

The Heart-Money Connection

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We are looking at Randy Alcorn's book, The Treasure Principle.

Last week we looked at Key #1: God owns everything.

Matthew 6:20-21 NIVO

²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.

²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.



Key #2: My heart always goes where I put God's money.

Jesus is saying: Show me your money statement and your credit card statements and I will show you where your heart is. What we do with our money, according to Jesus, doesn't just indicate where our hearts are, it *determines* where our hearts go.

1. My heart always follows my money.

Just as a compass needle always points to North, our hearts always points to our use of money.

If you invest in a particular company, suddenly you take interest in that company. You want to know how they are doing.

If you purchase materials to participate in a hobby, suddenly your heart focuses on that hobby.

If you send money to help a group of people in a crisis in another world, your heart focuses on that group of people.

Jesus said,

²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

It is a spiritual and a natural condition of the human heart to be connected to our use of money.

2. If I want my heart somewhere, all I have to do is put my money there.

If you want more of a heart for missions, then all you have to do is start putting your money toward missions.

God is not interested in dispassionate philanthropists, who give because they have a lot of money but do not love those to whom they give.

Giving out of Financial Planning

Dave Ramsey in his Financial Peace University teaches you to grow your wealth so you have money to help others. He teaches how to get out of debt. Then he teaches you how to store up wealth by not making bad decisions with money. He says the purpose of this plan is so you will have wealth to help others. If God allows you to follow this path, that is wonderful.

Giving out of dependence on God

You may not be able to live in financial success on earth. You may have a crisis that erodes all of your holdings, savings, etc. Many people are broken financially by medical bills or family crisis that eats up all savings. You may find yourself living day to day on the daily provision which God sends your way. You may never have a stash of wealth by which to give.

This seems to be the nature of life as Jesus lived it and how He taught his disciples. When he taught them to pray,

“Give us this day our daily bread,”

He was not indicating a security that would provide for the long term. Learning to give thanks for daily bread is difficult in a land of bountiful food, with fast food chains on every street.

America is a land of bounty, with food and material goods flowing into our country from all over the world. We are a consumer generation. We live to consume. We think of life as consuming, getting, enjoying, having our full of pleasurable things.

Yet the disciples did not know any such life. They lived mostly on the provisions which people made available to them as they took the message of Jesus into their world.

If you cannot live in a security of having wealth, you can still live in a dependency on God for life. Some will say, that being dependent on God is a better spiritual state. It is then you see God’s hand at work, not just your hand of achievement.

3. If I want to start giving, I must stop listening to the lie that I’m too poor to give.

God never asked us to do comparative thinking – that is, to compare our wealth to the wealth of someone else. Yet, we are fooled sometimes by a false idea, that we had more money, like others, then we could be free to give more. It is a lie, and it will never free you to give.

If you will not give, whether rich or poor, you will not give. It is not the money that is holding you back, but a lie you allow to justify your heart’s longing for the stuff of this world.

Greed is not just for the rich

Greed is not a condition of the wealthy any more than it is of those who have less. Often those who have less, hold onto more because they envy those who have more. Notice that even among the poorest people, they have satellite dishes on their roofs and their kids all have a cell phone. Those items require expensive monthly bills.

Robert Kiyosaki in his book, Rich Dad, Poor Dad, says greed is what keeps the poor in poverty. The poor are often too focused on spending what they earn, whereas the wealthy often refuse to spend their earnings on things they don't need. Greed has nothing to do with wealth. It is an issue of the heart that is tied directly to what people do with money.

Freddie Fischer Estate

Those of us who sit on the Cuero Education Foundation greatly appreciate Freddie Fischer. Freddie owned a dry cleaning service. He lived alone, and did not do much in his life except work and maybe go to church. When he died, he had managed to store up a sizeable estate. He gave all of it to the Education Foundation to the tune of \$3 million to be used exclusively to provide scholarships to students. What would you do with three million dollars? That really isn't even the best question. What will you do with all of the dollars that pass through your hands that could become a large amount some day that could be used? The heart always follows the money.

Being poor does not stop you from giving. Jesus commended the poor widow for giving two pennies. It was all she had. Jesus said it was a greater gift than all of the tithes of the wealthy, who still had great wealth remaining, after they gave their tithes. Mark 12:42-44

Hear what Paul says about the poor Macedonian churches.

2 Corinthians 8:1 NIVO

And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches.

² Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity.

³ For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own,

⁴ they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints.

In many places in the world people are poor. They do not have access to wealth, to investment portfolios, retirement funds, or anything like it. Yet, when you visit them, they go out of their way to treat you well to show you love.

What have we learned?

We have learned that God owns everything.

We have learned that our hearts always follow what we do with money.

Eye on eternity

If we want to live with an eye on eternity, then we will be free to give toward spiritual causes, because we know we can lay up treasures in heaven. Then, as we get closer and closer toward eternity, drawing near to death, we are not bothered at leaving our earthly goods, because our heart is focused on our eternal dwelling.

However, if we have spent our lives living for the stuff of this world, we may find it hard to make that separation.

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