

How Money Can Make You Happy

Part 1: Ownership

Luke 12:13-34

Main Idea: Trust God not money, b/c God is the one who gives what we need

WE: Money can't buy happiness... you sure?

It's funny/interesting/disturbing how we intertwine happiness with money.

For many of us... The amount of money we have often correlates to how happy we are.

It offers safety, security, freedom, peace.

- Maybe a little pride/prestige/status... not you of course.

But we all KNOW, Money can't buy happiness, but we'd all sure like to have a chance to try it out for ourselves right?

- It can buy me a boat and a truck to pull it.

So we try... but the problem is... we just end up worrying more and more and being more afraid of not having enough.

And if you're doing ok right now, there's always that looming fear/concern of the unknown future.

World economic uncertainty?

The life we want, the one where we don't have to worry about having enough, always seems out of reach or very unstable doesn't it.

So

the problem is we never have as much money as we want so we are never as happy as we want.

One Word- Greed

So we work harder to get more to be happier but it never works. Often the result is just the opposite.

End up more worried, stressed, exhausted.

So what do we do? Just work harder/more, get a better job... invest more wisely?

Or not think about money, and live in a commune?

Maybe there's a better way... 3 steps/ideas that will allow money to make you happy.

This episode...

We experience true happiness when we understand true ownership.

GOD: Luke. Jesus.

V 13-14 “Seriously? Have you not listened to anything I’ve been saying? Figure your own stuff out.”

V. 15 To which we all nod and agree. Yeah don't be greedy. Those people suck.

Life isn't measured by money but by how much you live, laugh, and love, right?

We know greed is bad, that's why we love those movies about the guy who's all caught up in his job and ignores his family or other relationships but then has some realization that makes him change into someone generous.

We watch those movies, read those stories, agree with them... and then get back to work to make more money so that we have enough to be happy.

We all agree that greed is bad but still want a little more than we have.

Jesus knew that about us so again, instead of laying down a list of rules, he tells a story...

V. 16-19

Sounds good right? Sounds like he's got a solid retirement plan. This guy reached the point we all hope to reach someday.

Who isn't hoping to gather enough to be able to sit back, relax and not have to work anymore?

- How many of us are spending our days just waiting for THE day we can retire??

Many might be thinking Jesus must be answering that greedy guy with... “Look, the key to happiness and combating greed is working hard to get enough to live on.”

“The key to money making you happy is... Don't squander what you own, be smart and save all you can.”

“That way you won't be greedy. Once you have enough you're not trying to get more and take from others right?”

“Be smart with your money and you can be self-sufficient and won't be greedy b/c you'll have all you need. And you'll finally be happy.”

Nope.

V. 20

WHOA! That's extreme, Jesus!

This guy seems kinda prudent actually. Maybe a bit selfish but greedy? Isn't Jesus talking about greed?

Look at the conversation this guy has with himself...

I don't have room for all of MY crops.

I'll tear down MY barns and build bigger ones

Room to store all MY wheat

Issue: He sees what he has as his. Everything he has is his to use how he wants on himself.

The more we think we own what we have, the more we think we deserve what we have... and the more we think we deserve what we have, the more we think we deserve to have more than what we have.

But that whole line of thinking is flawed... does this guy really OWN what he has?

"Well he owns the land..."

- Probably inherited it.
- Didn't create it did he?

"Well he worked it..."

- Probably paid others to work it
- Even if he had, is it his greatness that made him healthy and strong enough to work it?

Who sent the rain and the sun and kept the pests away? Did he invent photosynthesis?

See in reality... everything this man had was b/c God gave it to him.

We didn't get what we own on our own.

God made all of those things happen and he took them away just as easily.

Think about it... we don't actually own very much... we're just using it FOR NOW.

Whatever we have someday someone else will either spend it, break it, sell it, or throw it away.

Which we know. That's why we fear the future. We know it can all be taken in a moment.

Relying on money only creates fear... and greed is the offspring of fear.

It's simple really: We think money will make us happy.. But it's impossible to hang on to We're afraid we won't be happy.... So we try to grasp more and more money.

The man was relying on something that wasn't his. And something that wasn't promised to last.

Relying on something that would never give him what he truly wanted/needed.

Relying on the gift instead of the source... the Giver.

What we rely on is what we worship.

- It's what we have faith in. It's what we trust.

- Government, freedom, rights, people, money.

So we actually don't OWN very much. Almost everything can and will be taken away from us someday... except one thing.

V. 21

The one thing you can own that will never be taken is really what we all want/need...

A relationship with our creator where we are fully known, fully accepted, and fully taken care of... forever.

A love/relationship that Paul says... nothing and no one can separate from us.

Seems foolish actually... we don't need more stuff we need a relationship. And honestly it is... if this right now is all there is to our existence.

If we are just flesh and blood material beings in a material world... Then getting as much as we can for ourselves, no matter who gets hurt/ignored should make us happy

But you know that's not true don't you. There's something more than this.

It's why we all have an inner disgust for people who use others simply to get more or get ahead.

It's why we KNOW happiness is about way more than money, stuff, comfort.

The only place we can find that perfectly is in the one who made us, knows us, and loved us enough to die for us.

When we realize God owns everything we learn to rely on him for everything.

When we rely on God for everything it allows us to be thankful for what he has given us.

And in that reliance and thankfulness we find happiness, peace, joy.

It doesn't matter if we have a lot or a little. We know we can trust him and that he cares for us.

We don't have to worry about money. We can simply be thankful for what we have and use it for his good (later episodes).

What you will discover is that

The first step in money making us happy is accepting that we don't own it.

Question: What are you relying on to make you happy? Remember: **What we rely on is what we worship**

Rely on money and we'll also be afraid we won't have enough.

Rely on God and experience peace and joy and always have what you need.

There is only one person we can truly rely on. The owner and creator of everything. The one who created billions of galaxies but still knows your name and thoughts.

The One who invites you to rely on him on not on things we can never truly own anyway.

YOU:

Want to find happiness by giving up ownership?

Simple Prayer:

“Thank you for what you have given me.”

- Try to make a list (You’ll fall asleep before you finish)

“Help me trust you for what I need.”

You’ll discover as you thank him it becomes easier to trust him... you realize just how much he has cared for you. and as you trust him it becomes easier to thank him.

It’s a cycle.

Read rest of story: Luke 12:22-34

WE:

Money is not good or bad. It’s just a thing.

Money can’t do anything... what we do with it is the difference between it making us happy or not.

If we are always afraid we don't have enough or that we need more... money will always make us fearful and greedy.

But if we accept that we don't own it, that whatever we have is a gift from God we can use it to rely on him and trust him and find real happiness.

When you accept you don’t own anything you can accept that you are not on your own in anything.


Questions:


1. Is talking about money a comfortable or an awkward experience for you? Why do you think that is?
2. Read Jesus’ story again (Luke 15:16-21). What thoughts, feelings, and/or reactions did you have to this account?
3. In what way(s) could giving up ownership of what you own change your view on money and even your life?
4. Who and what can your group join you in praying for this week?

Summary: Money can't buy happiness, right? Funny thing is, most of us think we might be the exception and try anyway. Only to just become more stressed, anxious, and exhausted. But money actually can make us happy, if we understand true ownership.

Episode Breakdown:

- 01:45 Monica gets honest
- 03:02 Are we sure money can't buy happiness?
- 05:20 Allowing money to make us happy, a Jesus story
- 08:35 The key to fighting greed
- 11:52 What we're really afraid of
- 14:22 What we all want, and it seems dumb
- 17:30 The first step...
- 18:35 A practice
- 20:41 Crosscreek things 4 u

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▶ Upcoming #SalemOregon On-Site Gatherings

November 14th, 4:30pm ... <https://www.yourcrosscreek.com/gathering/> for more info.

▶ #forSalem NOVEMBER Opportunity: Giving Tree

1. Take a tag at our in-person gathering and buy a Christmas present for a CASA kid
2. Can't come in person? Connect with CASA and see how you can help. They do take online donations and have an amazon wishlist! <https://www.casamarionor.org/donate>

▶ Suggested Bible Readings:

Matthew 6:19-34, Matthew 25:14-30

▶ Music we listened to making this episode:

Open the Door: Ludwig Goransson- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ftNnSM_VnTM

Fox on the Run: Sweet- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kRv7EjjwYBI>

Barrett Strong: Money- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5KU34DrrPI>

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