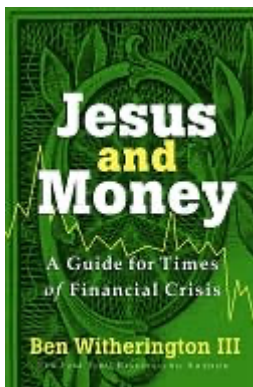
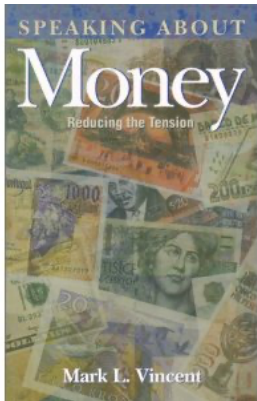


Faith Aflame: 360 Degrees

Living in God's Economy



Session Five – Part Two



“A steward,” writes Mark Vincent in *Speaking About Money*, “is a special kind of servant. She or he is trusted to take care of someone else’s assets. These assets can be property, equipment, wealth, or even people. Stewards are servants who treat their charges as if they were their own....Whatever we do, we give witness as to who we are” (pg 18-19).

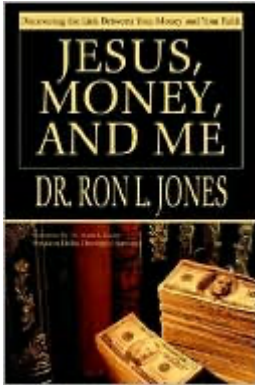
We are Christian stewards. As Christian stewards, our desire is to live as His children, to value what He values and to manage what He entrusts to us as He desires. To do this we look to His Word.

In *Jesus and Money*, Ben Witherington III references Sondra Wheeler’s summary of what the Old Testament says about wealth and abundance.

1. **Wealth as an occasion for idolatry** (Deut. 32:10-18; Is. 2:6-8; 3:16-24; Jer. 5:7; Ezek. 7:19-20; 16:15-22; Hos. 2:5-9; Amos 6:4-7).
2. **Wealth as the fruit of injustice** (Is. 3:14-15; 10:1-3; Micah 6:10-12; Jer. 5:27-28; Amos 2:6; 4:1-2).
3. **Wealth as a sign of faithfulness** (Lev. 26:3-10; Deut. 11:13-15; Is. 54:11-12; 60:9-16; Jer. 33:6-9).
4. **Wealth as the reward for hard labor** (Prov. 10-21).

Wheeler also summarizes the basic themes on wealth in the New Testament.

1. **Wealth as a stumbling block** (Luke 18:18-30).
2. **Wealth as a completing object of devotion** (Matt. 6:24; Luke 16:13; Matt. 6:19-21; Luke 12:31; Luke 12:15; Eph. 4:28; Col. 3:5-6).
3. **Wealth as a resource for human needs** (Rom. 15:25-27; Gal. 6:6; James 2:15-16; Acts 2; Acts 4; Matt. 5:42; Luke 6:30; Rom. 12:20).
4. **Wealth as a symptom of economic injustice** (Luke 1:51-53; 4:18-19; 6:21; 16:19-26; Rev. 17:3-4; 18:9-19; James 2:5; 4:1-2; 5:1-6).



Stewardship Fundamentals

- *God is the Owner.*
- *I am a steward.*
- *I am responsible and accountable.*



In *Jesus, Money and Me*, author Ron L. Jones writes, “God tests us with a very little thing called money to determine whether we are ready for bigger things; he also tests us with money to see whether he can trust us with something Jesus calls ‘true riches.’ Building on Luke 16:10, Jesus raises a question in verse 11: ‘If therefore you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous mammon, who will entrust the true riches to you?’” (pg 75).

Maybe it is time for some important reflection questions:

First, how much money did you make last year?

Second, what did you spend it on?

It was stated in part one that when it comes to the stewardship of money three things need to be considered.

The first is the importance of receiving it gratefully. How does the Christian steward receive money gratefully?

- Where does money come from?
- Are you an owner or steward of the money you have?
- How do you use money to further God's purposes?
 - Using it for God?
 - Using it for others?
 - Using it for ourselves?

The second is the importance of managing it faithfully. How does the Christian steward faithfully manage money?

- How much of the money entrusted to you should be given away?
- How much of the money entrusted to you should be spent on your own needs right now?
- How much of the money entrusted to you should be saved?
- How can the steward faithfully determine the difference between wants and needs?
- What resources are available to help you manage the money God has entrusted to you?

The third is the importance of sharing it generously. How does the Christian steward determine where and with whom to share money?

- How do you determine what “generous” is for you?
- How much should you share generously with the church you attend?
- Where else should you share generously?
 - For the sake of the Gospel...
 - For those who are of the household of faith...
 - For the poor and needy...
 - For special charities (cures for diseases, animal shelters, etc.)...