

Love Of Money Brings Dangers

By Paul Jetter, Pastor of Upper Valley Community Church, Piqua, Ohio
<http://www.uvcc.info>



Many of the Old Testament figures were rich and powerful. Abraham assembled an awesome entourage of servants and animals. Joseph became second only to Pharaoh of Egypt. Moses was raised as a prince. Daniel was second only to the King of Persia.

The last chapter in the Book of Proverbs praises a lady who is a loving, successful business lady. The New Testament teaches that we should be industrious and save up a part of our wealth so we can be generous.

Jesus had many wealthy friends — friends who invited him to fancy banquets and loaned him an expensive tomb for his burial. St. Paul often sought out powerful and wealthy persons when he entered a new city to share the news of Jesus Christ.

However, while wealth and capitalism are not condemned in the Bible, Jesus was quick to warn of the dangers the love of money can bring. One of his best-known teachings on investing and money is found in a parable that he told about three servants. Their master, who was planning to be away for a prolonged time, called them together and gave each of them some money to manage (Matthew 25:14-30).

When the lord returned, he called in the three servants. The first two had both invested their portion of the money and it had doubled. The third had been afraid to take a risk. Instead he had hidden his share in the ground, and returned it to the lord intact.

The lord complimented the first two servants, but condemned the last one. "You should have at least put my money in the bank and drawn interest," he told him. "Because you refused to be wise with what I entrusted to you, I will take everything from you."

While this parable, as well as the other basic teachings of the Bible concerning earthly possessions, encourages us to be wise and industrious, it has a deeper meaning. The main teaching of the Bible concerning wealth is that it really isn't ours — it's God's. We will take none of it with us.

If God owns it all, what are we doing with it? We are God's managers. The Bible teaches that we are to use our money for our families, to help others, to supply our needs, and to realize some of our dreams.

However, the Bible also teaches that we are to return back to God a part of our possessions. God calls it the tithe. It means that ten percent of what God entrusts to us is actually meant for his use, not ours. God's Word says that to give him less is to rob from him.

The Bible does not attempt to show if having wealth is good or evil. Instead, it teaches us that how we use money often demonstrates if we are good or evil.

Jesus' story of the three servants is a reminder that someday we will all stand before God and give an account of how we used the things he loaned to us in this life. If we have made him our Lord and have used his resources to help others, to advance God's causes on earth, which include righteousness and justice, we will hear, *"Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness"* (Matthew 25:23).