it. That is how wicked

power operates. It does not only sin. It manufactures a narrative that makes sin look righteous. It does not merely steal. It frames the victim. It does not merely desire. It weaponizes institutions. Ahab wanted a vineyard. Jezebel used the system to get it. When the love of possession joins hands with corrupt authority, innocent men get buried under official lies.

Chapter 5: False Witnesses Are Often Hired to Protect Covetous Men

Jezebel's scheme required false witnesses. She commanded that two men, "sons of Belial," be set before Naboth to bear witness against him, saying, "Thou didst blaspheme God and the king." That is devilish. Naboth had just honored God by refusing to sell his inheritance. Now he is accused of blaspheming God. That is how wickedness works. It calls the righteous man guilty of the very thing he is refusing to do. Naboth would not betray God's inheritance, so the sons of Belial accused him of blaspheming God. The lie was not random. It was designed to destroy his name before destroying his body.

False witnesses are one of the favorite tools of covetous power. If a man wants what he has no right to take, he often has to make the rightful owner look unworthy. That is how theft gets justified. Destroy the man's reputation, and people will not mourn when you take what belonged to him. Accuse him of evil, and your robbery can look like righteous judgment. Naboth had to be turned into a villain so Ahab could become the "rightful" possessor. This is the old satanic pattern. The devil is an accuser. He knows that before you can rob a man publicly, it helps to bury him under accusation.

This is why the Bible's warnings against false witness are so serious. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour" (Exodus 20:16, KJV). Proverbs 6 lists "a false witness that speaketh lies" among things the Lord hates. A false witness does not merely misstate facts. He becomes an instrument of destruction. He helps covetousness look legal. He helps envy look justified. He helps murder look moral. He helps thieves sleep at night. Jezebel needed sons of Belial because righteous men would not do the job. Every corrupt system eventually needs men willing to lie for the reward, the fear, the access, or the approval of power.

Chapter 6: Covetousness Starts With Desire and Ends With Blood

Ahab's sin begins with desire and ends with blood. That progression is not unique to Ahab. James 1:14-15 says, "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (KJV). That is exactly what happens in 1 Kings 21. Ahab is drawn away by desire. The desire conceives. Jezebel gives it a method. False witnesses give it a voice.

Stones give it an execution. Then Ahab rises to take possession. Lust conceived, sin was born, and death followed.

This is the real price of Naboth's vineyard. It was not the money Ahab offered. It was Naboth's blood. Ahab said he would give money, but he took life. That is the nature of covetousness when it is unrestrained. It starts by saying, "I will pay." It ends by saying, "Remove him." It starts by admiring. It ends by accusing. It starts with desire. It ends with destruction. That is why covetousness is not a harmless private weakness. Colossians 3:5 calls covetousness "idolatry." Idolatry always demands sacrifice. If the idol is possession, someone will eventually be placed on the altar.

The love of money and possessions is deadly because it convinces a man that having the thing will satisfy him enough to justify the cost. But the cost keeps rising. At first, Ahab only needed a little money. Then he needed Jezebel's wickedness. Then he needed forged authority. Then he needed false witnesses. Then he needed Naboth dead. Then he needed to walk into a vineyard watered with innocent blood. That is what sin does. It never presents the final bill at the beginning. It shows the vineyard and hides the grave. It shows the garden of herbs and hides the stones. It shows possession and hides judgment.

Chapter 7: God Saw the Blood Beneath the Vineyard

After Naboth is dead, Jezebel tells Ahab to arise and take possession of the vineyard. Ahab goes down to possess it. That scene should turn the stomach. He walks into land that was obtained through false witness and murder. He gets what he wanted. The vineyard is finally his. But God saw the blood beneath the property. God sends Elijah to meet him, and the word of the Lord comes with fire: "Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?" (1 Kings 21:19, KJV). That question says everything. God links the murder and the possession. Ahab may have thought Jezebel handled the details. God charges him with the crime. "Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?"

That is a great warning. A man cannot always hide behind the system that benefited him. Ahab did not personally throw the stones, but he took the vineyard. He profited from the murder. He accepted the result. He did not defend Naboth. He did not reject Jezebel's wickedness. He walked into the inheritance after the blood was spilled. God did not say, "Well, technically Jezebel arranged it." God said, "Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?" Heaven does not judge merely by paperwork. Heaven judges by truth. If a man profits from wickedness, endorses the fruit of wickedness, and takes possession after wickedness has cleared the way, God sees it.

Elijah then announces judgment. The dogs that licked the blood of Naboth would lick Ahab's blood. Jezebel also receives her doom. The vineyard was not worth the judgment.

No coveted thing ever is. Ahab gained land and lost peace. He gained a garden and inherited wrath. He got the vineyard, but the word of God found him standing in it. That is the final terror for every covetous man. He may get what he wanted, but God may meet him in the middle of it and ask, "What did it cost?" The world sees acquisition. God sees blood. The world sees success. God sees theft. The world sees possession. God sees judgment coming up the road.

Conclusion

Naboth's vineyard is one of the clearest pictures in the Bible of how covetousness hides behind polite language. Ahab did not begin by saying, "I will kill you and take your land." He began by offering money. He sounded reasonable. He offered another vineyard. He offered payment. But Naboth's conviction exposed the heart of the matter. The vineyard was not just property. It was inheritance. The Lord forbade Naboth to surrender it, and Naboth had enough backbone to say no to a king. That is the kind of conviction money cannot understand. Mammon believes everything has a price. Naboth proved some things do not.

Ahab's response showed that his offer was not as innocent as it sounded. He pouted like a child because righteousness blocked his desire. Jezebel then turned his covetousness into machinery. Letters were written. Authority was forged. A fast was proclaimed. False witnesses were hired. Naboth was accused, condemned, and stoned. Then Ahab went down to take possession. That is the path of unjudged desire. It begins with wanting what God has not given. It moves to resentment when refused. It joins itself to manipulation. It enlists lies. It spills blood. Then it walks into the vineyard as if possession proves success.

But God saw. That is the final word over the whole account. God saw the inheritance. God saw the refusal. God saw the pouting king. God saw the letters. God saw the sons of Belial. God saw the stones. God saw Naboth's blood. God saw Ahab take possession. And God sent Elijah with the question that should terrify every man who gains by covetousness: "Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?" The lesson is plain. Do not sell what God told you to keep. Do not covet what God gave another man. Do not think an offer of money purifies a wrong desire. Do not believe a legal process can hide blood from God. And never forget that when a man loves possession more than righteousness, he may begin by offering silver, but he may end with blood on the vineyard.

9 of 15: The Love of Money - Delilah's Price

Introduction

Delilah's story is not just a lesson about lust. It is not just a warning about a weak man and a dangerous woman. It is not just a tragic account of Samson's spiritual carelessness. It is also a money story. The Bible says, "And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver" (Judges 16:5, KJV). There it is. Silver on the table. A price named. A betrayal commissioned. Delilah was not conducting a Bible study on Samson's calling. She was not trying to understand the secret of God's power for the glory of the Lord. She was selling access. She was selling intimacy. She was selling the advantage that proximity gave her. Samson's enemies could not defeat him directly, so they paid someone close enough to ask what they could not discover by force.

That is one of the most frightening lessons in the whole account. The devil does not always come at a man with a sword in his hand. Sometimes he comes through a voice he likes to hear. Sometimes he comes through arms he wants around him. Sometimes he comes through tears, pressure, flattery, wounded feelings, and repeated questions asked in private. Samson could handle a lion. Samson could kill Philistines. Samson could carry away the gates of Gaza. Samson could break cords like thread. But he could not handle a woman pressing him day after day because his flesh had put him within reach of a paid betrayer. That is the danger. A man may have public strength and private weakness. He may win battles in the open and lose the war in the room where nobody is watching.

Delilah's money shows what the love of money can do when it joins itself to relationships. It does not merely buy goods. It buys access. It buys secrets. It buys betrayal. It buys emotional manipulation. It buys the betrayal of trust by someone close enough to wound deeply. Some people will smile at you, lie beside you, weep over you, tell you that you do not love them, and sell you before morning. That is not romance. That is merchandising. Delilah turned intimacy into a transaction and Samson's secret into a product. The lords of the Philistines did not need to know Samson's heart if they could pay someone who had access to it. That is why this story belongs in a series on the love of money. Silver did not just sit in the background. It funded the trap.

Chapter 1: The Enemy Paid for Access He Could Not Win by Force

Samson had already proven that ordinary Philistine methods could not handle him. His strength was not natural strength in the ordinary sense. It was connected to the Spirit of the LORD moving upon him and to his Nazarite separation from the womb. Judges 13 shows that he was appointed before his birth for a purpose: "he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines" (Judges 13:5, KJV). That made Samson a marked man. The Philistines did not merely hate him because he was strong. They hated him because he was

a divine problem in their system. He was God's instrument against them, even though he was often a careless and fleshly instrument.

When enemies cannot defeat strength directly, they often look for a private doorway. That is what the lords of the Philistines did. They did not come to Samson first. They came to Delilah. They understood something many men forget: if you cannot beat a man in the field, try to reach him in his affections. If you cannot bind him with ropes in public, find out what binds him in private. If you cannot take his strength head-on, pay someone close enough to learn the secret. Their offer was precise. "Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth." They did not want Delilah's companionship. They wanted intelligence. They wanted information. They wanted the key.

This is one of the devil's oldest strategies. He studies access points. He looks for the person, appetite, fear, vanity, lust, ambition, or desire close enough to ask dangerous questions. A man may guard the front gate and leave the bedroom window open. He may defend doctrine publicly and entertain compromise privately. He may fight enemies outside while feeding the one desire that can make him foolish inside. Samson's enemies purchased access because access is often more effective than attack. A sword in an enemy's hand is obvious. A question in Delilah's mouth was not. That is why spiritual discernment has to operate in private as well as public. The devil does not need to overpower a man if he can get close enough to entice him.

Chapter 2: Delilah's Price Reveals the Market Value of Betrayal

The lords of the Philistines promised Delilah eleven hundred pieces of silver each. That was not a casual tip. That was a serious price. The text wants the reader to see that Samson's downfall had a monetary arrangement behind it. This was not merely Delilah being curious. This was not merely a woman nagging because she wanted emotional reassurance. Money had already defined the mission. She had been hired to extract a secret. Her words may have sounded personal, but her assignment was financial. That is how betrayal often works. The surface language is intimate, but the hidden motive is gain.

The love of money has a way of turning people into merchandise. Delilah looked at Samson and saw profit. His strength, his calling, his secret, and his trust became assets to be converted into silver. That is a horrible thing, but it is not rare. Men sell other men every day. They sell private conversations. They sell loyalties. They sell ministries. They sell churches. They sell families. They sell friendships. They sell reputations. They sell access. They sell influence. They sell what someone trusted them to guard. Judas sold Christ for thirty pieces of silver. Delilah sold Samson's secret for Philistine silver. Different stories, same root. The love of money makes betrayal look like opportunity.

The real tragedy is that Delilah's price was not merely the silver she received. It was the destruction that followed. Samson lost his hair, his strength, his liberty, his eyes, and his place. The Philistines bound him, put out his eyes, brought him down to Gaza, bound him with fetters of brass, and made him grind in the prison house. That is what betrayal purchased. When a person sells another person's trust, he is not just making a deal. He is participating in the ruin that follows. Delilah did not have to put out Samson's eyes herself to be guilty in the chain of events. She sold the doorway through which the enemy entered. That is enough.

Chapter 3: Samson's Weakness Put Him Near the Betrayer

The account does not allow Samson to appear as an innocent man with no responsibility. Delilah was wicked, but Samson was careless. The Philistines were malicious, but Samson was playing too close to the edge. He had a long pattern of trouble with women and fleshly desire. He went down to Timnath and wanted a Philistine woman. He went in unto a harlot in Gaza. Then he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. Judges 16:4 says, "And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah" (KJV). The Bible does not need twenty chapters of psychological explanation. Samson's affections placed him within reach of betrayal.

This is a hard lesson, but it is necessary. A man cannot always choose whether enemies hate him, but he often chooses whether he gives them access. Samson had no business handing his heart to someone who could be purchased by Philistine lords. He had no business lingering in the environment where his separation would be pressed and tested. He had no business treating his secret like a game. But that is what flesh does. It takes holy things and plays with them near unholy people. It assumes strength will always be available. It assumes past victories guarantee future protection. It assumes the Spirit of God can be presumed upon while the man gratifies his appetites. That is deadly.

The devil often uses relationships to lower a man's defenses. This does not mean every relationship is wicked, or that affection itself is evil. God made marriage. God made companionship. God made loyalty, love, and fellowship. But any relationship that pulls a man away from obedience becomes a spiritual danger. Any relationship that pressures him to reveal what God told him to guard is a danger. Any relationship that treats his convictions as barriers to intimacy is a danger. Any relationship that says, "If you loved me, you would compromise," is speaking with Delilah's accent. Samson's weakness was not that he had enemies. It was that his lust brought him close enough for a paid betrayer to whisper in his ear.

Chapter 4: Emotional Manipulation Can Be Bought and Weaponized

Delilah did not overpower Samson physically. She worked on him emotionally. She asked, “Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee” (Judges 16:6, KJV). That question should have ended the relationship on the spot. It is almost absurdly direct. “Tell me how you can be bound and afflicted.” A man with spiritual sense would have heard the hiss of the serpent in that question. But Samson played. He gave false answers. He turned the matter into a game. That is another step toward ruin. When a man starts playing with danger, he is already losing respect for the holy thing he is supposed to guard.

Delilah keeps pressing. After each failed attempt, she complains that Samson has mocked her and told her lies. Then she uses the emotional dagger: “How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart is not with me?” (Judges 16:15, KJV). There it is. Emotional manipulation. She turns his refusal to reveal a guarded secret into proof that he does not love her. That is wicked. Love does not require a man to betray what God gave him to keep. Love does not demand access to every holy boundary. Love does not make obedience feel like rejection. Delilah’s method was not affection. It was pressure dressed in wounded language.

The devil still uses that method. “If you loved me, you would.” “If you trusted me, you would.” “If you cared, you would not keep that boundary.” “If you were really spiritual, you would not say no.” Those sentences have destroyed many people. A person can use tears like a weapon, silence like a weapon, disappointment like a weapon, and affection like a weapon. In Delilah’s case, the weapon was funded by money. She was not just emotionally needy. She was hired. That makes the scene even darker. The love of money can purchase emotional manipulation and turn private affection into a battlefield. Samson should have recognized that love was not being proven. His obedience was being hunted.

Chapter 5: The Secret of Strength Must Not Be Handed to the Enemy

Samson’s secret was not magic hair in a superstitious sense. His uncut hair was connected to his Nazarite vow and separation unto God from the womb. Judges 16:17 says he told her all his heart and said, “There hath not come a razor upon mine head; for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my mother’s womb.” That phrase “unto God” is the center of it. His strength was connected to divine calling, separation, and the Lord’s power upon him. His hair was the outward sign of that separated condition. When he surrendered the secret, he was not merely revealing information. He was treating his separation carelessly before someone allied with his enemies.

The Bible says he “told her all his heart.” That is one of the saddest lines in the chapter. He had not given his whole heart to the Lord in practical obedience, but he gave his heart to Delilah. He had not guarded the sign of his calling, but he exposed it to someone already

paid to destroy him. That is the ruin of misplaced trust. A man can be very strong in one area and incredibly foolish in another. He can slay enemies and still hand the razor to the woman who wants his secret. He can know he is called of God and still act like calling removes the need for caution. Samson's mistake was not merely that he spoke. It was that he spoke all his heart to the wrong person.

Every believer has things that must be guarded. The gospel is to be preached publicly, but the soul still needs boundaries. Convictions must be held. Family must be protected. Private weakness must not be handed to enemies. Ministry burdens must not be opened to mockers. Sacred things must not be tossed before people who will use them as leverage. Proverbs 4:23 says, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (KJV). Samson did not keep his heart. He gave it away in the wrong room. The price of that failure was terrible. Once the enemy knew where to cut, the rest happened quickly.

Chapter 6: Samson Knew Not That the LORD Was Departed From Him

After Delilah had his hair shaved, she said, "The Philistines be upon thee, Samson." Samson awoke and said, "I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself." Then the Bible says one of the most frightening sentences in Judges: "And he wist not that the LORD was departed from him" (Judges 16:20, KJV). That is the terror of presumption. Samson expected old strength after fresh compromise. He assumed he could rise as before. He assumed the power would be there because it had been there before. But he did not know the Lord was departed from him.

That sentence should sober every man who has ever presumed on God's past mercy. Past victories do not excuse present disobedience. Past usefulness does not guarantee present power. Past deliverance does not mean a man can play with sin and still shake himself free whenever he chooses. Samson had broken cords before. He had defeated enemies before. He had escaped danger before. But this time was different. The secret had been surrendered. The sign of separation had been cut. The Lord's power was gone, and Samson did not know it. There are few conditions more dangerous than being powerless and not knowing it.

The love of money sits behind this moment because Delilah's silver funded the trap that brought Samson to this condition. But Samson's presumption made the trap effective. That combination is deadly: someone else's greed and your own carelessness. Delilah wanted money. The Philistines wanted revenge. Samson wanted Delilah. Everybody wanted something, and the devil used every appetite in the room. That is how destruction often happens. One person's greed connects with another person's lust, another person's hatred, another person's pride, and another person's carelessness until the whole trap

closes. Then the man wakes up thinking he can shake himself, and he finds out too late that the strength is gone.

Chapter 7: Delilah's Price Was Paid in Samson's Eyes, Liberty, and Shame

The Philistines took Samson, put out his eyes, brought him down to Gaza, bound him with fetters of brass, and he did grind in the prison house. That is the bill Delilah's bargain produced. Silver was counted somewhere, but Samson paid in blindness. Delilah's price was money to her, but it was eyes to him. It was liberty to him. It was public shame to him. It was mockery before the enemies of God. Sin always distributes the bill unevenly. The betrayer may get silver, but the betrayed may lose much more. The person who sells access may walk away with gain while the one exposed bleeds in ways that cannot be measured by money.

This is why betrayal through relationship is so wicked. It is not merely the transfer of information. It is the destruction of trust. It takes what was given in closeness and hands it to enemies. It uses intimacy as a weapon. It takes the language of love and converts it into merchandise. Delilah did not defeat Samson in open combat. She hollowed out the place where he trusted her and let the enemy enter. That is a kind of treachery that leaves deep wounds. A sword wound is one thing. A kiss wound is another. The Bible gives both. Joab took Amasa by the beard to kiss him and smote him. Judas betrayed Christ with a kiss. Delilah betrayed Samson with affection, pressure, and paid persistence.

Yet even in Samson's shame, God's mercy is not absent. Judges 16:22 says, "Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven." That is one of the great "howbeit" moments in the Bible. Samson had fallen. He had been betrayed. He had been blinded. He had been bound. He had been humiliated. But the hair began to grow again. God was not finished. That does not soften the warning. It deepens it. God can restore and still let a man carry scars. Samson's final victory came, but he never got his eyes back in this life. Grace is real, but consequences are real too. The man who plays with Delilah may find mercy, but he may also grind in darkness before the final act.

Conclusion

Delilah's story belongs in a series on the love of money because silver funded the betrayal. The lords of the Philistines could not master Samson by ordinary strength, so they purchased access through someone close to him. That is the strategy. When direct attack fails, the enemy seeks a doorway through affection, lust, flattery, pressure, and misplaced trust. Delilah did not betray Samson because she loved truth. She sold the secret of his strength. She turned private access into public destruction. Her words sounded personal, but the money had already defined the mission.

Samson was not innocent in his carelessness. He lingered where he should not have lingered. He loved where he should not have loved. He played with questions that should have warned him. He treated holy separation like a riddle. He told all his heart to the wrong person and woke up expecting power after compromise. That is the warning. A man can be strong in battle and weak in affection. He can defeat enemies outside and surrender secrets inside. He can have a calling from God and still lose his liberty through private foolishness. No amount of public strength can make private compromise safe.

The lesson is plain. Not everyone who asks for your secret loves you. Not everyone who weeps over your boundaries is wounded. Some are working. Some are paid by another spirit, even if no coins are visible. Some people will smile at you, flatter you, lie beside you, press you, accuse you of not loving them, and sell you before morning. That is not romance. That is merchandising. Guard what God gave you to guard. Keep your heart with all diligence. Do not hand the razor to someone allied with your enemies. And never forget that the love of money can pay for the question that finally gets a careless man to reveal where his strength lies.

10 of 15: The Love of Money - Judas and the Price of Betrayal

Introduction

Judas Iscariot is one of the darkest warnings in the whole Bible because he proves a man can be close to the work of God and still belong to the devil. He walked with Jesus Christ. He heard the preaching of the Son of God with his own ears. He watched miracles that prophets and kings had desired to see. He sat near the other apostles. He was numbered among them. He had a place in the ministry. He had religious vocabulary, public association, visible privilege, and outward participation. But none of that changed his heart. None of that made him clean. None of that made him saved. None of that delivered him from the root that had been growing under the surface. Judas was close to the Light of the world, but darkness still ruled inside him.

The Bible does not present Judas as a man who suddenly made one bad decision in a moment of pressure. Judas' betrayal was the fruit of something already alive in him. John 12 shows the thing plainly when Mary anointed the feet of Jesus with costly ointment. Judas objected and said, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" (John 12:5, KJV). That sounded compassionate. It sounded responsible. It sounded like concern for the poor. But the Holy Ghost pulled the cover off him: "This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare

what was put therein” (John 12:6, KJV). There is the real Judas. He could use benevolent language while hiding a covetous heart. He did not care for the poor. He cared for the bag. He was not burdened about waste. He was angry that worship had bypassed his access to money.

That is why Judas belongs in this series on the love of money. His betrayal did not begin with thirty pieces of silver. It began with a heart that was already wrong around money. The silver did not create Judas. It exposed him. The bargain with the chief priests did not make him a betrayer out of nowhere. It revealed the price tag already hanging on his soul. First Timothy 6:10 says, “For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows” (KJV). Judas is that verse walking in shoe leather. He coveted. He erred. He pierced himself through. He did not just betray Christ. He proved that an unregenerate religious man can sit near the Lord, hear the truth, hold the bag, speak piously, and still sell the Son of God when the price touches the right nerve.

Chapter 1: Judas Was Near Christ Without Belonging to Christ

One of the first things to learn from Judas is that nearness to holy things is not the same as salvation. Judas was near Christ physically. He walked the roads with Him. He ate with Him. He heard His voice. He watched His compassion. He saw His power. He lived inside the circle of visible discipleship. If religious association could save a man, Judas would have been safe. If being around sound preaching could regenerate a man by itself, Judas would have been changed. If outward ministry activity could make a man clean inwardly, Judas would have had every advantage. But the Lord Jesus said in John 6:70, “Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?” (KJV). That is not soft language. That is not vague. One of the twelve was a devil.

That statement should terrify every religious pretender. A man can be in the right group and still be wrong with God. He can be close to the right doctrine and still be dead. He can handle ministry matters and still be lost. He can be trusted by men and still be known by Christ as a devil. Judas had outward placement, but not inward life. He had proximity, but not possession. He had the appearance of discipleship, but not the heart of a believer. The disciples did not seem to know the full depth of him, but Christ knew. That is the dividing line. Men may judge by association. Christ judges by truth.

This is where modern religion gets deceived. People assume that because a man is close to ministry, he must be right with God. Because he preaches, sings, serves, travels, gives, studies, debates, posts, teaches, or has a following, they assume spiritual life is present. Judas warns otherwise. He was close enough to kiss Christ and lost enough to betray Him.

He could sit at the table and still have Satan enter into him. The lesson is not that every struggling believer is Judas. The lesson is that outward nearness cannot be substituted for inward regeneration. A man must be born again. He must belong to Christ. Religious location does not save a soul.

Chapter 2: Judas Hid Covetousness Behind Religious Language

Judas' objection in John 12 is one of the clearest examples in the Bible of covetousness hiding behind moral speech. Mary poured out costly ointment on the Lord Jesus Christ, and Judas said it could have been sold and given to the poor. On the surface, that sounds noble. Who could object to helping the poor? But the Holy Ghost gives the motive. "This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief." That is the Bible's commentary. Judas was not a social reformer. He was not a financial steward. He was not a compassionate man troubled by waste. He was a thief who had lost access to a potential sum.

This is one of the oldest tricks of a covetous heart. It uses righteous vocabulary to cover selfish appetite. It calls greed stewardship. It calls envy justice. It calls theft concern. It calls bitterness discernment. It calls manipulation compassion. Judas sounded like he cared about the poor because religious language is useful when a man wants to hide the real issue. But the issue was the bag. He held the bag, and he bare what was put therein. Mary's act of worship did not pass through his hands, and that irritated him. His problem was not that the ointment was wasted. His problem was that he could not skim it.

The Lord Jesus defended Mary and exposed the false spirit behind Judas' complaint. "Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this" (John 12:7, KJV). Judas saw monetary value. Christ saw worship and burial. Judas calculated price. Christ received devotion. Judas thought in terms of what could have entered the bag. Christ thought in terms of what Mary had done unto Him. That contrast is vital. The love of money cannot understand extravagant worship. It always asks, "What could that have sold for?" It always reduces devotion to accounting. It always sees the Lord's honor as less important than the money it might control.

Chapter 3: The Bag Did Not Make Judas a Thief; It Revealed Him

The Bible says Judas "had the bag." That is not a small detail. Money was placed in his charge. He had access. He had opportunity. He had trust. But the bag did not make Judas wicked. It revealed what was already there. Money does that. It exposes character. Place money near a faithful man, and he uses it faithfully. Place money near a thief, and he finds a way to steal. Place money near a generous man, and he helps others. Place money near a

covetous man, and he begins to calculate. The same bag that could have been handled faithfully became a temptation because Judas' heart was wrong.

This is why positions involving money are spiritually dangerous for the wrong man. The money itself is not the root. The love of it is. Judas carried the bag while walking with Christ, and still he stole. That is astonishing. He was not stealing from a worldly corporation. He was not stealing from a pagan treasury. He was stealing while in the company of the Son of God. The presence of Christ did not restrain him because his heart did not belong to Christ. A man can be close to sacred things and still be privately corrupt. He can handle funds connected with ministry and still rob God's work. He can be trusted outwardly and be false inwardly.

That is why God's work needs faithful men, not merely talented men. A talented thief is still a thief. A gifted covetous man is still covetous. A polished speaker with an unclean heart is still dangerous. In the earlier temple repair passages, the workmen were trusted because "they dealt faithfully" (2 Kings 12:15, KJV). Judas dealt falsely. He had the bag but not faithfulness. He had access but not integrity. He had position but not life. Money placed in his hand became a stage on which his true nature eventually acted. The bag preached on Judas before Judas ever went to the chief priests.

Chapter 4: Judas Sought Opportunity Before the Betrayal Was Public

The Gospels show that Judas' betrayal had deliberate steps. Matthew 26:14-15 says, "Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?" That sentence is cold. Judas went. Judas asked. Judas bargained. Judas did not stumble accidentally into betrayal while confused and trembling. He approached the enemies of Christ and asked what the betrayal was worth. "What will ye give me?" That is the language of a man selling what does not belong to him. Christ was not Judas' to sell, but Judas treated access to Christ as merchandise.

Luke 22:5 says, "And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money." Of course they were glad. The enemies of Christ had found a man close enough to deliver Him. The same principle appears in Delilah's story. The enemy pays someone near the chosen vessel to gain access that force alone could not obtain. Judas knew where Christ resorted. He knew the movements of the Lord and the disciples. He had insider access. That access became the commodity. Judas did not sell doctrine in the abstract. He sold proximity. He sold location. He sold trust. He sold the privilege of nearness.

Then Matthew 26:16 says, "And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him." That is a frightening phrase. Once the money covenant was made, Judas began looking for the

moment. The love of money did not merely produce one bad action. It shaped his attention. He began watching for opportunity to fulfill the bargain. That is what covetousness does. It trains the eyes. It makes a man look for openings to sin profitably. It makes betrayal premeditated. It makes the conscience quieter each time the plan advances. Judas sat through the events that followed with betrayal already in motion. He had heard Christ preach, but now he listened as a man looking for the right time to sell Him.

Chapter 5: Thirty Pieces of Silver Exposed the Cheapness of Judas' Soul

Matthew 26:15 says, "And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver." Thirty pieces. Let that sit there. The Son of God, the Word made flesh, the Lamb of God, the King of Israel, the sinless Saviour, was sold by Judas for thirty pieces of silver. The price does not reveal Christ's worth. It reveals Judas' cheapness. No amount of silver could equal the value of the Lord Jesus Christ. But thirty pieces was enough to expose the heart of the betrayer. That is the terrifying thing about sin. It does not just show what a man wants. It shows what he is willing to trade for it.

Zechariah 11:12-13 prophetically speaks of "thirty pieces of silver" and calls it "a goodly price that I was prised at of them" with bitter irony. The Lord of glory was valued at the price of a slave. Judas' bargain was not merely an act of greed; it was a revelation of spiritual blindness. He had seen Christ raise the dead, cleanse lepers, open blind eyes, feed multitudes, walk on water, silence storms, and speak as never man spake. Yet silver could still draw his heart. That means he never truly saw Christ by faith. He saw the miracles, but not the glory. He heard the words, but not with a believing heart. He handled the bag, but missed the treasure standing in front of him.

Every sinner who trades Christ for sin repeats the madness in principle. Some sell Him for lust. Some sell Him for pride. Some sell Him for reputation. Some sell Him for academic approval. Some sell Him for religious tradition. Some sell Him for family pressure. Some sell Him for political power. Some sell Him for money. The price changes, but the insult remains. The question is not whether Christ is worth more. He is. The question is whether the man is blind enough to take the trade. Judas was. Thirty pieces of silver exposed a soul that had never been captured by the worth of Christ.

Chapter 6: Judas Proves That Remorse Is Not Repentance Unto Life

After Judas saw that Jesus was condemned, Matthew 27:3 says he "repented himself" and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders. That phrase has confused many people because they do not distinguish remorse from godly repentance and salvation. Judas was sorry in the aftermath, but he was not saved. He confessed, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood" (Matthew 27:4, KJV). That

statement was true. He returned the silver. He felt the horror of what he had done. But he did not flee to Christ in faith. He went out and hanged himself.

This is important because the love of money pierces men through with many sorrows. Judas got the money, then could not keep it. The silver that looked valuable in the bargain became unbearable after the condemnation. He threw it down in the temple. The thing he wanted became a witness against him. That is the nature of sin's payment. It shines before the act and burns after it. The devil shows the silver before betrayal and hides the rope until later. He shows the pleasure and hides the piercing. He shows the gain and hides the grief. Judas' sorrow was real, but it was not the sorrow of a man turning to the Saviour for mercy. It was the despair of a man crushed by guilt without faith.

The chief priests' response is also cold and revealing. Judas says he betrayed innocent blood, and they answer, "What is that to us? see thou to that." The men who paid him now discard him. That is how the devil's system works. It uses the betrayer, then abandons him. It offers silver, then gives no comfort. It makes the deal, then leaves the soul to choke on the consequences. Judas went to religious men with blood money and guilt, and they had no answer for his soul. They could pay for betrayal, but they could not provide redemption. They could buy treachery, but they could not cleanse conscience. That is false religion at its ugliest.

Chapter 7: Judas Is the Living Warning of 1 Timothy 6:10

First Timothy 6:10 says, "For the love of money is the root of all evil." Judas shows that root in action. The root was hidden for a while. The other disciples did not seem to recognize him as the betrayer immediately. When Jesus said one of them would betray Him, they did not all point at Judas. That means Judas had blended in. He had looked enough like the others to avoid obvious suspicion. But roots grow under the surface. His theft from the bag, his resentment over Mary's ointment, his bargain with the priests, and his final despair were all fruits from the same root.

The verse continues, "which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith." Judas was around the faith, but he erred from it. He was near the words of faith, but not a possessor of life. He had access to the company of believers, but his heart followed covetousness. That is the danger. Covetousness is not a minor private weakness. It is a doctrinal hazard. It pulls men away from truth. It makes them reinterpret obedience. It makes them resent worship that does not profit them. It makes them tolerate enemies if enemies pay. It makes them seek opportunities to betray. It makes them value silver above the Saviour. It makes them err from the faith.

Then Paul says such men have “pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” Judas literally ended in sorrow and death. He threw down the silver and went out to hang himself. That is a piercing end. The thirty pieces of silver did not comfort him. The priests did not comfort him. His association with the disciples did not save him. His regret did not redeem him. His confession to religious leaders did not cleanse him. He was pierced through with many sorrows. First Timothy 6:10 is not an abstract warning. Judas is one of its darkest illustrations. The love of money did not make him rich. It exposed him, used him, pierced him, and left him dead.

Conclusion

Judas and the price of betrayal show that the love of money can grow in a man who is surrounded by holy things. He was near Christ, near the apostles, near miracles, near preaching, near ministry, and near opportunity beyond imagination. But nearness did not save him. He was unclean. He was a thief. He had the bag. He spoke as though he cared for the poor, but the Holy Ghost said he cared for what he could steal. That is the first great warning. A man’s religious speech may sound compassionate while his heart is covetous. God knows the difference. Men may hear the words, but God sees the bag.

The betrayal itself was not a sudden accident. Judas went to the chief priests. He asked, “What will ye give me?” They covenanted for money. From that time he sought opportunity to betray Christ. That is deliberate. That is cold. That is the love of money moving from root to fruit. The silver did not create the betrayer. It exposed him. It found the nerve. It revealed what Christ was worth to Judas in practice. Thirty pieces of silver was not the value of Christ. It was the value Judas placed on his own soul. He sold access to the Son of God and discovered too late that sin pays in sorrow.

The final lesson is brutal and necessary. A man can be close to the Lord’s work and still be bought. He can hear truth and still sell it. He can handle ministry money and still be a thief. He can speak of the poor and still love the bag. He can kiss Christ and still belong to the devil. The love of money is not a small blemish. It is a root that can wrap around the soul and drag a man into betrayal. Judas stands as a warning to every religious man with a hidden price. Do not love the bag. Do not sell the truth. Do not trade Christ for silver. And never forget that the devil may offer the money up front, but he always leaves the sorrow for last.

Introduction

There is a phrase in Matthew 28 that ought to be written in fire over every institutional cover-up, every paid lie, every manufactured narrative, and every religious attempt to bury the truth: “they gave large money unto the soldiers” (Matthew 28:12, KJV). The Lord Jesus Christ had risen from the dead. The stone had been rolled away. The angel of the Lord had descended from heaven. The keepers had shaken and become as dead men. The tomb was empty. The resurrection had taken place exactly as the Lord said it would. The religious rulers could not stop it. Rome could not seal it. Soldiers could not guard against it. A stone could not hold Him. Death could not keep Him. Hell could not claim Him. Corruption could not touch Him. And when all their power failed, they reached for money. That is the old weapon of a defeated system. If truth cannot be stopped, pay somebody to lie about it.

Matthew 28:11-15 is one of the most revealing passages in the Bible because it shows the machinery of deception after the greatest event in history. Some of the watch came into the city and told the chief priests “all the things that were done.” That means the religious leaders received a report. They were not operating in ignorance. They heard what happened from the guards themselves. But instead of falling on their faces, confessing their wickedness, and receiving the risen Christ, they assembled with the elders, took counsel, and gave large money unto the soldiers. There is religion without repentance. There is leadership without truth. There is counsel without righteousness. There is money without conscience. They had enough information to know better and enough corruption to pay men to say worse.

This essay belongs in the series on the love of money because money is not merely used here to purchase personal pleasure or private betrayal. It is used to purchase a public lie. It is used to corrupt testimony. It is used to create an official false narrative. It is used to protect religious power from the implications of the resurrection. The soldiers knew something happened. The rulers knew something happened. But “large money” was enough to put a lie in circulation: “Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept” (Matthew 28:13, KJV). That lie was stupid on its face, but money does not need a lie to be brilliant. It only needs the lie to be useful. Some lies survive in history not because they are reasonable, but because somebody funded them.

Chapter 1: The Resurrection Could Not Be Stopped by Power

Before the money appears, the power of man is already exposed as useless. The chief priests and Pharisees had remembered that Jesus said He would rise again after three days. They went to Pilate and requested that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away. Pilate gave them a watch and told

them, “make it as sure as ye can” (Matthew 27:65, KJV). That is one of the greatest statements of human limitation in the Bible. Make it as sure as ye can. Seal it. Guard it. Watch it. Organize it. Put Roman authority behind it. Put religious anxiety behind it. Put soldiers in front of it. Do everything man can do.

Then Matthew 28 opens and heaven answers. “And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven.” One angel comes down, rolls back the stone from the door, and sits upon it. That is divine contempt for human security. The stone that men sealed becomes a seat for an angel. The keepers shake and become as dead men. Their strength disappears. Their weapons do nothing. Their watch fails. Their professional duty collapses before one messenger from heaven. The Lord Jesus Christ is already risen. The stone is not rolled away to let Him out like He needed help. It is rolled away to show that He is gone and that death lost.

That is the first lesson. Truth backed by God cannot be defeated by human power. Men can resist it, deny it, guard against it, legislate against it, mock it, seal it, and station soldiers around it, but they cannot overthrow it. The resurrection is the great declaration that man’s final weapon has failed. They killed Him. They buried Him. They sealed the tomb. They guarded the place. And He rose. If death could not hold Christ, then no religious council, political authority, soldier, stone, seal, or lie can finally destroy the truth. The money in Matthew 28 appears only after human power has already failed.

Chapter 2: The Soldiers Became Witnesses Against the Lie They Were Paid to Tell

The soldiers are important because they were not disciples of Christ trying to defend a cherished hope. They were guards assigned to keep the tomb secure. They had no interest in promoting the resurrection. Their job was to prevent anything that could give credibility to the Lord’s words about rising again. Yet when the event took place, the soldiers became terrified witnesses of something beyond their control. Matthew 28:4 says, “And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men” (KJV). These were not sentimental religious men having a private emotional experience. They were hardened keepers trembling before the intervention of God.

Then Matthew 28:11 says, “some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.” That means the religious rulers received testimony from hostile witnesses. The guards did not come saying, “We fell asleep and missed everything.” They came and reported what happened. They told the chief priests all the things that were done. That is a tremendous statement. The very men assigned to secure the tomb brought a report that the tomb had been opened by divine power. Their

testimony should have crushed the last resistance in those religious leaders. Instead, it only forced the leaders to decide what to do with the evidence.

That is how hardened unbelief works. It is not always lacking evidence. Sometimes it has evidence and hates the conclusion. The chief priests did not need more information. They needed repentance. They had seen Christ's works, heard His words, watched the darkness at Calvary, heard the reports, and now received the soldiers' testimony. But a corrupt heart can hear truth and immediately ask, "How do we manage this?" That is the spirit of institutional religion when it is trying to preserve itself from God. It does not ask, "What is true?" It asks, "What must be controlled?" The soldiers' witness became a threat, so the rulers purchased a counter-witness.

Chapter 3: "Large Money" Shows the Price of Public Deception

The Bible says they "gave large money unto the soldiers." The Holy Ghost does not say merely "money." He says "large money." The size matters. This was not a little tip. This was not a casual payment. This was a significant bribe because the lie required risk. Roman soldiers who slept on watch could face severe punishment. The false story they were told to spread was dangerous on its own terms. "His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept." If they were sleeping, they failed their post. If they were awake, they would have stopped the disciples. If they were asleep, they could not know who stole the body. The lie contradicts itself. But large money makes men repeat foolish things.

That phrase exposes a deep truth: public lies often require funding. A lie has to be organized, protected, repeated, and rewarded. Somebody has to pay the witnesses. Somebody has to absorb the risk. Somebody has to promise protection. Somebody has to coordinate the message. That is exactly what happens in Matthew 28. The chief priests and elders do not merely hand out money. They give instructions: "Say ye..." Then they offer protection: "And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you" (Matthew 28:14, KJV). That is a full cover-up. Payment, script, and protection.

This is why some lies survive. It is not because they are strong. It is because they are financed. It is not because they answer the evidence. It is because they are useful to people with something to lose. A funded lie can travel farther than an unfunded truth in a corrupt world, but it does not become true because it travels. The resurrection lie was absurd, yet Matthew says, "this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day" (Matthew 28:15, KJV). Commonly reported. That is the power of paid testimony. A falsehood can become "commonly reported" when enough people have an interest in keeping it alive.

Chapter 4: The Religious Crowd Preferred a Paid Lie to a Risen Saviour

The chief priests and elders had a choice. They could face the truth of the resurrection, or they could protect their position. They chose their position. That is one of the most damning things in the passage. These were religious leaders. They knew the Scriptures in outward form. They had offices, titles, ceremonies, traditions, influence, and public respect. Yet when confronted with evidence that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead, they did not worship. They strategized. They did not repent. They took counsel. They did not preach the resurrection. They paid men to deny it.

That is religion at its most wicked. It can be close to the facts of God and still hate God. It can read Moses and reject the Prophet like unto Moses. It can handle sacrifices and reject the Lamb of God. It can quote prophecy and conspire against the fulfillment. It can guard a tomb and then pay soldiers to lie when the tomb is empty. This is why a religious system can be more dangerous than open unbelief. The pagan may be ignorant. The religious ruler may be knowingly opposed to truth because truth threatens his authority. The resurrection was not merely a doctrine to them. It was a threat to their power structure.

The love of money connects here because money becomes the tool by which religion protects itself from repentance. They would rather spend large money than bow to the risen Christ. That is a terrible exchange. Men will often pay dearly to avoid truth. They will pay to preserve a lie, protect an image, maintain a system, suppress a scandal, silence a witness, or keep a position. They will spend money to avoid kneeling. That is the insanity of a corrupt heart. Large money unto the soldiers was not just a bribe. It was the price religious rulers paid to avoid confessing that Jesus Christ was exactly who He said He was.

Chapter 5: Paid Testimony Can Create a False Narrative That Outlives the Witnesses

Matthew 28:15 says, “So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.” That verse shows the success of the cover-up in public circulation. The soldiers took the money. They repeated the script. The saying spread. The lie outlived the initial meeting. It became a common report. That is how narratives work. Someone with authority creates the explanation. Paid witnesses repeat it. People hear it enough times to assume there must be something to it. Over time, the origin of the lie becomes less visible, but the lie itself keeps moving.

The phrase “did as they were taught” is important. The soldiers were not simply sharing their own conclusion. They were taught what to say. This was scripted deception. They had seen enough to know the truth, but they were instructed to repeat a false version. That is what money can buy: not only silence, but speech. Sometimes money pays a man not to say what he knows. Other times it pays him to say what he knows is false. The soldiers did

not merely withhold testimony. They distributed a lie. They became missionaries of a false narrative because large money had changed their public words.

This should make every Bible believer cautious about “commonly reported” explanations that serve the interests of powerful liars. A report is not true because it is common. A claim is not true because it is repeated. A narrative is not true because institutions promote it. In Matthew 28, the common report was the paid lie, and the truth was the risen Christ. That pattern has repeated itself countless times in history. Truth is often opposed not by better evidence, but by managed testimony. The resurrection itself had a paid counter-narrative from the beginning. That means the believer should not be shocked when truth is hated, buried, mocked, and misrepresented by people who know exactly what they are doing.

Chapter 6: Money Bought a Lie, But It Could Not Keep Christ in the Grave

Here is the great irony: the money came too late to stop the resurrection. The soldiers were paid after Christ had already risen. The chief priests were not preventing the event. They were trying to control the explanation after their prevention failed. That is the limit of money. It can buy lies, but it cannot reverse truth. It can pay soldiers, but it cannot put Christ back in the tomb. It can spread a rumor, but it cannot erase the empty sepulchre. It can secure a false witness, but it cannot silence heaven. Large money can influence men, but it cannot govern God.

This is the comfort in the passage. The enemies of Christ may have enough money to fund deception, but they do not have enough money to defeat God. The tomb is empty before the bribe is ever paid. The angel has already rolled back the stone. The women have already heard, “He is not here: for he is risen, as he said” (Matthew 28:6, KJV). The disciples will see Him. The gospel will go out. The apostles will preach the resurrection with boldness. The lie will be “commonly reported,” but the truth will conquer souls across the earth. Money can create noise, but it cannot extinguish the witness of God.

That distinction matters in every age. Lies may be funded. Truth may be mocked. Corrupt men may purchase silence. Institutions may protect themselves. Paid witnesses may repeat foolish things. But God is not poor. God is not nervous. God is not waiting for permission from liars. The resurrection did not depend on public relations. It did not require approval from the chief priests. It did not need the soldiers’ honesty to be true. It was true because Christ rose. That is where faith rests. Not in the fairness of human reporting. Not in the honesty of religious leaders. Not in the courage of soldiers. In the risen Christ.

Chapter 7: The Love of Money Makes Men Sell Their Own Witness

The soldiers’ part in the story is also a personal warning. They had a witness. They knew something. They had seen enough to shake them to the ground. They had reported “all the

things that were done.” Then they took money and did as they were taught. That is a fearful thing. A man can know the truth and still sell his witness. He can see what happened and still repeat what he was paid to say. He can have evidence in his conscience and still allow money to rewrite his mouth. That is the love of money at work. It does not merely buy hands. It buys tongues.

A man’s witness is not a small thing. Proverbs 14:5 says, “A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies” (KJV). The soldiers became false witnesses. They uttered lies. Their testimony was corrupted because money had purchased their speech. That is a warning to every man who knows truth but feels pressure to say something else. Maybe the pressure is money. Maybe it is job security. Maybe it is institutional loyalty. Maybe it is reputation. Maybe it is fear. But if a man lets gain determine his witness, he has entered the same moral territory as those soldiers. He is doing as he was taught by the paymaster instead of speaking as conscience and truth demand.

The believer must refuse to sell his witness. If Christ is risen, say He is risen. If the Bible is true, say it is true. If the gospel saves, say it saves. If a lie is a lie, call it a lie. Do not take the money. Do not repeat the script. Do not protect the system. Do not help religious men bury truth because they promise to secure you if trouble comes. The chief priests told the soldiers, “we will persuade him, and secure you.” That is what corrupt systems always promise: “Say what we tell you, and we will protect you.” But their protection is not worth the loss of truth. Better to stand with the risen Christ than be secured by men who are paying you to lie about Him.

Conclusion

“Large money unto the soldiers” is one of the most explosive phrases in the resurrection account because it shows the desperation of a defeated religious system. They could not stop Christ from rising. They could not keep the stone in place. They could not make the seal stronger than God. They could not make the guards braver than the angel. They could not make death hold the Prince of life. So they did what corrupt men always do when truth defeats power: they purchased a lie. Payment, script, protection, and repetition. That is the anatomy of a cover-up.

The soldiers knew enough to report what happened, but they took the money and did as they were taught. The rulers knew enough to tremble, but they took counsel and funded deception. The lie was absurd, but it became commonly reported. That is the power of paid testimony in a fallen world. Some lies do not survive because they are reasonable. They survive because somebody has money, influence, and motive to keep them alive. The resurrection lie began with large money, and it shows that the love of money can buy not

only betrayal, but public deception. It can buy tongues. It can buy silence. It can buy narratives. It can buy cowards.

But money could not buy the body of Christ back into the tomb. That is the glory of the passage. The lie spread, but the Lord was risen. The soldiers were paid, but the tomb was empty. The rulers plotted, but heaven had already spoken. The narrative was funded, but the gospel went forward. That is where the believer's confidence stands. Let the world fund lies. Let religion protect itself. Let cowards take the silver. Let false reports become common. The truth is not determined by the highest bidder. Jesus Christ rose from the dead, and no amount of large money can bury a living Saviour.

12 of 15: The Love of Money - The Changers of Money Sitting in the Temple

Introduction

There is a Jesus preached in modern religious marketing who bears almost no resemblance to the Jesus of the King James Bible. He is soft, syrupy, harmless, endlessly tolerant, commercially useful, emotionally manageable, and carefully edited so no one in the marketplace of religion gets disturbed. That is not the Jesus who walked into the temple in John 2. The Bible says, "And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting" (John 2:14, KJV). Then it says, "And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple" (John 2:15, KJV). That is not a suggestion box. That is not a committee meeting. That is not a branding adjustment. That is the Son of God entering the place connected with worship and overthrowing the tables of religious commerce.

The scene is not mild. It is not gentle. It is not the polished Christ of stained-glass sentimentality being used to sell religious products to consumers. This is the Lord Jesus Christ angry with holy anger because His Father's house has been made a house of merchandise. Sacrifice had become commerce. Worship had become business. The approach to God had become surrounded by men who knew how to profit from religious necessity. They were not sitting outside a tavern. They were in the temple. They were not selling common goods in a common street. They were profiting in a place where men came under the burden of worship, sacrifice, obligation, and conscience. That is what makes it so wicked. The closer greed gets to holy things, the more disgusting it becomes.

This essay has to deal with that straight. The danger is not merely that money exists near religion. The Bible has already shown money used rightly in the work of God. Money

repaired breaches. Money paid workers. Money supplied materials. Money could serve a righteous purpose under faithful handling. The danger in John 2 is something else. It is the religious marketplace. It is men learning how to profit from people trying to approach God. It is worship turned into a sales funnel. It is sacrifice turned into inventory. It is guilt, hunger, prayer, offering, healing, blessing, forgiveness, and spiritual need turned into something that can be packaged, priced, and processed. Christ did not negotiate with that system. He did not ask the money changers to lower their rates. He did not request better signage. He did not tell them to improve transparency. He overturned the tables.

Chapter 1: Christ Found Commerce Sitting Where Worship Should Have Ruled

John 2:14 says Jesus “found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting.” That word “sitting” is worth noticing. They were settled. Comfortable. Established. They had a place. They were not passing through with accidental merchandise. They were sitting in the system. Commerce had found a chair in the temple. The money changers were not embarrassed. The sellers were not hiding in a corner. They were functioning as though this belonged there. That is how corruption often works. What begins as an accommodation becomes an arrangement, and what becomes an arrangement eventually acts like it has a right to stay.

The temple was connected with sacrifice and worship under Israel’s law. Men needed animals for sacrifice. Travelers came from distances. Money exchange had practical reasons in that historical setting. That is how religious corruption often justifies itself. It begins with practical explanations. “People need animals.” “People need acceptable currency.” “People need convenience.” “We are helping worshippers.” But somewhere the practical thing became a profitable system, and the place of worship became a marketplace. The need of the worshipper became the opportunity of the merchant. Men coming toward God found themselves surrounded by sellers and changers. What should have pointed upward began to smell like business.

That is the warning. Not everything that claims to serve worship actually serves worship. Some things attach themselves to worship because worship draws needy people, guilty people, sincere people, fearful people, hopeful people, and obedient people. A religious merchant understands that. He does not have to create the hunger. He only has to position himself near it. He does not have to create the guilt. He only has to monetize the relief. He does not have to create the desire to approach God. He only has to set up a table along the path. Christ walked in and saw commerce sitting where worship should have ruled. That was enough.

Chapter 2: Religious Merchandising Turns Sacrifice Into Inventory

The oxen, sheep, and doves had a proper place in the Old Testament sacrificial system. God Himself had appointed sacrifices under the law. The problem in John 2 was not that sacrifices existed. The problem was that men had turned the sacrificial approach into a market. Animals connected with worship were being sold in the temple courts, and money changers were seated there handling exchange. Sacrifice had become inventory. Holy obligation had become a business opportunity. That is what religious greed does. It takes something God appointed and figures out how to profit from the people who need it.

That is an especially vile form of the love of money because it does not merely sell bread to the hungry or goods to a customer. It sells around the conscience. It profits from the man who believes he must approach God a certain way. Under the law, the worshipper was not just shopping for luxury. He was dealing with divine commandment, offering, guilt, thanksgiving, and obedience. To turn that into a racket is to feed on the most sacred part of a man's life. It is one thing to sell a plow in the field. It is another thing to turn the altar into a business model.

The same spirit continues wherever men turn the things of God into inventory. Prayer becomes a package. Healing becomes a product. Deliverance becomes a fee. Blessing becomes a donation tier. Prophecy becomes an appointment. Worship becomes a brand. Spiritual hunger becomes data. The altar becomes a checkout page. The Bible becomes a prop in the sales pitch. The name of Jesus becomes a logo. The Holy Ghost is treated like an experience that can be scheduled, promoted, monetized, and distributed by professionals. That is not ministry. That is temple merchandising with better technology.

Chapter 3: Christ's Anger Was Holy, Deliberate, and Public

John 2:15 says, "And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple." The Lord did not lose control. He did not have a fleshly tantrum. He made a scourge. That implies deliberation. He knew what He was doing. He acted with holy purpose. He drove them out. He poured out the changers' money. He overthrew the tables. That scene destroys the cartoon Jesus of modern softness. The true Christ is meek, but He is not weak. He is lowly, but He is not indulgent toward corruption. He receives sinners, but He does not flatter religious thieves. He opens His arms to the broken, but He closes His fist around a scourge when men turn His Father's house into merchandise.

That matters because many people think anger is always unspiritual. It is not. Sinful anger is wrong. Proud anger is wrong. Petty anger is wrong. Vengeful anger is wrong. But holy anger against corruption, especially corruption that profanes the things of God and exploits worshippers, is not wrong. The Lord Jesus Christ never sinned. Yet He drove men out. He overturned tables. He poured out money. He issued a command: "Take these things

hence.” The question is not whether anger exists. The question is whether it is governed by God’s holiness or by man’s flesh.

Christ’s action was also public because the corruption was public. The tables were not hidden. The selling was not hidden. The money changing was not hidden. Therefore the rebuke was not hidden. Public religious corruption often requires public confrontation. That does not mean every man should act like a wild fool and blame it on zeal. But it does mean that soft whispers are not always the Bible response to open profanation. Christ did not take the money changers aside privately and ask them to consider a more worshipful business model. He overthrew the tables in the place where the tables had been set.

Chapter 4: “Make Not My Father’s House an House of Merchandise”

The Lord’s words in John 2:16 explain the action: “Take these things hence; make not my Father’s house an house of merchandise” (KJV). There is the charge. Merchandise. The issue was not simply movement, noise, or inconvenience. The issue was the transformation of the house into a marketplace. His Father’s house had been made something else. That is always what corruption does. It takes a thing God defined and remakes it for profit. The house of prayer becomes a house of merchandise. The ministry of truth becomes a brand. The assembly becomes a customer base. The preacher becomes a salesman. The sheep become consumers. The altar becomes a platform.

The word “make” is important. “Make not my Father’s house an house of merchandise.” Men had made it that. They had redefined the atmosphere by their activity. The presence of religious objects did not keep it from becoming merchandise. The presence of sacrifices did not keep it from becoming merchandise. The location did not sanctify the business. The temple setting did not make greed holy. That is a critical point. Greed does not become righteous because it operates near holy language. A sales machine does not become ministry because it uses Bible verses. A marketplace does not become worship because it is built around religious need.

Christ’s statement also shows ownership. “My Father’s house.” The house did not belong to the merchants. It did not belong to the money changers. It did not belong to the religious managers who tolerated the arrangement. It belonged to His Father. That settles the authority issue. When the Lord owns the house, the Lord decides what the house is for. Men may profit from corruption for a season, but they are trespassing against divine purpose. The same principle applies wherever God’s work is handled. The church is not the preacher’s business. The flock is not the hireling’s market. The gospel is not the merchant’s product. The ministry belongs to the Lord, and He has every right to overthrow what men have made of it.

Chapter 5: Zeal for God's House Consumes What Greed Tries to Control

John 2:17 says, "And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up" (KJV). The disciples connected Christ's action with zeal for God's house. That is the proper interpretation. He was not merely irritated by noise. He was consumed with zeal for the honor of His Father. Greed had occupied space that belonged to reverence. Commerce had invaded the path of worship. Men had become comfortable profiting where they should have trembled. Christ's zeal consumed the arrangement that greed had normalized.

Zeal is dangerous when it is ignorant, proud, or fleshly, but zeal for God's honor is necessary. A generation without zeal will tolerate anything if it is profitable, popular, or familiar. It will call compromise nuance. It will call cowardice grace. It will call corruption complexity. It will say, "That is just how things are done," while tables sit in the temple and money changers count coins under the shadow of holy things. Zeal says no. Zeal sees what belongs to God and refuses to let merchandise rule it. Zeal is not impressed by the fact that the arrangement has been there a long time. If it profanes the house, it must go.

That kind of zeal is hated by religious merchants because it interrupts business. A cold religious manager can tolerate anything that keeps the system moving. A hireling can live with tables as long as the tables pay. A compromiser can explain why the money changers are necessary. But zeal for God's house asks a different question. Not "Is it profitable?" Not "Is it convenient?" Not "Is it traditional?" Not "Will people be upset if we remove it?" The question is, "Does this honor God?" If not, the tables need to be overturned. Christ's zeal did not ask whether the merchants were comfortable. It defended the honor of the Father's house.

Chapter 6: Temple Profiteering Reappears Whenever Spiritual Hunger Becomes a Sales Funnel

The spirit of the money changers did not die when the tables hit the floor. It reappears in every age under new names and cleaner packaging. Wherever spiritual hunger is turned into a sales funnel, the same spirit is at work. A sinner feels guilt, and someone sells him religious relief. A sick person wants healing, and someone sells him a miracle object. A confused believer wants direction, and someone sells him a prophetic word. A fearful person wants protection, and someone sells him a charm in Christian language. A lonely person wants belonging, and someone sells him access to a religious personality. A desperate person wants hope, and someone sells him a seed-faith promise.

This is not a rebuke of honest books, honest support, honest labor, or legitimate provision in ministry. A workman is worthy of his meat. Paul received support. Churches gave.

Laborers were helped. Printing costs money. Buildings cost money. Travel costs money. Food costs money. The issue is not whether ministry has practical expenses. The issue is whether spiritual need is being exploited. Is truth being served, or is truth being packaged as bait? Is the ministry feeding sheep, or monetizing them? Is the preacher giving the word of God, or using the word of God to build a customer pipeline? That is the dividing line.

The temple marketplace probably had defenders who could explain why it was necessary. Religious profiteering always has defenders. They will say it helps people. They will say it provides convenience. They will say it funds the work. They will say everyone benefits. They will say critics do not understand the system. But Christ did not accept the explanation. He saw what it had become. When worship becomes commerce, when sacrifice becomes merchandise, when prayer becomes profit, when guilt becomes a market, and when men learn how to profit from people approaching God, the tables need more than adjustment. They need judgment.

Chapter 7: Christ Did Not Negotiate With the Tables

One of the strongest lessons in John 2 is that Christ did not negotiate with the tables. He did not regulate them. He did not sanctify them. He did not ask for a fairer exchange rate. He did not require the sellers to provide receipts. He did not say, "Let us make this a more ethical marketplace." He made a scourge, drove them out, poured out the money, and overthrew the tables. That matters. Some corruptions are not meant to be improved. They are meant to be removed. Some arrangements do not need reform. They need expulsion.

Modern religion often wants to manage what Christ would overthrow. It wants to keep the table but put a Bible verse on it. It wants to keep the racket but improve the language. It wants to keep the sales funnel but call it discipleship. It wants to keep the celebrity machine but call it influence. It wants to keep the merchandise but call it resources. It wants to keep the manipulation but call it generosity. Christ's example gives no comfort to that spirit. The Lord did not baptize the tables. He flipped them. He did not sanctify the money changers' seats. He emptied them.

That does not mean every practical structure in ministry is a table to overthrow. Wisdom is required. Discernment is required. The Bible must define the issue. But once the thing is clearly merchandise in the place of worship, once it clearly profits from guilt, once it clearly turns approach to God into a transaction, once it clearly makes spiritual things serve greed, the response should not be sentimental. Christ's action gives the pattern: remove it. Do not pet it. Do not polish it. Do not rename it. Do not make peace with it. The house belongs to the Father.

Conclusion

John 2 shows the Lord Jesus Christ confronting religious commerce in the temple with unmistakable authority. He found those selling oxen, sheep, and doves, and the changers of money sitting. He made a scourge of small cords. He drove them out. He poured out the changers' money. He overthrew the tables. He said, "Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise." That is not the soft Christ of religious advertising. That is the holy Son of God defending the honor of His Father's house against men who had turned worship into a marketplace.

The issue was not that money can never touch the work of God. The Bible has already shown otherwise. Money can repair breaches. Money can pay laborers. Money can supply materials. Money can help the poor. Money can support righteous work when handled by faithful men. The issue is when money rules the work, when spiritual hunger is exploited, when sacrifice becomes inventory, when worship becomes commerce, and when religious men learn how to profit from people trying to approach God. That is the house of merchandise. That is what Christ judged.

The lesson is plain. Let money serve God's work, but never let God's work serve money. Let practical needs be met, but never let spiritual need be exploited. Let faithful men handle provision, but never let merchants rule the temple. Let books be printed, laborers supported, buildings maintained, and truth spread, but never sell the things of God like trinkets in a market stall. Christ did not negotiate with the tables. He overturned them. And any generation that loves the Lord more than the marketplace had better learn the difference between ministry and merchandise before the sound of falling tables is heard again.

13 of 15: The Love of Money - Simon the Sorcerer and the Gift That Cannot Be Purchased

Introduction

Acts 8 gives one of the strongest rebukes in the New Testament against the religious love of money. Simon the sorcerer saw something real. He saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, and instead of falling on his face in fear, he reached for money. The Bible says, "And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money" (Acts 8:18, KJV). That is one of the most revealing moments in the whole book of Acts. Simon did not merely want doctrine. He wanted power. He did not merely want truth. He wanted ability. He did not merely want God. He wanted the appearance, influence, and authority connected with

spiritual manifestation. His instinct was not worship. His instinct was transaction. He saw the power of God and thought like a merchant.

Peter's answer is not soft. It is not seeker-sensitive. It is not diplomatic. It is not padded with modern religious politeness. Peter says, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money" (Acts 8:20, KJV). That one sentence should be nailed over every religious racket on earth. "Thy money perish with thee." Not, "Thank you for your generous interest." Not, "Let us discuss partnership levels." Not, "Sow into this anointing." Not, "We can mentor you for a fee." Peter saw the spirit behind the offer and cut it open in public. Simon's money was not the main problem. Simon's heart was. Peter says in the next verse, "Thy heart is not right in the sight of God" (Acts 8:21, KJV). That is the issue. The wrong heart had reached for holy power with natural currency.

This passage is desperately needed in a generation obsessed with platforms, impartations, paid credentials, spiritual branding, religious influence, celebrity ministry, conference circuits, online authority, and purchased visibility. Simon's spirit is everywhere. Men want the power without the heart, the gift without the surrender, the authority without the holiness, the appearance without the inward truth, the office without the calling, the manifestation without the fear of God, and the public result without the private dealings of the Lord. The love of money does not only make men greedy. It makes men think spiritual things can be acquired by natural means. You can buy a degree, a building, a robe, a microphone, a camera, a mailing list, a website, a studio, a crowd, and a title. You cannot buy the Holy Ghost. You cannot purchase the power of God. You cannot bribe your way into apostolic authority.

Chapter 1: Simon Was Religious, Impressive, and Wrong

Simon was not presented as an ignorant man with no spiritual interests at all. Acts 8 says he had used sorcery in Samaria and bewitched the people, giving out that himself was some great one. The people gave heed to him, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God" (Acts 8:10, KJV). That is important. Simon already had influence. He already had a reputation. He already had people impressed. He already knew what it was to be regarded as spiritually powerful. He was not a nobody looking for a hobby. He was a man accustomed to attention, mystique, and spiritual showmanship. That background explains why the power manifested through the apostles attracted him so strongly. He recognized power as something that could produce influence.

The Bible says the people had regard to Simon because he had bewitched them with sorceries. That is counterfeit spiritual influence. It produces awe without truth, fear without

God, fascination without salvation, and dependence upon the personality of the performer. That is exactly the kind of ground where religious pride grows. A man who has been admired as “some great one” does not easily become nothing before God. He may attach himself to a movement. He may profess belief. He may be baptized. He may follow the preacher around. But if his heart is still in love with being regarded as great, he will eventually reveal it. Simon did.

Acts 8:13 says, “Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done” (KJV). That verse has been argued over, but the passage itself shows that something was still terribly wrong in Simon. Peter later tells him his heart is not right, he has neither part nor lot in the matter, and he is in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity. Whatever profession Simon made, his later request exposed a heart still captivated by power and influence. He followed, but he was still wrong. He wondered at miracles, but wonder is not worship. He was baptized, but water did not fix his heart. Religious movement around him did not make him clean within.

Chapter 2: Simon Wanted the Power Without the Heart

Simon’s request reveals what he wanted: “Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost” (Acts 8:19, KJV). Notice the wording. “Give me also this power.” That is the cry of the religious climber. He is not asking, “How may I be right with God?” He is not asking, “How may I walk in holiness?” He is not asking, “How may I serve Christ faithfully?” He is asking for power. He wants an ability. He wants something he can possess and exercise. He sees the apostles lay hands on people, and he wants the capacity to do the same. In his mind, this is transferable authority, and money is his proposed method of acquisition.

That is the Simon spirit. It wants spiritual power as a possession rather than God Himself as Lord. It wants the outward effect without the inward correction. It wants the visible ability without the hidden dealings. It wants hands that can impart, but not a heart that is right. It wants recognition without repentance. This spirit thrives wherever spiritual gifts, offices, anointings, platforms, and influence are desired more than holiness, truth, and obedience. The man does not want to decrease. He wants spiritual power to make him increase. He does not want Christ exalted. He wants to be seen as someone who can distribute supernatural things.

Peter’s rebuke goes straight to the root: “Thy heart is not right in the sight of God.” Not, “Your offer is too small.” Not, “You misunderstood our pricing.” Not, “You need additional training.” The issue is heart. In Scripture, power without a right heart is not a blessing. It is a

danger. A wrong heart with influence becomes a menace. A wrong heart with a platform becomes a trap for others. A wrong heart with religious authority becomes a wolf's mouth. Simon wanted ability, but Peter exposed the condition. God does not hand holy authority to a heart that sees the gift as an instrument of self-exaltation.

Chapter 3: Money Cannot Purchase the Gift of God

Peter's words are final: "because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money." The phrase "the gift of God" is key. A gift is not merchandise. A gift is not inventory. A gift is not a product to be bought from an apostle. A gift is not a religious technique transferred by payment. Simon's great error was thinking that what came from God could be acquired by money. He treated divine grace like a commodity. He saw spiritual authority and reached for the currency of the marketplace. Peter answered by cursing the whole thought. "Thy money perish with thee." If Simon's money and Simon's soul are tied together in that wicked imagination, let the money perish with the man.

The gift of God cannot be purchased because God is not a vendor. He is not standing behind a counter selling the Holy Ghost to ambitious men. He is not auctioning spiritual power to the highest bidder. He is not impressed by the man who can fund the biggest project, buy the best equipment, gather the largest crowd, or purchase the most credentials. God gives according to His will, His purpose, His grace, and His word. Men may handle outward things with money, but the inward things of God are not for sale. A man can buy oil in a bottle, but he cannot buy the unction of the Holy One. He can buy a pulpit, but not a burden. He can buy a stage, but not the fear of God.

This is the deathblow to religious merchandising. Any system that implies spiritual blessing can be bought is operating in Simon's spirit. Any man who sells access to God as though money increases grace is trafficking in wickedness. Any preacher who makes the desperate believe that payment is the key to divine favor has wandered into the same corruption Peter rebuked. The gospel itself is "without money and without price" in the sense that the sinner brings no payment for salvation. The price was paid by Christ. The Holy Ghost is not bought with silver. Spiritual life is not bought with donations. The gifts of God are not purchased by human currency.

Chapter 4: Religious Ambition Often Hides Behind Spiritual Vocabulary

Simon's request sounds spiritual if a man is careless. He is talking about the Holy Ghost. He is talking about laying on of hands. He is talking about people receiving something from God. That language could fool the undiscerning. But Peter saw beneath the vocabulary. Religious ambition often uses spiritual words to hide self-centered motives. A man may talk about revival when he wants recognition. He may talk about impartation when he

wants influence. He may talk about ministry when he wants a career. He may talk about souls when he wants a following. He may talk about truth when he wants to win arguments and build a name.

Simon had already been known as “some great one.” That old desire does not die just because a man learns new vocabulary. A sorcerer can stop using pagan words and start using Christian words while the old hunger for greatness remains. That is why conversion must deal with the heart, not merely the language. A man can move from occult theatrics into religious theatrics if his inner man is not changed. He can exchange one platform for another. He can stop bewitching people with sorcery and begin trying to impress people with borrowed Christian power. The costume changes, but the self-exalting spirit remains.

This is one of the great dangers in modern spiritual culture. People can learn the language of anointing, authority, calling, ministry, revelation, deliverance, and power without ever being broken before God. They can speak fluently in religious terms while still seeking greatness. They can build brands around spiritual vocabulary. They can attach God’s name to personal ambition. Simon’s request is not merely ancient history. It is the seed form of every religious climber who wants the appearance of divine power because it increases his influence. Peter did not flatter that. He rebuked it.

Chapter 5: Apostolic Authority Was Not a Commodity

In Acts 8, the laying on of the apostles’ hands had a specific place in that transitional apostolic setting. The gospel had gone into Samaria through Philip’s preaching, many believed and were baptized, and then Peter and John came down from Jerusalem. Through the laying on of the apostles’ hands, the Holy Ghost was given in a visible way that demonstrated divine acceptance and unity between Jewish and Samaritan believers under apostolic authority. That moment was not a carnival trick. It was not a technique. It was not a formula that Simon could add to his religious toolkit. It belonged to God’s apostolic program in the book of Acts.

Simon did not understand that because his mind ran along the tracks of power acquisition. He saw hands laid. He saw results. He wanted the ability. That is how natural men approach spiritual things. They reduce the things of God to methods. They see prayer as technique, preaching as performance, authority as branding, and gifts as transferable assets. They think if they can observe the mechanics, they can reproduce the power. But apostolic authority is not a commodity. It is not acquired by watching, paying, mimicking, or branding. It is given by God for His purpose, in His time, under His authority.

This has a sharp application today. Men buy robes, collars, certificates, titles, offices, degrees, and institutional recognition, and then assume they have spiritual authority. They

do not. A title cannot make a man called. A certificate cannot make him clean. A robe cannot give him unction. A degree cannot give him discernment. A platform cannot make him a shepherd. A microphone cannot make him a prophet. The things men can buy are outward. The things that matter most in ministry are inward and spiritual. God may use trained men, educated men, organized men, and supported men, but none of those outward arrangements can purchase authority from heaven. Simon wanted to buy what God had not given him. Peter told him exactly where that thought belonged.

Chapter 6: Peter Rebuked Simon Because the Matter Was Deadly

Peter's rebuke was severe because Simon's error was severe. "Thy money perish with thee" is not gentle language. Peter did not soften the blow because Simon was new, interested, impressed, or influential. He did not say, "At least your heart is in the right place." Peter said the opposite: "Thy heart is not right in the sight of God." He continued, "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter" (Acts 8:21, KJV). That is exclusionary language. Peter is telling Simon he has no share in the matter he is trying to purchase. A man with a wrong heart has no right to holy power simply because he desires it.

Then Peter says, "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22, KJV). Notice that Simon's thought is called wickedness. Not misunderstanding only. Not poor phrasing only. Wickedness. The thought of purchasing the gift of God with money revealed a wicked condition. Peter tells him to repent and pray. That is the proper counsel. Not "develop your gift." Not "join our leadership track." Not "give it time." Repent. Pray. The issue is not lack of opportunity. It is sin in the heart.

Peter then says, "For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity" (Acts 8:23, KJV). That is a deep diagnosis. Simon wanted power, but Peter saw bondage. Simon wanted influence, but Peter saw iniquity. Simon wanted authority, but Peter saw bitterness. That is often how it works. A man who is bound inwardly may still crave outward power. A bitter man may want spiritual influence as compensation for inward corruption. A man in bondage may want to control others religiously. Peter did not treat Simon's ambition as harmless. He exposed the chain behind it.

Chapter 7: Simon's Spirit Still Haunts Modern Religion

The spirit of Simon is alive wherever men think spiritual things can be bought, branded, packaged, transferred, or monetized apart from a right heart before God. It shows up when men sell impartations, paid prophecies, miracle access, spiritual covering, anointed objects, religious status, elite mentorship, and promises of power. It shows up when churches and ministries act as though influence can substitute for unction. It shows up

when a man believes that if he can buy the right equipment, get near the right personalities, pay for the right credentials, and build the right platform, he will have spiritual authority. That is Simon with a camera and a website.

This spirit also shows up more subtly. A man may not offer cash to an apostle, but he may still treat ministry as a purchase. He may think donations entitle him to control. He may think support gives him authority over the message. He may think funding a work gives him leverage over doctrine. He may think paying tuition gives him spiritual stature. He may think buying books gives him wisdom while never obeying what he reads. He may think a large platform proves God's approval. He may think influence is the same as fruit. The forms differ, but the root is the same: natural acquisition of spiritual things.

The cure is the same as Peter's rebuke: repent, pray, and get the heart right before God. The believer must reject the idea that the gifts of God are merchandise. He must reject the idea that spiritual authority can be purchased. He must reject the idea that religious branding equals divine power. He must reject the idea that platform equals calling. He must reject the idea that money can buy what only God gives. If God gives a man a work, let him do it faithfully. If God gives him resources, let him steward them humbly. If God gives him influence, let him tremble. But let him never reach for holy power with Simon's money in his hand.

Conclusion

Simon the sorcerer stands as one of the clearest warnings in Scripture that the love of money corrupts a man's understanding of spiritual things. He saw the Holy Ghost given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, and he offered money. That is the whole spirit of religious merchandising in one act. He wanted the power without the heart, the gift without surrender, the authority without holiness, the appearance without inward truth. He treated the gift of God like a commodity, and Peter answered with words that still burn: "Thy money perish with thee."

The issue was never that money cannot be used for any good purpose. Money can feed, repair, support, print, build, help, and serve. But money cannot buy the Holy Ghost. Money cannot purchase the power of God. Money cannot obtain apostolic authority. Money cannot cleanse a wrong heart. Money cannot turn a bitter man into a spiritual man. Money cannot transform ambition into calling. Money cannot purchase the gift of God. The things that matter most in the work of God are not sold in the marketplace. They come from God, under God's terms, for God's glory.

This generation needs Acts 8 as badly as any generation ever has. Men can buy platforms, cameras, lights, buildings, degrees, robes, titles, mailing lists, advertising, crowds, and

influence. They can build impressive religious machines. They can polish a brand and gather attention. But if the heart is not right in the sight of God, the whole thing stinks. Simon's money could not buy the gift then, and it cannot buy it now. The believer's duty is plain: refuse the Simon spirit, reject the religious marketplace, fear God, repent of ambition, seek the Lord with a clean heart, and never forget that what God gives by grace cannot be purchased with silver.

14 of 15: The Love of Money - Felix, the Bribe, and the Sale of Justice

Introduction

Acts 24 gives one of the most miserable portraits in the New Testament of a man who had truth in the room, conviction in the conscience, authority in his hand, and greed still sitting on the throne. Felix was not an ignorant savage who had never heard anything. He was not a man sitting in total darkness with no witness from God. He had Paul standing before him. He heard the case. He knew enough about "that way" to understand more than he pretended. He had the opportunity to do justice. He had the opportunity to release an innocent man. He had the opportunity to tremble under preaching and obey the truth. But instead of righteousness, he chose delay. Instead of justice, he chose political convenience. Instead of repentance, he chose postponement. Instead of releasing Paul because it was right, he hoped for money.

The verse is plain: "He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him" (Acts 24:26, KJV). There it is. Felix had the prisoner, but money had Felix. Paul was in bonds, but Felix was in deeper bondage. Paul stood before a governor, but the governor stood under the judgment of God. Paul's body was confined, but Felix's conscience was chained to covetousness, fear, and ambition. That is the strange irony of the passage. The man in custody was freer than the man on the judgment seat. Paul could preach righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. Felix could only tremble, delay, and hope for a bribe. The official had power, but the prisoner had truth.

This is where the love of money becomes more than private greed. It corrupts justice. It makes authority negotiable. It turns a legal decision into a transaction. It teaches a man to look at innocence and ask, "What will this pay?" It teaches a ruler to hear truth and say, "Go thy way for this time." It teaches a conscience under conviction to postpone obedience because greed sees a possible profit. Felix is one of the ugliest combinations in Scripture: a man under conviction who still wants cash more than righteousness. He communed with Paul often, but not because he wanted salvation. He called for him often because he

hoped money would be given him. That is religion and politics at their worst: truth present, conscience stirred, justice delayed, and greed waiting with an open hand.

Chapter 1: Felix Had Authority, But Not Righteousness

Felix was governor. That means he held civil authority in the case before him. Paul had been accused by the Jews, brought before him, and forced to answer charges. Authority is not wicked by itself. Romans 13 teaches that rulers have a God-ordained function in maintaining order and punishing evil. But authority becomes wicked when it is separated from righteousness. A judge, governor, ruler, magistrate, elder, pastor, father, employer, or leader may have a position, but position does not make him righteous. Felix had the seat, but he did not have the character. He had jurisdiction, but he did not have justice. He had the prisoner, but he did not have clean hands.

Paul's defense before Felix was clear. He denied the false accusations. He confessed his hope toward God. He spoke of the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. He said, "And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men" (Acts 24:16, KJV). That is a remarkable statement from a prisoner. Paul was not standing there as a criminal trying to manipulate the system. He was a preacher with a clean conscience. The accusers could not prove the things whereof they accused him. Felix had enough before him to know that Paul was not the villain the Jews claimed him to be. But knowing the right thing and doing the right thing are not the same.

That is the first warning from Felix. Authority without righteousness becomes a marketplace. When the man in power does not fear God, his decisions are for sale to the strongest pressure. Sometimes the pressure is money. Sometimes it is politics. Sometimes it is reputation. Sometimes it is fear of the crowd. Sometimes it is ambition. In Felix's case, all those currents seem to be moving together. He wants to please the Jews. He wants to hold Paul. He wants to keep control. He wants money. That is what happens when a man has authority but no fear of God. Justice becomes something to manage instead of something to obey.

Chapter 2: Felix Heard Righteousness, Temperance, and Judgment to Come

Acts 24:25 says Paul "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." That is a sermon outline from heaven. Paul did not stand before Felix and flatter him. He did not adjust the message because Felix held the keys. He did not say, "Governor, I know you are a busy man, so let me give you something positive and encouraging." He reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. That means Paul preached directly to the conscience of a powerful, immoral, self-indulgent ruler. He spoke about what is right, what governs the flesh, and what awaits every man before God.

Righteousness aimed at Felix's crooked authority. Temperance aimed at his corrupt passions. Judgment to come aimed at his eternal accountability. That is how preaching ought to work. It should not merely inform the mind. It should reach the conscience. It should put the sinner under God's eye. It should expose the ruler who thinks his office shields him. It should confront the man who thinks position, money, sex, influence, and power can postpone the day when he must answer to the Judge of all the earth. Paul did not have Felix's office, but Paul had Felix's number. The preacher in chains spoke like a free man because truth does not need the governor's permission.

The Bible says Felix trembled. That is no small thing. The preaching got through. His conscience shook. He felt something. He was not bored. He was not untouched. He was not merely intellectually curious. He trembled under the weight of righteousness, temperance, and judgment. But trembling is not salvation. Trembling is not obedience. Trembling is not repentance. A man can tremble under preaching and still go to hell. A man can feel the terror of judgment and still choose delay. A man can be moved in his emotions and still remain unchanged in his will. Felix trembled, but he did not yield.

Chapter 3: Conviction Without Obedience Becomes Delay

Felix's answer is one of the classic responses of a man who wants to escape conviction without surrendering to truth: "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee" (Acts 24:25, KJV). There it is. Delay. Not open atheism. Not violent rejection. Not an argument against Paul's doctrine. Just delay. "For this time." "A convenient season." Felix did not say Paul was wrong. He said now was not convenient. That is how many men lose their souls. They do not always curse the truth. They postpone it. They file it away for a better season that never comes.

The devil has destroyed multitudes with the word "later." Later is one of hell's favorite lullabies. Later I will repent. Later I will believe. Later I will get serious. Later I will forgive. Later I will obey. Later I will break with that sin. Later I will tell the truth. Later I will make it right. Later I will stop playing games with God. But the Bible says, "behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2, KJV). God says now. The flesh says later. Felix said later, and the later never turned into obedience.

Conviction is dangerous when resisted. It can harden instead of heal. The more a man says no to light, the easier no becomes. Felix trembled under preaching, but he dismissed the preacher. That is a terrible thing. He had enough conviction to shake, but not enough humility to bow. He had enough light to know he was in danger, but enough love for sin and money to keep him from moving toward God. Delayed obedience is often dressed up as caution, prudence, timing, complexity, and waiting for clarity, but often it is just unbelief

with clean clothes. Felix wanted a convenient season. God gave him a convicting sermon. He chose the wrong one.

Chapter 4: Felix Wanted Money More Than Justice

Acts 24:26 pulls the curtain back: “He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him.” That verse reveals the filthy underside of Felix’s delay. He was not merely waiting for more evidence. He was not merely studying the case carefully. He was not merely trying to keep public order. He hoped for money. Paul’s release had become negotiable in Felix’s mind. Justice had a price. The innocent man could be loosed if the right payment appeared. That is corruption in its most basic form. The judge’s hand is open, and righteousness is waiting for a bribe.

This is the love of money working inside authority. It makes a man treat justice as merchandise. It takes the thing God commanded rulers to uphold and turns it into a private revenue stream. Felix had no right to keep Paul imprisoned in the hope of payment. He had no right to delay justice for personal gain. But the love of money does not ask, “What is right?” It asks, “What can I get?” It does not ask, “What does God require?” It asks, “What is this worth to me?” That is why bribery is so wicked. It does not merely enrich the bribe-taker. It perverts the moral order. It turns truth into a bargaining chip.

The irony is brutal. Paul had been preaching righteousness, and Felix was hoping for unrighteous money. Paul had been preaching temperance, and Felix was enslaved to covetous desire. Paul had been preaching judgment to come, and Felix was acting as though his governorship exempted him from judgment. The sermon and the sin stood in the same room. That happens often. A man hears exactly what he needs, feels the edge of it, and then returns to the very sin the sermon condemned. Felix did not lack truth. He lacked surrender. The love of money kept him from doing the righteous thing when the righteous thing was sitting right in front of him.

Chapter 5: Felix Communed Often, But Not for Salvation

The end of Acts 24:26 says, “wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him.” At first glance, someone might think that sounds encouraging. Felix keeps calling for Paul. Felix keeps talking with the preacher. Felix keeps returning to the conversation. But the verse tells us why. He hoped money would be given him. That makes the repeated communication darker, not brighter. Felix was not a hungry soul seeking more truth. He was a greedy ruler keeping the door open for a bribe. He used spiritual conversation as cover for corrupt expectation.

This is a warning that repeated exposure to preaching does not always mean a man is moving toward God. Some men love to talk about truth but never obey it. Some men enjoy

religious conversation but refuse repentance. Some men keep the preacher close because they find him interesting, useful, comforting, or politically convenient, but they do not want to bow to Christ. Felix heard Paul often, but hearing often did not make him right. Judas heard Christ often. Pharaoh heard Moses repeatedly. Herod heard John gladly and did many things, but still kept his sin. Repetition is not regeneration.

There is something especially ugly about using a man of God while ignoring the God he preaches. Felix called for Paul when it served his purpose. He communed with Paul while Paul remained unjustly bound. He wanted access to Paul's presence without submission to Paul's message. That is the spirit of many people toward preaching. They like the preacher near enough to consult, but not near enough to correct. They like truth as conversation, but not as command. They like Bible talk as long as it does not dethrone the idol. Felix's idol was gain. He communed often, but the open hand for a bribe was still underneath the conversation.

Chapter 6: Political Convenience Finished What Greed Started

Acts 24:27 says, "But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room: and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound" (KJV). Two years. Paul remained bound while Felix delayed, hoped for money, communed often, and then left office. In the end, Felix left Paul bound to please the Jews. That is what corrupt authority does. If money does not settle the matter, political convenience does. Justice is still not done. The innocent man is still used as a pawn. Felix's conscience, greed, and politics all converge to leave Paul in chains.

That verse shows how the love of money rarely travels alone. It has companions. Fear of man, ambition, convenience, pride, lust, and political calculation often walk beside it. Felix hoped for money, but he also wanted to manage the Jews. He trembled under judgment, but he also wanted to preserve his standing. He heard truth, but he also wanted advantage. That is the tangled web of a corrupt heart. A man may have several reasons for not doing right, but God sees the root of them all. Felix was not trapped by circumstances. He was trapped by his own unwillingness to obey righteousness.

Paul's bondage under Felix also shows that injustice can last a long time under corrupt men. Two years is not a small delay. A righteous judgment could have loosed Paul earlier. Instead, he was kept in custody because a ruler wanted money and approval. That is the sale of justice. That is what happens when authority has no fear of God. People suffer while rulers calculate. Truth waits while politicians posture. Innocent men are held while powerful men look for benefit. But God was not absent. Paul's life was still in God's hand.

Felix could delay justice, but he could not derail providence. Man's corruption never becomes stronger than God's purpose.

Chapter 7: The True Judge Cannot Be Bribe

Felix sat in judgment over Paul for a season, but Felix himself was under the judgment of God. That is the great reversal. Every earthly judge is also a defendant before heaven. Every ruler will answer to the Ruler. Every man who sells justice will stand before the Judge who cannot be bought. Abraham asked, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Genesis 18:25, KJV). The answer is yes. The Judge of all the earth will do right. He will not take a bribe. He will not be influenced by office. He will not be impressed by titles. He will not sell verdicts. He will not delay righteousness because powerful men are nervous. He will not ask who has money. He will judge in perfect truth.

That should terrify every Felix. The man who thought Paul's release could be purchased will someday stand where no release can be purchased. The governor who hoped for money will face the God who owns all things and needs nothing. The ruler who trembled at righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come will meet the very judgment he postponed. Money will have no voice there. Political connections will have no voice there. Public image will have no voice there. The excuses that worked in human courts will die before the throne of God.

For the believer, this is also comfort. Paul was not ultimately in Felix's hands. No child of God ever is. Men may delay justice, pervert authority, take bribes, seek advantage, and leave the righteous bound, but God sees. God weighs. God records. God will judge. The Christian can suffer injustice without believing injustice has the final word. Felix had a seat in Caesarea, but Christ has the throne in heaven. Felix had Paul in custody, but Christ had Paul in His will. Felix could hope for money, but Paul had treasure in heaven. The true Judge cannot be bribed, and His verdict will outlast every corrupt court in history.

Conclusion

Felix is a tragic picture of a man with truth in the room and greed in the heart. He heard Paul reason of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. He trembled. His conscience felt the blow. He had enough light to know Paul's message was not empty. But instead of bowing to God, he dismissed the preacher until a more convenient season. That convenient season never became obedience. The trembling passed, the opportunity lingered, and the heart remained corrupt. Conviction without surrender became delay.

Then the Holy Ghost tells us what Felix wanted: money. He hoped money would be given him of Paul, that he might loose him. That is the sale of justice. A ruler with authority over a prisoner allowed greed to corrupt the case. Paul's innocence was not enough. Truth was

not enough. Righteousness was not enough. Felix wanted a bribe. He communed with Paul often, but not because he wanted salvation. He wanted payment. He had preaching in his ears and covetousness in his hand. That is a terrifying condition for any man.

The warning is plain. Do not sell justice. Do not delay obedience. Do not mistake trembling for repentance. Do not treat truth as something to discuss while refusing to obey it. Do not think authority shields you from the Judge of all the earth. Felix had power for a little while, but his power did not save him from accountability. The love of money made him pervert justice, postpone righteousness, and leave an innocent man bound. But the true Judge cannot be bribed. Money may buy favors from men, but it cannot buy mercy from God after a man rejects the truth. When righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come are preached, the right answer is not “a convenient season.” The right answer is to bow now, before the court of heaven is in session and the verdict is final.

15 of 15: The Love of Money - The Root of All Evil

Introduction

The final word in this series has to land where the Holy Ghost lands it: “For the love of money is the root of all evil” (1 Timothy 6:10, KJV). That verse has been misquoted so many times that most people who think they know it do not actually know what it says. The Bible does not say money is the root of all evil. It says the love of money is the root of all evil. That distinction is not small. It is the difference between Bible doctrine and religious stupidity. Money can be used rightly. Money can buy food, pay laborers, repair breaches, help the poor, support the work of God, provide for a household, and settle honest obligations. But the love of money is something else. Money is an object. The love of money is an affection. Money can pass through the hand. The love of money sits on the throne of the heart. Money can serve. The love of money demands worship.

After walking through the Bible’s use of money, Paul’s statement comes with full force. Money bought land for burial. Money bought fields. Money bought food. Money appeared in household service and legal arrangements. Money failed in Egypt and Canaan. Money was connected with usury and the grinding of the poor. Money was gathered for the repair of the house of God. Money appeared in redemption arrangements, sanctuary shekels, and valuations. Money tempted prophets, priests, judges, sorcerers, soldiers, rulers, and betrayers. Money was offered by Simon to buy spiritual power. Money was expected by Felix to corrupt justice. Money was given to soldiers to spread a lie about the resurrection. Money was covenanted to Judas to betray the Lord Jesus Christ. By the time a man reaches

1 Timothy 6:10, he should not read it as a slogan. He should read it as the doctrinal diagnosis of a disease that has infected religion, politics, business, family, conscience, worship, and the soul.

The verse does not merely say the love of money is dangerous. It shows the path of destruction. “Which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows” (1 Timothy 6:10, KJV). That is the final picture. Not a rich man smiling in security. Not a successful man enjoying his pile. Not a powerful man standing safely above trouble. A pierced man. A sorrowful man. A man who chased something that could not save him, could not satisfy him, could not redeem him, could not cleanse him, and could not protect him when judgment came. That is where the love of money ends. It promises gain and delivers grief. It promises power and delivers bondage. It promises safety and delivers fear. It promises satisfaction and delivers hunger. It promises freedom and delivers chains. The believer’s charge is simple: use money without loving it, steward it without serving it, give it without worshipping it, and never let the devil find the price tag on your convictions.

Chapter 1: The Verse Must Be Read Exactly as Written

The first duty is to read the verse exactly as God gave it. “For the love of money is the root of all evil.” Men love to misquote it because misquoting it helps them avoid the real issue. If they say “money is the root of all evil,” then they can turn the verse into a childish attack on wealth, business, property, labor, and provision. But if they read it correctly, the knife turns inward. The issue is not the coin. It is the love. Not the bank account. The affection. Not the possession. The worship. Not the tool. The throne. God does not merely rebuke the man with money. He rebukes the man whose heart loves it.

That means a poor man can be guilty of this sin while having very little money. He may dream about money, envy money, resent others for having money, measure life by money, and imagine that money would save him from every inward misery. That is still the love of money. A rich man may also be guilty, of course, when he trusts in uncertain riches, boasts in abundance, uses money to control others, or clings to wealth as though it were his god. But the sin is not measured by the total in the account. It is measured by the seat money occupies in the heart. A poor covetous man and a rich covetous man may be bowing to the same idol from opposite sides of the altar.

This exact reading also protects the believer from false extremes. One extreme worships wealth and calls gain godliness. Paul condemns that in the same chapter when he speaks of men “supposing that gain is godliness” (1 Timothy 6:5, KJV). The other extreme acts as though money itself is defiling and that practical provision is unspiritual. The Bible

condemns that nonsense too. Paul says if any provide not for his own, especially those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel. The issue is not whether money is ever handled. The issue is whether the heart is clean before God while handling it. Money in a faithful hand can serve righteousness. Money loved in the heart becomes a root of evil.

Chapter 2: The Love of Money Is a Root, Not Merely a Fruit

Paul calls the love of money “the root of all evil.” A root works beneath the surface. It is hidden before it is visible. It feeds things before those things appear. By the time fruit shows above ground, the root has already been drawing strength in secret. That is how the love of money works. Judas did not suddenly become a betrayer when the chief priests offered silver. The root was already there. He had the bag. He was a thief. He objected to Mary’s ointment not because he cared for the poor, but because he cared for what might have passed through his hands. The silver revealed the root. It did not create it.

This is why the love of money is so deceptive. A man can look fine outwardly while the root is feeding underground. He can speak religiously. He can serve visibly. He can appear responsible, successful, careful, strategic, and respectable. But if the love of money is feeding under the surface, sooner or later it will produce fruit. It may produce compromise. It may produce cowardice. It may produce manipulation. It may produce false teaching. It may produce oppression. It may produce betrayal. It may produce a softened sermon, a crooked deal, a hidden theft, a purchased lie, a delayed obedience, or a sold conviction. The fruit may differ, but the root is the same.

Calling it a root also explains why so many different evils connect to money in Scripture. The love of money can feed religious corruption, political bribery, family betrayal, oppression of the poor, false witness, temple merchandising, spiritual ambition, and apostasy. That does not mean every single sin in history is directly committed for money in the immediate sense. It means the love of money is a root capable of feeding all manner of evil. It reaches into places men do not expect. It wraps around judgment, worship, doctrine, mercy, truth, and loyalty. It can grow under a judge’s seat, a prophet’s platform, a priest’s office, a soldier’s testimony, a disciple’s purse, and a governor’s conscience.

Chapter 3: Coveting After Money Leads Men Away From the Faith

Paul says, “which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith.” That is a doctrinal warning. The love of money is not just a personality flaw. It is not merely a bad habit. It is a spiritual danger that can pull a man away from truth. “Coveted after” means the heart has begun chasing. It is no longer using money as a servant. It is pursuing money as an object of desire. Once that chase begins, faith becomes inconvenient. Truth

becomes expensive. Obedience becomes costly. The Book begins to interfere with the pursuit. Then the man starts adjusting.

This is how men err from the faith. A preacher sees that certain doctrines cost support, so he avoids them. A teacher sees that truth offends the donors, so he softens it. A church sees that the market rewards entertainment, so it replaces preaching with performance. A religious leader sees that the people prefer smooth things, so he gives them smooth things. A man in business sees that honesty will cost profit, so he cheats and calls it survival. A believer sees that obedience may reduce income, so he delays, rationalizes, and compromises. The faith does not disappear all at once. It is traded piece by piece for safety, gain, and approval.

Judas is the most terrible picture of this. He was near the faith outwardly, but his covetousness took him into betrayal. Balaam loved the wages of unrighteousness and became a standing warning. Simon thought the gift of God could be purchased with money. Felix trembled under truth but hoped for a bribe. The chief priests knew the soldiers' report and paid for a lie. These are not merely money stories. They are faith stories. Money becomes the instrument through which men reveal whether they believe God or not. A man who truly believes God may use money, but he will not let money purchase his disobedience. A man who loves money will eventually find a doctrine, a conviction, or a testimony he is willing to sell.

Chapter 4: The Love of Money Pierces With Many Sorrows

The end of 1 Timothy 6:10 is one of the saddest descriptions in the Bible: "and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." The love of money does not leave a man whole. It pierces him. It wounds him from different directions. The sorrow may be guilt, fear, loss, betrayal, emptiness, exposure, judgment, family damage, spiritual decay, or eternal ruin. Money promises to shield a man from sorrow, but the love of it multiplies sorrow. It promises control, but produces anxiety. It promises satisfaction, but produces hunger. It promises status, but produces envy. It promises independence, but produces bondage.

Judas shows this perfectly. He got the silver, then threw it down. The money that looked desirable before the betrayal became unbearable afterward. He confessed that he had betrayed innocent blood, but he did not go to Christ for mercy. He went out and hanged himself. That is a man pierced through with many sorrows. The silver did not comfort him. The chief priests did not comfort him. His religious associations did not comfort him. The bargain he had made turned into a witness against him. The devil showed him the silver before the sin and the rope after the sin. That is always how the devil works. He advertises the bait and hides the hook.

But the piercing is not limited to Judas. A man who oppresses the poor pierces his own conscience even if he silences it for a time. A preacher who sells truth pierces his own ministry. A father who sacrifices his family for money pierces his own household. A ruler who takes bribes pierces justice and eventually himself. A religious merchant who profits from spiritual hunger pierces the testimony of the house of God. A believer who lets money rule him pierces his peace. The sorrows may not all appear immediately, but they come. The love of money is not a harmless preference. It is a self-inflicted stabbing. Paul says they “pierced themselves.” The wound is chosen.

Chapter 5: Godliness With Contentment Is the Antidote

The immediate context of 1 Timothy 6 gives the antidote before the warning. Paul says, “But godliness with contentment is great gain” (1 Timothy 6:6, KJV). That is the opposite of the love of money. The covetous man thinks gain is found in more money. God says great gain is found in godliness with contentment. Not godliness without contentment, where a man has religious activity but still burns with envy and appetite. Not contentment without godliness, where a man becomes lazy, careless, and spiritually dead. Godliness with contentment. A life under God with a heart satisfied in God’s provision.

Paul then says, “For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out” (1 Timothy 6:7, KJV). That verse strips every man naked. He came in with nothing. He will go out carrying nothing. The richest man in the cemetery took no suitcase into eternity. The most powerful man in town cannot transfer his estate into the judgment seat. A baby enters with empty hands, and a dead man leaves with empty hands. Everything in between is stewardship, not ownership. That truth should kill pride and cure panic. If you cannot carry it out, do not worship it while you are here.

Then Paul says, “And having food and raiment let us be therewith content” (1 Timothy 6:8, KJV). That does not mean a believer may never have more than food and clothing. It means the heart must learn contentment with necessities under God. Contentment does not mean laziness. It means freedom from the tyranny of more. It means money has lost the power to define peace. It means a man can work diligently without worshipping increase. He can receive blessing without trusting it. He can suffer lack without believing God has abandoned him. Contentment is not poverty. It is a settled heart under the hand of a faithful God.

Chapter 6: Riches Are Uncertain, But God Is Not

Later in the chapter, Paul says, “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches” (1 Timothy 6:17, KJV). There is the Bible’s label: uncertain riches. Men call them secure. God calls them uncertain. Men call them stable.

God calls them uncertain. Men call them the future. God calls them uncertain. A bank can fail. A market can collapse. A thief can steal. A government can seize. A sickness can drain. A lawsuit can devour. A war can erase. A famine can make money fail. Death can end access in a moment. Riches are uncertain because everything under the sun is subject to change.

But Paul does not merely tell the rich what not to trust. He says, “but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.” That is the contrast. Do not trust uncertain riches. Trust the living God. Riches are uncertain, but God is living. Riches can leave, but God remains. Riches can fail, but God cannot. Riches can be enjoyed rightly when God is trusted supremely. That balance matters. The Bible does not say God never gives anything to enjoy. It says the enjoyment must be under the living God, not in place of Him. When God gives, receive with thanksgiving. When God withholds, trust Him. When God removes, do not collapse as though your god died.

The rich are then charged “that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate” (1 Timothy 6:18, KJV). Money under God becomes an instrument of good works. Money under mammon becomes an idol. The rich believer is not told to feel guilty merely because he has resources. He is told not to be highminded, not to trust riches, to do good, and to be ready to distribute. That is stewardship. God can put resources into a man’s hand and command the man to use them as a servant of righteousness. The problem is when the resources climb from the hand to the heart and begin ruling the man.

Chapter 7: Never Let the Devil Find the Price Tag on Your Convictions

This whole series has shown one repeated pattern: the devil looks for the price. Ahab wanted Naboth’s vineyard and began with money. Delilah sold access to Samson’s secret for silver. Judas sold the Lord Jesus Christ for thirty pieces of silver. The chief priests gave large money to soldiers to lie about the resurrection. Simon offered money for spiritual power. Felix hoped money would be given him to loose Paul. The prophets in Micah divined for money. The money changers sat in the temple and turned worship into merchandise. Again and again, money becomes the test that reveals whether a man’s convictions are for sale.

That is why the believer must never let the devil find the price tag. There must be some things that cannot be bought. The truth cannot be bought. The gospel cannot be bought. The King James Bible cannot be traded for academic approval. The testimony of Christ cannot be softened for donors. The pulpit cannot be rented by rich men. The conscience cannot be sold for opportunity. The family cannot be sacrificed for gain. The soul cannot be

exchanged for the world. The believer must be able to say, like Naboth, “The LORD forbid it me.” Not “raise the offer.” Not “let me think about it.” Not “what are the terms?” The Lord forbid it.

A man who belongs to Christ must remember he has already been bought. “Ye are bought with a price” (1 Corinthians 6:20, KJV). That price was not silver or gold. It was the precious blood of Christ. If Christ bought the believer, then mammon has no right to buy him back. The devil may offer comfort, success, money, influence, safety, applause, or access, but the saved man should answer, “I am not for sale.” That is the final practical application of this whole series. Use money. Steward money. Give money. Earn honestly. Provide faithfully. Help generously. But do not sell what God purchased with blood. Do not let money own what belongs to Christ.

Conclusion

The love of money is the root of all evil because it reaches into every part of fallen human life and tries to make gain more important than God. It corrupts justice, as with Felix. It purchases lies, as with the soldiers. It funds betrayal, as with Judas and Delilah. It turns worship into merchandise, as with the money changers. It tempts spiritual ambition, as with Simon. It devours the poor through usury. It turns prophets into hirelings, judges into vendors, priests into professionals, and weak men into traitors. It is not merely a sin of rich men. It is a root that can grow in any heart that values money above righteousness.

But the Bible also gives the proper place of money. Money is a tool. It can be used. It can serve. It can repair breaches, feed families, help the needy, support laborers, and advance righteous work when handled by faithful men. The issue is not whether money touches the hand. The issue is whether money rules the heart. The believer must keep the order straight. God first. Truth first. Christ first. The Book first. Righteousness first. Money underneath, never above. Money as servant, never master. Money as stewardship, never god.

So the series ends where it began: the problem is not the silver in the hand, but the throne in the heart. “For the love of money is the root of all evil.” Read it as written. Believe it as written. Fear it as written. Do not chase what cannot save you. Do not trust what cannot keep you. Do not sell what God told you to guard. Do not pierce yourself through for a handful of uncertain riches. Let money serve the Lord’s purposes and then let it go when obedience requires it. The man who loves money will eventually be owned by it. The man who loves Christ can use money without bowing to it. And when the final account is settled, it will not matter what a man held in his hand. It will matter who held his heart.

Conclusion to the Series: The Love of Money

After completing this 15-part series, the conclusion is plain: the Bible's warning about money is much deeper than the common misquotation people throw around. The Bible does not say money is the root of all evil. It says, **“For the love of money is the root of all evil”** (1 Timothy 6:10, KJV). That distinction governed the entire study. Money itself can be used lawfully, honestly, and faithfully. It can buy land, food, tools, supplies, and materials. It can pay laborers. It can repair breaches. It can support the work of God. It can help the poor. It can provide for a family. It can be used as a servant. But once money becomes an idol, a master, a motivator, a fear, a lust, or a god, it becomes one of the most corrupting forces in the human heart.

What we learned from tracing the word **money** through the King James Bible is that money is a revealer. It reveals the heart. It reveals whether a man trusts God or Egypt. It reveals whether a preacher fears God or fears losing support. It reveals whether a ruler loves justice or loves a bribe. It reveals whether a man sees the poor as people to help or opportunities to exploit. It reveals whether a person's convictions are truly convictions or just preferences waiting for the right price. Money does not always create the sin. Many times, money simply exposes the sin that was already growing underneath the surface.

We saw that money could be used properly in Scripture. Abraham used money to purchase a buryingplace. Jacob bought land. Joseph handled money during famine. Israel had redemption money, atonement money, sanctuary shekels, and legal valuations under the law. Money was gathered and delivered to faithful workmen to repair the house of the LORD. These passages keep us balanced. The Bible does not teach that poverty is automatically holiness or that handling money is automatically wicked. God's people are expected to be honest, responsible, faithful, and practical. A man who will not provide for his own is not spiritual. A ministry that needs materials, labor, printing, travel, repairs, or support is not carnal merely because those things require money.

But we also saw the other side. Money failed in Egypt and Canaan. Money could not stop famine. Money could not create bread when the supply was gone. Money could not give life. Money could not satisfy the soul. Money could not redeem a sinner from hell. Money could not buy the Holy Ghost. Money could not purchase spiritual authority. Money could not cleanse Judas' conscience after he betrayed innocent blood. Money could not put Christ back into the tomb after He rose from the dead. Money can answer many earthly matters, but it cannot answer death, judgment, sin, guilt, eternity, or the hunger of a soul without God.

That is one of the greatest lessons from the entire series: **money has limits**. It can buy many things under the sun, but it cannot buy the things that matter most before God. It can buy a Bible, but not faith. It can buy a building, but not the presence of God. It can buy a microphone, but not unction. It can buy a degree, but not spiritual authority. It can buy a casket, but not resurrection. It can buy applause, but not approval from God. It can buy religious access, but not redemption. Silver and gold are useful in their place, but when the soul is at stake, they are corruptible things. The sinner is redeemed only by the precious blood of Christ.

We learned that the love of money can turn private covetousness into public corruption. It does not stay small. It spreads. It can become usury that grinds the poor. It can become a prophet for hire. It can become a judge for reward. It can become a priest teaching for hire. It can become religious merchandise in the temple. It can become false testimony paid to bury the truth. It can become a bribe offered to pervert justice. It can become silver paid for betrayal. It can become a religious man thinking the gift of God may be purchased with money. The love of money is not merely a bad attitude. It is a root, and that root feeds many branches of evil.

We saw Naboth refuse to sell his inheritance because the LORD forbade it. That account taught us that some things must not be for sale. Ahab's offer sounded reasonable. He offered another vineyard or the worth of it in money. But Naboth understood that the issue was not market value. It was inheritance and obedience. That is a powerful lesson for the believer. The world will always offer money, convenience, promotion, approval, or opportunity in exchange for something God told you to keep. The answer must be settled before the offer comes. Some things are not for sale: the truth, the gospel, the Bible, the conscience, the family, the calling, the testimony, the convictions, and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We saw Delilah sell access to Samson's secret. That account taught us that money often works through relationships, pressure, flattery, and emotional manipulation. The enemy could not defeat Samson directly, so he paid someone close enough to ask dangerous questions. That is a warning to guard the heart. Not everyone who asks for access loves the Lord. Not everyone who pressures your boundaries is wounded. Some are working for another interest, another spirit, another agenda. Delilah's betrayal was not romance. It was merchandising. She turned intimacy into a transaction and Samson's guarded secret into a product.

We saw Judas stand as one of the darkest warnings in the whole Bible. Judas was near Christ, near the apostles, near the miracles, near the preaching, and near the work of God, but his heart still loved the bag. The thirty pieces of silver did not create Judas; they

exposed Judas. That is terrifying. A man can be close to holy things and still be lost. A man can handle ministry matters and still be a thief. A man can speak religiously and still be covetous. A man can appear to care for the poor while really caring for the bag. Judas proves that outward proximity to truth is not the same as inward possession of Christ.

We saw the chief priests and elders give **large money** to the soldiers to lie about the resurrection. That lesson was tremendous. When the religious crowd could not stop the truth, they funded a false narrative. The lie that the disciples stole the body was not reasonable. If the soldiers were asleep, they could not know who took the body. If they were awake, they failed to stop it. Yet the lie spread because it was paid for and protected. That still happens. Some lies survive not because they are strong, but because they are funded. Money can buy testimony, silence, narratives, and institutional cover-ups, but it cannot change the truth. Christ was risen before the bribe was ever paid.

We saw Christ overthrow the tables of the money changers in the temple. That scene demolished the weak, syrupy caricature of Jesus Christ sold by modern religious marketing. He made a scourge of small cords. He drove them out. He poured out the changers' money. He overthrew the tables. He said, **“make not my Father's house an house of merchandise”** (John 2:16, KJV). That teaches us that not everything attached to religion is ministry. Worship can be merchandised. Guilt can be merchandised. Prayer can be merchandised. Healing can be merchandised. Spiritual hunger can be merchandised. The Lord did not reform those tables. He overturned them.

We saw Simon the sorcerer offer money for spiritual power. Peter's answer was one of the strongest rebukes in Acts: **“Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money”** (Acts 8:20, KJV). Simon wanted the power without the heart, the authority without the holiness, the gift without the surrender, the appearance without the inward truth. That spirit is everywhere today. Men can buy platforms, cameras, degrees, robes, titles, mailing lists, buildings, and crowds. But they cannot buy the Holy Ghost. They cannot purchase the power of God. They cannot bribe their way into spiritual authority. The gift of God is not merchandise.

We saw Felix tremble under Paul's preaching about righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, yet still hope for money. That is a frightening picture: conviction in the conscience, truth in the room, and greed still on the throne. Felix delayed obedience and hoped for a bribe. He communed with Paul often, not because he wanted salvation, but because he hoped money would be given him. That teaches us that trembling is not repentance. Religious conversation is not conversion. Exposure to truth is not obedience. A man can feel conviction and still choose money, politics, convenience, and delay over righteousness.

So what do we do from here?

First, we must examine the heart. The question is not simply, “Do I have money?” The question is, “Does money have me?” Can God tell me what to do with it? Can He tell me to give it? Can He tell me to refuse it? Can He tell me to walk away from money that comes with sin attached to it? Can He tell me to lose income rather than compromise truth? Can He tell me to be generous when no one sees it? Can He tell me to be honest when dishonesty would profit me? Can He tell me to keep preaching the truth when support might drop? These are the questions that reveal whether money is a tool or a god.

Second, we must put money back under stewardship. Money should be earned honestly, handled faithfully, spent wisely, saved prudently, given generously, and refused courageously when necessary. It belongs under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It must not be allowed to command the conscience. It must not dictate doctrine. It must not rule the pulpit. It must not silence truth. It must not purchase compromise. It must not turn the poor into prey. It must not turn the house of God into merchandise. It must not make a man value gain above godliness.

Third, we must learn contentment. Paul said, “**But godliness with contentment is great gain**” (1 Timothy 6:6, KJV). That is the antidote to covetousness. Contentment does not mean laziness. It does not mean a man refuses to work, provide, build, or improve. It means his peace is not chained to increase. It means he can receive blessing without worshipping it and suffer lack without believing God has failed him. It means he brought nothing into this world and knows he can carry nothing out. It means the living God is more secure than uncertain riches.

Fourth, we must refuse to sell what God told us to keep. Naboth’s words should stay with us: “**The LORD forbid it me.**” Every believer needs that sentence ready. When the world offers money for conviction, “The LORD forbid it me.” When the religious system offers approval for silence, “The LORD forbid it me.” When the devil offers opportunity for compromise, “The LORD forbid it me.” When mammon offers comfort in exchange for obedience, “The LORD forbid it me.” The believer must decide now that the truth is not for sale.

Fifth, we must remember we have already been bought. The believer is not his own. “**For ye are bought with a price**” (1 Corinthians 6:20, KJV). That price was not silver or gold. It was the blood of Jesus Christ. If Christ has bought the believer, then mammon has no legal claim to own him. The devil may make offers, but he is trying to buy something that already belongs to another. The saved man’s body, mind, conscience, calling, family, testimony,

and future belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. Money may be used, but it may not rule what Christ has purchased.

Finally, this series should leave us sober but not fearful. God is not calling believers to panic over money. He is calling them to keep it in its place. Use it. Steward it. Give it. Save it. Spend it wisely. Provide with it. Help with it. Support righteous work with it. But never love it. Never serve it. Never trust it as God. Never let it become the voice that decides obedience. Never let it sit in the throne of the heart.

The love of money ends in piercing sorrow. The love of Christ ends in life, freedom, and eternal reward. That is the final contrast. Judas had silver and ended in despair. Felix had authority and hoped for a bribe while judgment waited. Simon had ambition and money but no right heart before God. The soldiers had large money and a lie. The money changers had tables until Christ overthrew them. But the believer has something better than all of that. He has Christ. He has the Book. He has the blood. He has eternal life. He has a Father who knows his needs before he asks.

So the final charge is simple: **let money serve, but never let it reign. Let Christ reign.**



THE LOVE OF MONEY

A 15-PART KJV BIBLE STUDY SERIES

EXPOSING THE TRUTH. CORRECTING FALSE TEACHINGS. EXALTING CHRIST ALONE.



#	STUDY TITLE	SCRIPTURE	KEY VERSE (KJV)	MAIN THEME	WARNING / TRUTH	CHRISTIAN APPLICATION
1	Money Is a Tool, Not a God	1 Tim. 6:10 Eccl. 5:10	"For the love of money is the root of all evil..."	Money is neutral. The love of it is the problem.	Money becomes an idol when it rules the heart.	Use money. Don't worship it. Keep God on the throne.
2	When Money Fails: Egypt & Canaan	Gen. 47:13-15,31 Gen. 42:35	"And the money failed in all the land of Egypt..."	Money has limits. Only God sustains life.	Trusting money leads to fear, bondage, and loss.	Trust God, not your bank account or possessions.
3	Bought With Money: Service & Ownership	Ex. 21:2-6 1 Cor. 6:20	"For ye are bought with a price..."	People can be bought. Believers are bought by Christ.	You are not your own. You belong to Christ.	Live as one redeemed and purchased by the blood.
4	Usury & The Grinding of the Poor	Ex. 22:24 Ezek. 18:13	"Thou shalt not lend upon usury..."	God hates financial oppression.	Usury exploits the weak and invites judgment.	Be just, fair, and merciful in all your dealings.
5	Redemption Money & The Limits of Silver	Ex. 30:12-16 1 Pet. 1:18-19	"Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things..."	Money had a place under the law, not for salvation.	No sinner can be redeemed by silver or gold.	Redemption is by the precious blood of Christ alone.
6	Money in the House of God	Ezra 3:10-13 1 Chron. 29:6-9	"They gave money in great abundance..."	Money can be used faithfully for God's work.	Misused money in ministry brings reproach.	Give cheerfully and handle God's money with integrity.
7	The Prophet for Hire: Micah 3:11	Micah 3:11	"Her judges judge for reward, and her priests teach for hire..."	Religious leaders can sell truth for money.	Covetous leaders destroy the soul of a nation.	Follow God-called men who preach truth, not profit.
8	Naboth's Vineyard & The Price of Covetousness	1 Kings 21	"Wilt thou sell me thy vineyard? ...Or I will give thee money for it..."	Covetousness leads to lies, murder, and judgment.	When money is desired, conscience is silenced.	Some things are not for sale. "LORD forbid it me."
9	Delilah's Price: Betrayal for Silver	Judges 16:5 Judges 16:18	"Then she pressed him daily with her words, so that his soul was vexed unto death..."	Money can corrupt relationships and trust.	Flattery + pressure + money = destruction.	Guard your heart and your secrets. Trust the LORD.
10	Judas & The Price of Betrayal	Matt. 26:14-15 Matt. 27:3-5	"That ye will give me whatsoever I shall give him. And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver..."	The love of money can turn a disciple into a traitor.	No amount of money can cleanse a guilty soul.	Keep your heart from covetousness. Serve Christ, not the bag.
11	Large Money Unto the Soldiers	Matt. 28:11-15	"When they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers..."	Money is used to spread lies and protect agendas.	Some lies survive because they are funded.	Stand for the truth even when the system buys the lie.
12	The Changers of Money Sitting in the Temple	John 2:13-16	"Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise..."	When worship becomes commerce, Christ overturns it.	Turning God's house into a marketplace is sin.	Keep worship pure. Not for sale.
13	Simon the Sorcerer & The Gift That Cannot Be Purchased	Acts 8:18-20	"Thy money perish with thee; because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money..."	Spiritual gifts and power cannot be bought.	You cannot buy the Holy Ghost or spiritual authority.	Seek the gift, not for power, but for purity and God's glory.
14	Felix, the Bribe, and the Sale of Justice	Acts 24:24-26	"And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ Jesus. And because he expected a bribe, he was courteous unto him, and he longed that Paul should be given him of Paul; so he sent officers to fetch him." (Acts 24:26)	Conviction without repentance leads to corruption.	A man can tremble under truth and still love the bribe.	Don't delay obedience. Don't hope to bribe God or men.
15	The Root of All Evil	1 Tim. 6:10	"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows..."	The love of money leads to apostasy, sorrow, and eternal loss.	Covetousness pierces the soul with sorrows.	Use it. Steward it. Give it. But never love it.

MONEY CAN BE USED FOR:



THE LOVE OF MONEY LEADS TO:



APPLICATION: WHAT SHOULD WE DO?



KEY TRUTH



Money is a servant. The love of money is a master.

KEY VERSE



"For the love of money is the root of all evil..." 1 Timothy 6:10

WHAT IS NOT TAUGHT



- Money is not evil in itself.
- God's work does not run on sin.
- Prosperity is not a promise.
- Poverty is not holiness.
- Handling money is not the same as loving it.

THE DANGER

The love of money corrupts the heart, buys compromise, perverts justice, and destroys the soul.

THE SOLUTION

Love God. Trust His Word. Steward His provision. Serve His purpose. Seek righteousness, not riches.

YOU CAN USE MONEY WITHOUT LOVING IT. BUT YOU CANNOT LOVE MONEY WITHOUT BEING USED BY IT.

VerseQuest Ministries