



FINANCIAL Faithfulness

ISBN: 9780892651511

 **ACCESS**
downloadable curriculum

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever wondered if the Bible gives any direct instructions about handling your finances? Are there actual biblical concepts about money management recorded in the pages of God's Word? The answer is yes! The Bible has never, and will never, lose its relevance. Its pages are filled with sound biblical principles that offer as much help today as when it was first written.

This study guarantees to equip the citizens of a materialistic-driven society to focus on sound biblical financial principles, which if applied, will help them to experience the joy of giving, while reflecting the wisdom of God in their financial dealings.

Session 1: Common Cents About Money

Group members will discover what the Christian's attitude toward money should be according to the Word of God.

Session 2: The Grimy World of Greed

Group members will examine the bottomless pit of greed and understand how it should not be part of the believer's life.

Session 3: The Buck Stops Here

Group members will be armed with the skills necessary to begin proper money management, as they learn some helpful hints to gain control over unhealthy spending habits.

Session 4: Turning the Tables on Gambling

Group members will experience an in-depth tour of the gambling underworld, exposing their lies and tricks.

Session One

Common Cents About Money

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Student Handouts
- Extra pens and pencils
- Bibles
- One dozen eggs
- A can of spray paint
- A baseball bat
- \$10 bill
- Bottle of medicine

LESSON OBJECTIVE

Group members will discover what the Christian's attitude toward money should be according to the Word of God.

CONNECT

Facilitator, begin this session by distributing the handout, "Money Matters Makes Cents." Also, display the following items on a table: one dozen eggs, a can of spray paint, a baseball bat, a bottle of prescription medicine and a \$10 bill. Direct the small group's attention to the items. Encourage the group members to write down on the handout how each of the items could be used for good or how it could be used for evil. Once everyone is finished, ask for volunteers to share what they have written down. Facilitator, be sure to share what you have written down, too. Segue into the CONSIDER section by saying: *As you can see, any of these objects can be used for either good or evil purposes. Money, like all the other objects, is neither good nor evil. The outcome lies entirely in the hands of the user.*

Possible answers to "Money Matters Make Cents."

1. One dozen eggs: Make an omelet for family or throw eggs at cars.
2. A can of spray paint: Paint props for Christmas play or spray graffiti on wall.
3. A baseball bat: Help with little league or break windows.
4. Prescription meds: Brings healing when taking appropriately or sell to others.
5. \$10 bill: Generosity or gambling.

CONSIDER

(Possible PowerPoint Slide: Scripture references)

Ask a volunteer to read the Scriptures.

- 1 Timothy 6:10

Ask the small group to give examples of greed in today's world. Explain that money itself is not inherently evil, but the love of money or greed is what causes priorities to become "lopsided." The Word of God is our standard. It is God's will that our lives be biblically grounded. We must study and see what the Bible says about money. Then, as we learn financial truths, we must be doers of the Word and not hearers only. When we implement the principles we have learned, even our finances will become biblically sound. Say to the group: *Let's look into the Word of God and discover where riches and wealth come from.*

- 1 Chronicles 29:12
- Ecclesiastes 5:19

Say to the small group: *God blesses certain individuals with material wealth so they can bless others. Can you think of any biblical examples of this truth? After participants have named some examples, continue: Today we will look at the lives of two men—Abraham and Joseph of Arimathea. We can learn much from their examples.*

- Genesis 13:2-11, 14-18 / Abraham—the Financial Father

Say: *God prospered Abraham. These verses give us a glimpse into Abraham's character. He was unselfish. When he and Lot realized they needed separate space for their cattle, herdsman, and other possessions, Abraham offered Lot first choice of all the land. When Lot chose the prime farmland, humble Abraham accepted his decision and took the inferior land. We are blessed because we know the "rest of the story," Abraham inherited it all and Lot had to flee from Sodom. But when the decision was made, Abraham didn't know how the story would end. He walked by faith, and in the 18th verse, we get a glimpse into the heart of Abraham. After being given more wealth than he ever dreamed of possessing, he never bragged to his neighbors about how rich he was, but he built an altar and worshiped the One who had blessed him. Abraham remembered God.*

Ask the group what we can learn from the life of Abraham. After discussion say to the group: *Whether our bank accounts are large or small, we should always remember the God who provides for us. He has promised if we seek Him first, He will meet all of our needs.*

- Matthew 6:33
- Matthew 27:57-60 / Joseph of Arimathea—a Grave Situation

Did you notice before Matthew told us Joseph of Arimathea's name and where he was from, he told us his status?

Remind the group that when a loved one dies, it is natural for family members to desire to give them the very best funeral, a proper burial, and a grave marker. Continue by saying: *Jesus' friends and loved ones felt the same way. They wanted Him to have a nice burial, but most of His followers were poor, and burials were expensive even in their day. That's when Joseph of Arimathea stepped forward. He took the body of Jesus, wrapped it in linen cloth, and laid it in his personal tomb. Prosperity had allowed him to purchase a tomb for himself, but when Jesus needed it, Joseph gave it. After Jesus' body was placed in the tomb, Joseph rolled a large stone to the door of the sepulcher. Can you imagine what Joseph must have felt like after the resurrection? His tomb was empty, but his heart was full! That eternal truth can thunder in our hearts, too, because of the empty tomb, our hearts are full.*

Dollars and Sense

Ask the group what we can learn from Joseph's example. After discussion, say to the group: *God blessed Abraham and Joseph of Arimathea with "dollars and sense."*

(Possible PowerPoint Material)

- "Dollars"—God blessed Abraham with great wealth. "Sense"—he shared it with Lot, and he gave thanks to God.
- "Dollars"—God blessed Joseph with great wealth. "Sense"—he shared it with Jesus, and he gave glory to God.

Say to the group: *Abraham and Joseph of Arimathea were both very rich, and they were both very wise. They had the "sense" to remember the God who had blessed them and present Him with thanksgiving and glory. Does this mean we have to be rich to be generous?*

Allow time for discussion. Then say to the group: *We do not have to be rich to be generous. The most famous philanthropist in the Bible was a pauper, but she got Jesus' attention.*

(Possible PowerPoint Material)

- Mark 12:41-44 / The Widow's Mite

God is not looking at the size of our wallets. He is looking at the condition of our hearts. Unfortunately, not all wealthy people have "sense" to realize it is God who has blessed them financially, and many times poor people have no "sense" with the "cents" they have been given. They are often inept when handling their financial affairs.

COMMIT

Ask your group members what practical lessons can be learned from the verses studied today. After they share what they have learned, present your group with these three points.

(Possible PowerPoint Material)

- Money is not evil. Humanity is the problem.
- We must understand the responsibility of wise money management.
- As Christians, we must live a life free of greed and covetousness.

In closing, present your group with the handout, "A Blank Check."

Student Handout One

Money Matters Makes Cents

Write down how each item can be used for good or evil beside each item.

GOOD

EVIL

One dozen eggs _____

A can of spray paint _____

A baseball bat _____

Prescription meds _____

\$10 bill _____

SAMPLE

“Any object can be used either for **good or evil** purposes. The **outcome** lies entirely in the **hands of the user.**”

Student Handout Two

A Blank Check

Fill in the correct answer in the space provided at the end of each question.

According to Psalm 62:10, if we find we have more financial resources, should we set our heart on our money?

According to Luke 12:15, does the Bible teach that a person's wealth is measured by the abundance of his possessions?

According to Hebrews 13:5, does God want us to be content with what we have?

What have you learned about God's view on money through looking at these Scriptures? Has it changed your view on the way you look at money?

SAMPLE