



**Worship – Part 32**  
**Acts of Worship – Part 20**  
**Worshipping God with Our Treasure – Part 4**  
**GCSP – 01/05/2008**

Who in here could raise their hand as a testimony to the fact that you have been, and are currently blessed by God? Do you really believe that?

We are indeed truly blessed. Apart from God's plan, God's purpose, and God's providence, you and I could have been born in Kenya, or Siberia, or Nepal, or India, or Iraq, or any other place in this world where our choices and opportunities would be severely limited compared to what we have here. You could have been born in a country where owning a home or a vehicle is virtually impossible. You could have been born where there is no prospect of earning a decent living. You could have been born in a place that has yet to be penetrated with the gospel message of Jesus Christ, or a place where it is illegal to have a copy of the Bible.

We live in a country where we complain when run out of milk and have to spend an hour driving back and forth from the store to get another gallon; while most of the world does not have access to milk. We live in a country where we are sometimes disappointed that we only have 25 choices of what to eat when we open our cupboard or refrigerator; while most of the world has to work hard to find anything for their next meal. We live in a country where we are angry with the IREA when our power goes out for a few hours; while most of the world has no electricity or running water.

We are indeed truly blessed. But at the same time there are some very real dangers to living in a country that has been given so much; and that danger starts with a lack of true understanding as to where all of this blessing comes from.

Turn with me in your Bibles to **Deuteronomy 8**.

**Deuteronomy 8:11-18**

Let's pray.

The Lord is the One who gives us the power and ability to earn money. He strongly warns us to never make the mistake of thinking it is in our own strength and ability. And if you want to take things a step further, in **Haggai 2:8**, God says, "**The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine**" – meaning that we cannot even claim possession of any of the wealth we do have; it's not ours to possess.

God wants us to understand one very simple but important principle: We are to depend upon Him and Him only for all of our needs. The trap we all too often fall into is leaning on and depending on our money, our possessions, and our ability to earn and make money. We lose sight of the fact that it is all God's and all His doing.

Turn with me in your Bibles to **Proverbs 8**.

**Proverbs 8:20-21**

God desires to endow you with wealth and to fill your treasuries, but you have to be prepared for it and you have to have the right understanding and attitude about it.

I will talk about the preparation part in just a moment, but this is a good spot to briefly review what was covered last week; having the proper understanding and attitude toward wealth and possessions.

I spent the better part of the last two sermons in this series on **1 Timothy 6:6-11a**. Hold your place in **Proverbs 8** and turn with me in your Bibles again to **1 Timothy 6**.

### **1 Timothy 6:6-11a**

Contentment is the key to having a proper understanding and attitude toward money and possessions. If you learn to be content with what you already have you will never have a problem with money and possessions.

And if you are content with what God has chosen to give you, you will not fall as God has guaranteed for those who desire to get rich.

You won't fall into **temptation**. He doesn't give us the specifics of what kinds of temptation because it is different for each of us. I gave us just a few possibilities of the types of temptations that are common to those who are seeking riches.

You may be tempted to gamble; and while there is not a specific verse I can point you to that simply says, "Thou shalt not gamble." But I did give you a few biblical problems with gambling last time.

- Gambling is a very poor use of the money God has entrusted to your care. You have to remember that God owns the money we have and we are only the stewards or managers of that money. If you worked at a company and were in charge of managing the company's funds, how long would you have that job if you took the company funds to a casino?
- Gambling supports an industry that is involved with or closely connected with countless other abominations of God's Word.
- Gambling can reveal an utter lack of faith in God's provision for you. You are not content with God's provision or you do not trust that He will provide as you see fit.
- Gambling will damage or destroy your testimony with the vast majority of unbelievers.

A second temptation you may face when seeking riches is to loosen the reins on your integrity. You may cheat on your taxes or take advantage of innocent mistakes in your favor. You may become prone to lying when there is a financial advantage to do so.

And a third temptation you may fall to is ignoring God's wisdom in your career. You may take a job that would cause you to neglect your family or would fill your schedule so tightly that you have no time for church or for the study of God's Word.

And while the specific temptation that would accomplish its work on you may not be included in the three we briefly looked at, God's Word says you will fall to temptation if you pursue riches; it's an iron-clad guarantee.

Paul then adds you will fall into **a snare** or a trap. And I spoke about how that trap will have a lasting and damaging affect on your life.

Another guarantee for those who desire riches is your attitudes and your mind and your heart will be polluted and diseased. Your appetite for the things of this world will increase and your appetite for the things of God will be diminished and eventually completely crowded out. Like the drug addict or like the wildlife up here that gets a hold of loco weed, you will no longer desire what is good until it eventually destroys you.

And the end of all of this disastrous pursuit of wealth Paul concludes by saying you will sink into the depths of utter blackness. The desire for riches will eventually drown you in its deceitfulness. And beloved let me stress one more time, this is not a possibility or something that might happen, this is a promise of God's Word.

But we also talked about the fact that Jesus wants us to accumulate riches according to **Matthew 6**. He commands us to store up treasure in heaven. The principle is that we cannot take any of our earthly wealth with us when we die but we can send it on ahead of us. And we do that by obeying His commands and His directives in the care and use of whatever measure of earthly wealth we do have – and I will eventually get around to showing you how God expects you to use your money.

Go back to **Proverbs 8** and we will look at what we must do to be prepared for the endowment of wealth and the filling of our treasuries as Solomon puts it.

Now be careful here. This is not a magic formula or a step-by-step program to riches. If your attitude is wrong; if your thought process is to do what I am about to tell for the sole purpose of becoming wealthy, then you will have missed the point completely – and you will become the person Paul talked about in **1 Timothy 6** and you will fall.

### **Proverbs 8:12-21**

This passage begins with identifying the speaker: “**I wisdom...**” So who is wisdom? Solomon speaks through this person called wisdom throughout the Book of Proverbs. There are many clues and we could spend a lot of time doing the biblical research, but let me just direct you to **verse 13** for the biggest clue: He begins that verse with, “**The fear of the Lord...**” and then as the passage continues you will find that wisdom and the Lord are interchangeable.

So although Solomon uses the term wisdom, and sometimes he refers to wisdom as “she,” he is speaking about the Lord, because God is wisdom. We always hear the phrase, God is love, but God is also so many other things, including wisdom. His character and essence embody these traits to such a degree that we can easily and accurately call Him by these names. So let’s quickly work through these verses with this in mind.

### **v. 13**

We prepare our hearts and minds for God’s blessing by hating **evil, pride, arrogance,** and the **perverted mouth**. I would probably be correct in guessing that every one of us in here would at least give lip service to hating these things, but all of us had better take a closer look inside. If you truly hate something you are going to strongly avoid participating in the activity. We may say we hate evil but we watch evil programs or read evil books, etc. We may say we hate pride but we lose the battle against being prideful on a daily basis. We may say we hate arrogance but we make judgments about the people we meet just because of the clothes they wear or the color of their skin. We may say we hate the perverted mouth but we listen in when a co-worker is telling a dirty joke. You get the point.

### **v. 14**

When we need **counsel** we must go to the Lord. When we need **wisdom** we must go to the Lord. When we need **understanding** we must go to the Lord. When we need **power** we must go to the Lord; for He is all of these things. Yet typically our first response when we are lacking in counsel and wisdom and understanding and power is to seek these things in ourselves and then in the world. If we want to prepare our hearts and minds for the blessings of God we must always go to Him first. God is not our last resort He is instead our first and only true resource.

### **v. 15-16**

Leadership (**reign**) and **justice** come from the Lord. Do we depend on the latest trends and corporate fads to teach us leadership or do we depend on the Lord? Do we take our own form of vigilante justice when we have been offended or harmed or do we seek the Lord to defend us? Preparing our hearts and minds for God’s blessings demand that we lean on Him for our leadership skills and sense of justice.

### **v. 17**

We must **love** God and we must **diligently seek** Him. And even though it is obviously impossible for us to do, the implication is to love God with the same love He has for us. We must love Him so much that everything we do, say, and think, is in accordance with His Word. We must love Him so much that we willingly yield our will and our desires to His, in utter and complete submission.

We must diligently seek Him; which means we tenaciously pursue God. We show the persistence of a bulldog. Most breeds of bulldog have the IQ of a box of rocks but they persistently pursue whatever they are after; they never give up. Most Christians throw up a quick selfish prayer to the Lord and if the answer doesn't come before we say "Amen" we move on to other man-made solutions. Diligently seek Him and don't give up until you find Him if you truly desire to prepare your hearts and minds for His blessing.

### **v. 18**

He is the source for **riches** and **enduring wealth**, but notice He adds the qualities of **honor** and **righteousness** to the mix. We cannot separate one from the other. Do you pursue righteousness and are you honorable in all of your dealings? Riches and enduring wealth will not be yours apart from righteousness and honor.

Yes, there are people who are unrighteous and less than honorable who possess great riches, but these people have also fallen to the temptation and traps that Paul spoke of in 1 Timothy 6. We are not pursuing riches at that cost. As I said last week, if you choose to pursue riches you may very well obtain riches, but the cost is great.

### **v. 19**

Uh-oh! Something has changed here. We got a hint in the last verse when it mentioned "**enduring wealth**" but now it is much clearer. At least in part, the Lord is speaking of something other than material riches. He is speaking of a wealth that cannot be measured in dollars and cents, or in land and possessions, or in investments and precious metals; no, this is something of far greater value. This is the enduring wealth that Jesus spoke of when He told us to not store up our treasures on earth but to store them in heaven. This is the fruit of good works and the yield of obedience to God's Word.

And this also takes us full circle back to what I have preaching about for the last three sermons; your attitude about money and possessions. Will you be content with what you have and will you be content with riches in heaven even if it means poverty on earth? God is not calling you to a vow of poverty by any stretch of the imagination. This passage is abundantly clear that part of His blessing involves material wealth, but it is also abundantly clear that a more important part of His blessing is enduring wealth; riches that last beyond our life here on earth.

### **v. 20-21**

Here He repeats the qualities of **righteousness**, **justice** and **love**. And we all know what it means when God repeats Himself; stand up and take extra special notice to what He is saying because this is something He knows you struggle with.

So let me ask the question; is it wrong to have money? Of course not, it is just wrong to love money and it wrong to have an unhealthy attitude about it. Money is a gift from God. Unfortunately, as with every other gift from God, this world has perverted the use of His gifts. And even more unfortunately, the church has by and large followed the lead of the world in how we use, or more accurately, abuse, this gift.

So it is not wrong to have money, and to show you the truth of this statement, let me show you four principles that God gives us to increase the amount of money we have at our disposal.

## Work

The Bible teaches a strong work ethic all throughout its pages, but let's just look at one verse tonight. Turn with me in your Bibles to **Proverbs 14**.

### **Proverbs 14:23**

Work brings profit; idle talk brings poverty. Pretty simple. If you refuse to work you should expect poverty.

You don't have to turn here for sake of time, but **Ephesians 4:28** says, "**He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need.**"

**Ephesians 6:7** and **Colossians 3:23** tell us that our attitude toward work should be as if we were working for the Lord and not for men.

Turn with in your Bibles back to the Book of **Proverbs**.

### **Proverbs 28:19-20**

You should work if you desire to increase your money. Don't be hasty by falling for a get-rich-quick scheme, and don't look for shortcuts like lottery tickets – we've already talked about gambling and the lottery is just another form of gambling, regardless of what they say some of the money goes towards.

There will obviously be times when you are physically unable to work or when it is difficult to find work, but if your heart and attitude about work is in line with God's Word, He will provide for you. If you simply choose to not work, then you need to read **Proverbs 6:6-11**; **Proverbs 20:4**; and **1 Timothy 5:8**; all of which condemn laziness and basically say if you don't work, you don't eat.

So if you desire to increase your available money, work. The second biblical principle is to save.

## Save

Turn with me in your Bibles to **Proverbs 21**.

### **Proverbs 21:20**

The second half of this verse describes the majority of Americans today – we are consumers. We consume everything we get and then some. We buy things to consume on credit and then have to work to pay for what we have already consumed. The wise save a portion of what they earn so that there is "**treasure and oil**" in their household; meaning they have a surplus available for the lean times.

A third principle for increasing your money is to plan.

## Plan

Turn with me in your Bibles to **Proverbs 30**.

### **Proverbs 30:24-25**

Ants think winter all summer. They plan for the times that may not be as abundant as the present. You can't think summer all summer; you need to plan for winter. Many people who live up here have fireplaces or wood stoves to heat their homes. The middle of winter is not the time to go walking through the mountains looking for wood; that's a summertime activity. You can also read **Proverbs 27:23-24** on this issue of planning.

So work, save, and plan. The last principle is be wise in dealing with other people who desire to see you part with your money. In other words, protect what you have from foolish pursuits. We're running out of time, but **Proverbs 6:1-5** speaks of the danger of co-signing a loan, especially for someone you do not know very well.

So what if you are short of money? Let me close with four questions to ask yourself when you are in this predicament.

First, do I really need it? Am I short on money because of something I want or something I need?

Secondly, is God testing my trust? Have I been putting my trust in riches and so the Lord has diminished those to remind me that my trust is to be in Him?

Thirdly, did I misuse what He gave me? Have I failed in the aspects of working, saving, planning, and protecting what He has already blessed me with?

And fourthly, have I violated a biblical principle in my life? Is there unconfessed sin in my life in regards to money and possessions?

**Proverbs 11:24** tells us that being stingy will lead to poverty. **Proverbs 21:5** tells us hastiness will lead to poverty. **Proverbs 13:18** tells us that stubbornness will lead to poverty. **Proverbs 20:13** tells us that laziness will lead to poverty. **Proverbs 23:21** tells us that indulgence will lead to poverty.

So if you have been stingy, hasty, stubborn, lazy, or indulgent when it comes to money you have sinned and that could be why you are short of money.

Well I trust the Lord has revealed some things to you tonight.

Let's pray.