



# Managing GOD's Money

## Theme for July: Money By The Book

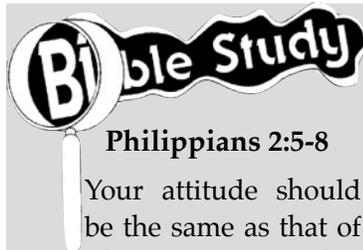
*Biblical teachings on money startles many folks as they discover Jesus spoke more about money, wealth, and possessions than other items. Many people wonder why we don't learn more about biblical stewardship from the church and Messianic congregations.*

*We will explore some Bible teachings on money this month to help us build a solid, biblically based 'money management' foundation. We will address these areas:*



- **ABC's:** What is your world-view?
- **Saving for Retirement:** Is your retirement income secure?
- **Rich Man Poor Man:** Who will inherit the Kingdom?
- **Breaking the Vase:** Lavish spending

## Topic for July 1-7: ABCs—What's Your Worldview?



### Philippians 2:5-8

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross

**R**ecently I told an acquaintance that normally I don't take painkillers because I don't

want to mask or defer discovering and treating the pain's core cause. This attitude allows me to ignore the pain; so my pain-threshold is high.

My acquaintance's attitude, on the other hand, was different. He dealt with his pain instantly with a pill. So his pain-threshold was low. On reflection, he told me he thought he developed this *attitude or view* from TV advertisements. Subsequently, he changed his *behavior* and today handles pain much better without pills.

Our attitude is our opinion or general view about something. In today's talk, it is our world-view. Many subliminal messages in society contribute to forming

this view; each affecting our behavior directly.

Most of us realize our attitude controls our behavior, but unconsciously we deny it. We claim watching television doesn't affect our children's behavior despite research showing it does. We deny advertising and violence on television influence children. Then again, even with available, verifiable, devastating results, we deny pornography affects our behavior.

I like Apostle Paul's comments in **Philippians 2:5:** your attitude should be the same as that of Messiah. The believer's attitude should be contrary to the world's. So, his source of choices must be

the Bible to allow godly morals to guide his behavior.

Today's post-modern society teaches us to focus on us; to call on our inner being to give us strength; to be tolerant and inclusive—a euphemism for ignoring biblically-based standards.

Have you noticed that preventing aging is a priority for baby boomers who spend large sums on various forms of surgery and medications; many believing they are succeeding. Really! We will age, and nothing doctors can do can prevent it. Where are Moses and Abraham today?

We live in a 'fallen' world, and we must be proactive to prevent it from influencing us. Most of us work in the world and spend many days there with nonbelievers who are against Jesus' followers. Beloved, Jesus left these words for us in John 15:18-21:

"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. Remember the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. They will treat you this way



## Memory Verse

John 15:16

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit — fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

because of my name, for they do not know the One who sent me.

Today, focused, personal advertisements appealing to people's sin nature bombard believers in Jesus and unbelievers alike. The goal is to coerce us to spend to buy stuff we don't need with funds we don't have.

Many folks succumb to these enticements, spend, and then fall deep into debt, depression, and despair. Families break up as a result.

Only with Messiah Jesus as our Lord and Savior can we withstand this onslaught. In **Isaiah 26:4**, the Prophet reminds us to trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD, is the Rock eternal.

Most Christians will admit they trust in the Lord. They

will say they know the earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. (**Psalm 24:1**). They will even agree they are mere stewards. But many will confirm they find it impossible to carry out their stewardship responsibilities consistently.

That's correct; we can't do it on our own, but with the Holy Spirit's help, we can become good stewards. We need to stay in the Word and feed our souls continually (**Acts 1:14**). This means living with Messiah-centeredness: When tempted, we run immediately to God; when the car swerves in front of us recklessly, we pray instantly for the driver's salvation; when we meet someone, we share Jesus with him or her.

Yes folks, to become Messiah-centered we must let every thought focus on Jesus (**1 Thessalonians 5:14-20**).

In **Mark 8:36** Jesus reminds us to look after our souls: "What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet lose his soul?"

When we focus on nurturing the soul, our priorities and behavior will differ from the world's. We will wish to surrender our decisions to Jesus. Then we will understand feeding the poor entails more than handing out

money. So too, healing the sick is more than prescribing medication. This is a radical world-view, contrary to everything taught in finance 101, but it shows Jesus' attitude.

Sadly, we rejected His attitude to dispense "medicine for the soul." Instead, we are preoccupied with money as the solution for everything. So we spend huge sums to find medical and behavior solutions for poverty and disease. We forget physical solutions alone will provide temporary healing only, because they do not point to the only permanent healing source, Messiah Jesus.

As well, we forget Jesus' words in **Matthew 26:11**, "The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me." We must feed the poor, but we must get the priority straight and focus on the eternal.

In **Romans 12:2** Apostle Paul warns us not to conform to this world but to "be transformed by the renewing of your mind":

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.

## Application



1 Peter 4:1-5

Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do — living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. ...But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

**T**he world will not appreciate our wish to dispense aid using Messiah's attitude and will demand we remove God from the solution. Stand firm and accept the results. That's the price to follow Jesus; we believers are not of this world.

Applying Jesus' attitude shows our stewardship roles: We must do everything to honor Him and further His Kingdom.

Attitude or world-view controls behavior, and decides the source of choices. Right ABC's are primary for you to carry out *Money by the Book*. This week, mull over these questions:

1. Are you living a Messiah centered life? Regularly in the Word? Praying?
2. Have you succumbed to 'political correctness'?
3. Can you point to a recent example when you chose Jesus over the world?
4. What are you doing about 'feeding souls'?
5. How do you handle pressure to give God's funds to un-biblically—focused charities?

If you are in debt, take Apostle Paul's advice to adopt Messiah's attitude. This is the only way to remove debt-related stress and depression. It will allow you also to stop spending God's money on unnecessary items that advertisers present in attractive packages.

In your own strength, you cannot work this way, but with the Holy Spirit's help, you can.

This week, talk to the Lord, tell Him you know you can't take on His attitude on your own; you need Him to guide you. He is there waiting on your call. This is a guarantee from Him; just call.



# Daily Reflections



**July 1:**  
Philippians 2:5-8;  
1 Peter 4:1-5

**July 2:**  
John  
15:18-21; Acts 1:14

**July 3:**  
Isaiah 26:4;  
Romans 12:2

**July 4:**  
Psalm 24:1-2

**July 5:**  
1 Thessalonians  
5:14-20

**July 6:**  
Mark 8:36;  
Matthew 26:11

**July 7:**  
John 15:16

**C**onsidering the month's *theme*, and the period's *topic*, daily, reflect on these verses. These questions might help your reflections:

1. Who is talking to whom, about what, and in what context?
2. How do these verses apply to me today?
3. What lessons from these verses can I start today?

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