

STEWARDSHIP OF MATERIAL WEALTH

SCRIPTURES: Genesis 39
 Luke 16:1-13; 12:13-15
 Deuteronomy 6:10-15
 1 Timothy 6:9, 10
 Ephesians 4:28
 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2
 Matthew 6:19-34—Do an Inductive Study. Make a chart in two columns, comparing “God” and “Mammon”. Watch for repetition.

MEMORIZE: Matthew 6:31-33

“Money is the root of all evil.” Right? Wrong! It is the “love of money” that lies at the root of every kind of evil imaginable. Money, wealth and material possessions are not, in themselves, wrong. It is how we view them; what we would do to gain or keep them. It is not the amount you have, but your attitude toward it. It is not wrong for a Christian to be wealthy nor is it a virtue to be poor. In fact, some poor people are more materialistic than some wealthy people.

Living in a prosperous culture can be dangerous to your spiritual health. There is a general pattern that follows God’s people: as the gospel brings people to Christ, their new lifestyle results in greater prosperity. As His people prosper, they begin to trust in their wealth and become distracted by the pleasures around them. The next generation then departs from the faith.

Everything belongs to God. We are only stewards of what He has entrusted to us and we must give an account of our stewardship to Him.

1. Compare the stewardship of Joseph (Genesis 39) with the unjust steward (Luke 16:1-13) in reference to material wealth.

WARNINGS ABOUT MATERIALISM

2. What are the two tendencies that follow material prosperity among God’s people? Deuteronomy 6:10-15

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3. Why do you suppose this generally happens?

4. What sin does Jesus condemn in Luke 12:13-15?

5. What was wrong in the man's evaluation of life? Luke 12:13-15

6. How do we measure importance in our culture?

7. How does the advertising world use the principle that Jesus condemned?
Luke 12:15

8. How would Jesus respond to modern advertising?

9. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you grade yourself regarding materialism and consumerism? (One represents a high resistance to consumerism and a low appeal for materialism. Ten means a low resistance to advertising and fads and a high appeal for materialism.) Write a few sentences stating how and why you graded yourself as you did. List any items toward which you have a materialistic attitude.

10. Why is it dangerous to want to be rich? 1 Timothy 6:9, 10

COMPARISONS

11. Review inductive study of Matthew 6:19-34 with your teachers.
12. What is God's cure for anxiety? Matthew 6:19-34
13. Why did Christ use the illustrations of the birds and the lilies?
14. When we waste time and find ourselves under a great deal of pressure, what is the thing we usually sacrifice first?
15. If we were genuinely spiritual, what would we do? Matthew 6:33
16. Why is worry about tomorrow foolish? Matthew 6:34
17. Is it wrong to think ahead or make plans?

GOOD STEWARDSHIP

18. What is God's cure for materialism? Matthew 6:21. What does He mean?
19. How might we be sure that our treasure is in heaven? Matthew 6:21;
Luke 16:9

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20. Paul was collecting funds from the Gentile churches to relieve the destitute saints in Jerusalem. State three principles that apply when we give to relieve other Christians in poverty. 2 Corinthians 9:6-8

21. What is our obligation to those who minister to us spiritually?
1 Corinthians 9:3-14

22. Interpret Philippians 4:19 in its context (Philippians 4:13-19). What areas of obligation do we have here?

23. Why are we to work diligently to make a living? Ephesians 4:28

24. One of the spiritual gifts is the gift of giving—Romans 12:8. Why doesn't God make us all wealthy so we can give generously?

25. How are we as Christians to give to the Lord's work?
1 Corinthians 16:1, 2

26. What is the New Testament attitude toward the stewardship of wealth?

27. When it comes to stewardship of material wealth, what is our responsibility toward ecology? Genesis 1:28

28. Make a commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ in this area of stewardship of material wealth. Be honest with yourself and your teacher. Write it out, date it and sign it.