

False Profit

The Loss of Gain

September 13, 2026



Today we're learning how **temporary treasure robs us of eternal riches!** Cuz our *instinct* is to get *what we can while we're here* – even though we all *know* the second we *die*, it's *left behind*. Which *means* all this *money* is *meaningless* outside of a *material* universe and *therefore* a *pointless* possession for anyone with *faith* in a future *beyond this place*. And if *that's* true, then every *cynic* of the church is *right* to ask today's big question: **Why does God want our money?**



[Cuz we believe] The God who *made* the world and everything in it ... is not served by human hands, as if He needed anything. Rather, *He Himself* gives everyone *life and breath and everything else*. – Acts 17:24–25 NIV



Now, I was *raised* by a Sunday school teacher and *surrounded* by *lots of* good *Christian* folk, so I had heard the *basic* beliefs about *how* God handled money – but when I hit 13 and started *questioning* everything in the *adult* world, I was *appalled* by church budget *behavior*. Cuz there were pastors on TV repeatedly saying God *mandated* believers to give *millions* cuz, **“You are supposed to be rich”** and private jets were *necessary* so they wouldn't be forced to sit in a **“long tube with a bunch of demons.”** Like Jesse Duplantis said while asking for *multiple* jets, **“I'm not doing this for luxury. I'm burning them up for the Lord Jesus Christ!”** Later adding in 2018, **“I really believe that if Jesus was physically on the Earth today, he wouldn't be riding a donkey; He'd be in an airplane!”**



Well, I stand by what I thought at 13, *what a bunch of balderdash!* Sorry to use such *strong* language, but I call *shenanigans* to the highest degree on *any* church that teaches *spiritual* growth *should* produce *material* wealth! And I advise anybody who *attends* such a church to *run* the *opposite* direction ASAP! Cuz *Jesus Himself* made it pretty clear:



Blessed are you who are poor, for *yours* is the kingdom of God ... But woe to you who are rich, for you have *already* received your comfort. – Luke 6:20, 24 NIV

Simply put, **the poor are hungry for heaven and the rich are reluctant to leave earth** – so *who* would *you* rather *be* when choosing your *eternity* on the *deathbed* we're *all* destined for? *That's* Scripture's consistent messaging! [Jn 16:33, 2 Tim 3:12, Heb 10:34, Rev 2:9–10, 1 Tim 6:5–10, Phil 1:29, and Lk 6:20–25]

So, how on earth do *whole* churches justify a focus on *earthly* gain when Scripture clearly promises *faith* means *material* pain? Well, unfortunately the answer is *obvious* – **churches are full of people and people corrupt perfection.** And that means we shouldn't take the word of any *pastor* on money matters – we should take *God at His Word!* So, I'm just gonna share what *I've* seen since trying to understand God and *giving*; but **here at His Place we expect you to check our work with God's Word!**

And *here's* the headline I heard: **Heaven isn't short on cash – we're short on perspective!** And Paul lays it out to the Ephesians by helping them see that **real riches aren't material – they're positional.** Cuz having all the *cash* on *earth* doesn't come close to being a *penniless kid* of the *earth's* Creator!

[So, Paul says] I pray that the eyes of your heart may be *enlightened* in order that you may know the *hope* to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in His holy people, and His incomparably *great* power for us who believe. – Ephesians 1:18–19 NIV



Notice Paul *isn't* praying to *have* more inheritance or power – **he's praying for the knowledge of the inheritance and power we already have!** Cuz once we see the *situation* of our position, it *changes* our perception – and we'll realize, **we don't need more riches – we need richer awareness.**



Cuz even *without* God, you've already won the *existential* lottery! I mean, we're only having *this* conversation cuz we're the *only* things in creation *capable* of considering these concepts! Out of *quintillions* of animals and exponentially more *life* on this little *grain* of the universe – you are *suspiciously* the only thing able to *think* about your *purpose*... doesn't *that* make you think you probably *should*?!



Cuz **just taking the time to acknowledge the power you possess in your position as a human should change how you measure your treasure!** You have a brain that values *learning*, a *heart* that's enriched by *loving*, and a *soul* that *feels* our worth by *finding* our *purpose*. But *birds* don't! So why would you *lower* the measure of your treasure to shiny objects that *don't* serve any *real* purpose? *That's* why Paul's *imploring* us to *open* our eyes and hearts to see the *real riches* of our *position* at the center of the universe. In fact, the three Greek words he uses for **"incomparably great power"** are where we get our words, *super*, *mega*, and *dynamite* – cuz he's trying to really drive home the *reality* of our identity; we're the kids of **"Super Mega Dynamite!"**



This whole universe is working *something* out between the *Creator* and *His* creations to get things back in *order* – which means putting *us* back in *our* eternal position as kids of the King. And that makes us a bunch of *trust fund* kids who just need to *mature* and become responsible enough to *receive* our riches. And that *maturity* is revealed in how we see real riches.



C.S. Lewis famously painted a picture of the process by comparing humans to *kids* who are only happy with their mud pies in a *slum* because we don't see how much better a *holiday* at a waterfront resort would be. *That's* our problem: **if we fill up on garbage, we won't be hungry for goodness.** We can get so *satisfied* with shiny little *samples* that we stop craving the *feast*.



[Sound familiar?] The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground – trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food ... [and said] "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." – Genesis 2:9, 16–17 NIV

Think about that! Adam and Eve surrounded by an all-you-can-eat *paradise* – and the serpent just has to point at *the one thing not* on the menu – and the *whole orchard* of *perfect* produce becomes instantly *invisible*. Cuz **greed makes missing one thing look bigger than having everything**. And that's how *false profit works*; *subtraction by addition*. **They gained one bite and lost the whole Garden**. The serpent didn't have to *steal* God's gifts from us; he just had to steal our focus from God. Cuz **lesser things only win by blinding us to better things**. So, *that's* how all *fleeting* things on *earth* operate.



This lesser world keeps our focus on the temporary profit of the present to stop us from seeing the eternal purpose in our future! And we all do it! Lord knows I spent years chasing the *false* promise of *shiny fruit* – cuz I wanted to be a famous musician, writer, or comic to increase earthly riches, relations, and reputation. And I settled for bartender in a *band* cuz I got *overpaid* and *appreciated* just enough. But after almost *ten* years, I realized, I pretty much *have* what I wanted; *so what?* Then I saw musicians, writers, and comics like Kurt Cobain, David Foster Wallace, and Robin Williams *get* where I *dreamed* of going, realize the *same* thing, and choose *suicide*. And that's when I realized, *earthly* promises are *proven empty* when *possessed*! Cuz **possessions provide profit but prove real riches need a purpose**. So you *made* a *million* bucks and *got* the big *movie* role; *so what?* *To what end?* The whole way we measure *profit* is by *projecting* the *value* it *adds* to *life* – but that'll eventually teach us: **all additions are pointless without more life**.

[Like Paul says:] Whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. – Philippians 3:7–8 NIV

Cuz **Christ is the only addition to life that adds more life!** Cuz as we learn to fix our focus on following Him, we fix the fatal flaw that caused the deadly distractions back in the Garden. Remember, God's goal isn't keeping any riches *from you* – it's keeping all His riches *closer to you*! So, Jesus isn't saying, **"Be miserable now so you can finally be rich after you die."** He's saying what Paul explains:

Godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. – 1 Timothy 4:8 NIV

Faith isn't just about a future promise, it has a present-tense payoff! Like we've said before, imagine holding the winning lotto ticket for a billion-dollar jackpot on Friday night, but the bank doesn't open till Monday. Does everything *stay the same*? *No way!* Sure, you don't technically *have* the money yet, but for all *intents* and *purposes* you're rich *now*! So *this* weekend, you'll *buy* dinner, *tip* too much, and *smile* while *spending* cuz what your wallet's *losing* can't compare with what you *know* you're *gaining*!

Though you do not see [Jesus] now, you believe in Him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls. – 1 Peter 1:8–9 NIV

[The way Paul stays pumped in the middle of present problems] I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. – Romans 8:18 NIV

Cuz **the problem isn't our inheritance being far away – it's that closer things feel more real**. A billion dollars paid in a *decade* changes how you feel *today*, but *half* up front can *distract* us from *that future*.

That's the danger of *earthly* riches – **they don't have to be better than God's promises – they just have to be more visible.** Something we can touch, count, spend, polish, and protect right *now*. But, **we get too many irons in the fire to leave the fire!** The *danger* of material wealth *isn't* that it makes us *rich* – it's that it can make us feel rich *enough* to *ignore* real riches. Which is why we're *warned*:

Do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it [or any of the other material desires of the present]... But seek His kingdom and these things will be given to you as well ... for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. – Luke 12:29–32 NIV



That's why the rich young ruler walked away *sad* when Jesus said to *sell* what he had, *give* the money *away*, and *follow* Him – it *sounds* like Jesus asks him to lose a fortune, but in reality **Jesus was asking him to lose a distraction.** And notice the *order*: our Father gives us the Kingdom, *then* Jesus tells us to *loosen* our grip on *possessions*. Cuz **money doesn't buy our inheritance – our inheritance buys our freedom from money.**

And that's why tithing and offerings are for *our benefit*! Think of *giving* as a material *fast*. Fasting *doesn't* feed God – it trains *our appetite*. **Tithing doesn't fund God – it trains our heart.** A tithe says, **"This money ain't my answer."** And an offering says, **"I want God's purpose more than these distractions."** **Giving practices letting go of what holds us back.**

In the book *The Last Lecture*, Randy Pausch tells the story of getting his *dream car* and then giving his *niece* and *nephew* a ride. And after hearing their mom *warn* them to be *extremely careful*, Randy *cured* their *anxiety* by just *pouring* a soda all over the *backseat*. So *later*, when his nephew *vomited* in the car, the poor kid *wasn't mortified* cuz he already *knew* he was *more* important than the *upholstery*. Cuz, **lowering something's material value prevents its distraction from true value.**

And *giving* helps us do *that* on purpose. Cuz **every time we loosen our grip on something temporary, we're practicing correcting what happened in the Garden.** Cuz sin *started* when we let one *lesser* thing *distract* us from a *world* of *better* things, but *giving* trains our heart to *see* the *good* stuff again.

So, **why does God want our money?** *He doesn't!* He wants our *heart*! And so does *money* – so **He wants it out of the way!** God teaches us to *give*, *not* because Heaven is *poor*, but because *temporary* treasure can *make us poor* in everything that *matters*. Cuz this whole experience of *death* and *decay* began when we *already* had *true life and love* – and *traded* it for an *inferior* fruit that *promised* faster satisfaction. So *now*, **every tithe and offering is a little act of rebellion against that old appetite!** It's a way of saying, **"I'm not trading tomorrow's winning ticket for a taste of it today!"** But again, don't take my word – I'm just sharing what I heard in God's Word and *it* says to:

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life. – 1 Timothy 6:17-19 NIV