

LESSON 12



THE CHRISTIAN'S USE OF MONEY AND GOODS

Scripture Texts: *Mark 10:29-30; 1 Timothy 6:17-19; Philippians 4:11-13; Matthew 7:12; 1 Timothy 5:8*

Our lesson today has to do with the stewardship of the money and goods which God has entrusted into our care. Our last lesson had to do with the acquiring under the guidance of God's Spirit. Today's lesson deals with the using, under the guidance of God's Spirit, of what we have acquired.

MEMORY VERSE: *"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."*

Matthew 6:33

The Divine Exchange

The Christian life is not all taking from God's hand to ours. It is also giving up for His sake, from our hand to others. The heart where Christ dwells prefers Him above comfort, ease, or satisfaction of appetite. If, in surrendering these, one keeps trust anchored in God, He will provide substitutes more precious than those lost. In Mark 10:29-30 He promises the use of plenty of the necessary goods here in this life and in the world to come eternal life. Even though with persecutions, who can say the exchange is not profitable?

The Riches of God's Grace

In 1 Timothy 6:8 we are told to be content with having food and raiment. This is a very important lesson for all people to learn. The fact that our friends and neighbors purchase many things that we cannot afford should not affect our contentment with what we are blessed with. Trying to keep up with the Joneses, so to speak, has led to the ruin of many good, Christian financial situations.

If young people have learned, to some extent, to budget their income before they are married, they will have much less difficulty living within a budgeted income after they are married. Plan a workable budget and live within these means. There is no way for us to know how many people have been led to a bankrupt condition because they allowed greed to cause them to be dissatisfied with their situation. They continued to ask for loans that they did not need, and that they never could expect to repay. This is spoken about in Hebrews 13:5. This tight financial position causes people to tighten up, and many times to stop altogether in their giving to the Christian cause. They rob God. What greater sin can man commit than this? This brings spiritual bankruptcy. First John 3:17 makes this truth clear. **THINK TWICE BEFORE YOU USE THAT CREDIT CARD!**

When people are willing to invest wisely into heavenly business, God will help them to invest wisely into earthly business. If an individual will seek God's wisdom in all financial matters, God will help him to meet those obligations. When a Christian cannot meet an obligation at the time it is due, he will never shun it, but he will meet

the creditor and give him a square, honest explanation of his plan to pay.

When we have godly contentment, there will rarely be a need for both husband and wife to find outside employment to supply material needs.

Christian Responsibility for the Use of Goods

Psalm 24:1 gives us the true basis of stewardship. The Lord owns ALL—ourselves and all creation. We own nothing. We only hold some in trust for the Owner, God. We must give account for our use of it. In Isaiah 55:2 we are warned not to spend money for that which is not bread. This simply tells us not to be wasteful. Spend to provide for the needs of your family. In 1 Timothy 5:8 we are told of those who waste that which God has provided. Some money must be used for self, but none must be used selfishly.

Contributions

In these days many calls for contributions reach us. Shall we give? withhold? investigate? Many times a simple investigation will plainly show them to be unworthy of our financial support in the least.

To what type of cause ought we give? Not give? Will we not be responsible for the money we give to agencies who do not regard the teachings of God's Word? How about the Community Fund or the United Appeal? Do not many of the agencies which they support work against God's true cause? Check them out.

Christians need only to be shown a worthy need, and they will desire to supply it.

JUST A THOUGHT

**When you get the daily bread you have been praying for,
do not grumble because it is not cake.**