Wildly Generous

**Week 1: Want Wealth Rightly**

**Mike Colaw**

# Introduction

Pull your **next steps cards out** and pray that God would speak to you today.

**A Tale of Two Passions for Wealth**

I remember back in college I lifted weights with a business major. Over the span of a few years, we had a lot of life conversations. I remember one conversation where he told me, *“I want to be rich. Seriously, I want to be rich.”* Knowing I was a theology major, he added, *“I mean, I want to do good things too and help with Christian stuff.”*

As the conversation progressed, I realized he wanted me to pray for him to get wealthy. After talking with him, it hit me:

Some people want wealth and use the **potential of generosity** as a **bargaining method with God** to get it. Their **eyes are on opulence**.

Not long ago, I met with a very wealthy Christian investor and asked him about his wealth strategy. Imagine Shark Tank but with ministry endeavors. With great passion, he shared story after story of launching new ministries, sending and supporting missionaries, and even surprising individuals with blessings as God put them on his heart.

Let me give you some of his axioms. Some of these I’ve shortened, but the idea remains intact:

**There is a selfish discontent and a holy discontent. You must know the difference!**

**Most Christians need better wealth heroes. They are looking at the wrong people to model.**

**As fast as possible, I set my lifestyle limit to force my attention onto God’s Kingdom work.**

After a wonderful conversation, I realized something. After each of these axioms, he would drop another story of how he had helped a ministry. By the time we finished our conversation, it hit me:

Some people truly **want to participate in God’s work**. **Generosity is their tool, and Jesus is their treasure**. Their **eyes are on God’s work**.

# Lectio

**Luke 16:10-11 (ESV)**
*"One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?"*

# Meditatio

* **Money is a serious test:** In Jesus’ time, wealth was often viewed as a sign of God’s blessing. **Jesus, however, turns it into a serious test of character**.
	+ Many believed financial success demonstrated righteousness, but Jesus challenges this assumption, teaching that **wealth is a responsibility rather than a reward** (*Expositor’s Bible Commentary*).
	+ If God is allowing wealth to flow into your hands **it is a test** to see what your treasure really is!
* **Money is temporary: All wealth belongs to God.** Wealthy landowners commonly entrusted managers with their financial affairs. The parable preceding this passage (Luke 16:1-9) highlights a **dishonest managers’** actions, setting the stage for Jesus’ lesson on faithfulness. **We are temporary managers, not owners** (*Matthew Henry’s Commentary*).
	+ **Illustration:** *When you came out of your mother’s womb, how much money did you bring with you? None. How much money will you take into the next life? None. My friends, this is all a test.*
	+ **Key Word:** *Faithful* (πιστός, *pistos*): The Greek word for **faithful** means **trustworthy or reliable**. It conveys the idea of someone **proven dependable over time**. **God is most interested in shaping your faithfulness and testing it through stewardship.**
* **Money magnifies and displays what you really love:** Money acts as a **magnifying glass** to show what’s truly in your heart. If you don’t love **“true riches,”** it will show. There is the wealth of a **good heart, a sound mind, a healthy family, friendship, peace with God, and ultimately, eternity in heaven.** Money puts on display what you truly love.
	+ If you are **selfish and dishonest**, money will **only magnify** that. If you are **generous and selfless**, that will be **magnified too**.
	+ **Mark 8:36 (ESV):** *“What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?”*
* **Money is a powerful tool that wants to become your treasure.** You must master **the love of money** before it masters you. Money will want you to put your trust in it. Money will want you to put your hope in it. Money will want to become your treasure.
	+ **1 Timothy 6:10 (ESV):** *“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.”*

**Actio**

John Wesley is one of the most **prolific writers and theologians** in Christian history. He is credited with **starting the Methodist movement, incorporating Christian themes into social justice, and planting countless churches in highly depraved communities**.

John Wesley **made Jesus famous**.

Though not a physician, Wesley wrote a **widely used medical book** and was deeply concerned about **practical health and well-being**, reflecting his belief that **faith should impact all aspects of life**. Because of this book’s success, he became **exceedingly wealthy** and understood the **temptations and dangers of money well**.

Here are a few of his famous quotes:

**"When I have money, I get rid of it quickly, lest it find a way into my heart."** – John Wesley

**"Gain all you can, save all you can, give all you can."** – John Wesley

Back to the **passionate Christian investor** I interviewed. There is one more quote I want to share with you.

He was very aware of **Jesus’ teachings on money** and told me this:

**Warning:** *You all aren’t going to like this one.*

*"I realized I was scrutinizing my generosity way more than my indulgences. As critically as possible, I would evaluate a ministry before I gave to it, but I would buy a car or travel to extravagant places on a whim. After God changed my heart, I decided to be generous on a 'whim' and scrutinize my indulgences."*

Imagine meeting with a **financial advisor**. Would he not tell you to **start investing even now**—begin small, and it will build?

Use **the same principle**, but apply it to **generosity**.

**Compete to be the greatest giver not the greatest haver.**

See, **God wants you to be an incredibly wealthy investor…in love and good deeds**. Start investing in **“true riches” now**.

**Prayer**

For the sake of your heart, I am going to pray this prayer:

**Father, if the love of money is destroying someone’s heart, please protect them from getting money—or even take it away. If there are people here today who burn with passion to invest in good deeds, please give abundantly.**

What is God speaking into your heart?

# Communion

**Introduce communion**

Today we remember the generosity of God. We don’t only receive the generosity of God; we pray to become conduits of the generosity of God.

**Words of Institution**

On the night when He was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying:

“Take and eat; this is My body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way, after supper, He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying:

“Drink of it, all of you. This cup is the new covenant in My blood, shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

# References

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