

Luke 18:22

So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

"Oh no, he's going to teach us on tithing and giving our money away. I don't want to read today's devotional." Really, if you think that way and cringe every time you hear or read a message on money and tithing, you really need to check your heart, because you are making money a god in your life, and this devotional may be for you.

We know that the bible says about money: *For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. 1 Timothy 6:10* (underlined for emphasis)

Note what I underlined, just showing that this verse is saying that *the love of money*, not money itself, *is the root of all kinds of evil*. So money in itself is not a sin. Just like having a steak knife in your home to cut up the steak you are having for dinner is not sinful. But you can take that same steak knife and stab someone with it and now you have turn it into something sinful, even though that is not it intended use. Just like God gives us jobs and paychecks to take care of us, if we choose to use it on alcohol, drugs, partying, the Lotto, etc.... That's not God's fault, but our faulty for using what He blessed us with wrongfully.

So, if you made it this far and have not stopped reading, you'll be happy to know that the devotional today is not about money at all, at least not in the sense you think it is. But how many have read today's verse and always think when they do that it's bad to have money, and that those who are rich or have plenty really need to be cautious, because they will struggle or they need to watch out or they wont make it to heaven because, like the rich guy in this verse, they are not giving it all away. But did you realize, this is the only time in the bible that Jesus told someone to give away all his riches.

Remember Zacchaeus who was a Chief Tax Collector. Do you remember what Jesus said to him when He saw him in a tree? (He was there because he was short and could not see Jesus so he had to climbed the tree.)

† **Luke 19:5** *And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house."*

And when you read that you never think that Jesus wanted to go to his house to get all of his money, even though Zacchaeus was very well off financially. No, Jesus went to his house to bring salvation to his house.

† **Luke 19:9-10** *And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."*

Sure, Zacchaeus did give some (Not all) of his money to those in need. But we never read of Jesus telling him to do this, he did it because He loved Jesus and had a new heart, which was to do for the Lord with what he had, money. I'm sure if he had no money that he would had found some other way to minister to others, like give more of his time to help others, or opening up his home to others, or serving in some way in the synagogue or his town.

So if you think that you have to be poor to get to heaven, then you are basing salvation on what a person does and has, and not what Jesus did on the cross. Because Jesus didn't die for everyone except the rich or well off financially. He didn't say, give all your money away or you are going to hell because My death on the cross didn't cover that.

Sure, Jesus did say that:

† **Luke 18:24-25** *And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."*

But this was in reference to this same man from today's verse today, showing how hard it is for those who make money their god, and for them to follow or truly give their life to Jesus. But then it could apply to anything, not just money, or even anyone that you make a god, which is something you are clinging onto so tight that you refuse to let it go, like this man did with his money, put it before Jesus.

Also, do not judge those in the church who are well off financially, because you have no idea what they are doing with their money, and actually... It's none of your business, because they do not have to answer to you for what God has blessed them with.

† **Hebrews 4:13 (NLT2)** *Nothing in all creation is hidden from God. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes, and he is the one to whom we are accountable.*

So you may not have riches, and maybe even struggle week to week financially, but it doesn't mean the Lord wont ask you to give up something else that you have turned into a god and put before Him. What has the Lord been asking you to give up lately as you follow Him? Whether you give it up or not does not determine your salvation, but it does show who or what is really Lord or lord of your life.

† **Mark 8:34** *When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."*