

## GETTING STARTED

The *Wall Street Journal* quoted an anonymous source who defined *money* as “an article which may be used as a universal passport to everywhere except heaven, and as a universal provider for everything except happiness.” The writer might have added that money is also a provoker of covetousness and competition, a wonderful servant but a terrible master. The love of money is still “a root of all kinds of evil” (1 Timothy 6:10) and has helped fill our world with corruption and lust (1 Peter 1:4).

- *You were told* to “live for today”. In your own words summarize the key point(s) that Pastor Lee communicated that may help us to refocus how we live for today in light of eternity.
- There are 2450 verses in the Bible about money. One sixth of Jesus’ stories are about money. One third of the parables that Jesus told deal with money. There are 41 conversations about money in just Luke’s gospel.

Why do you think God shines such a bright light on this topic?

## DISCUSSION

Read Luke 15:11-32 and Luke 16:1-15.

One definition of the word “*prodigal*” is spending money or resources freely and recklessly; wastefully extravagant.

In His portrait of the prodigal and the elder brother, Jesus described two opposite philosophies of life. Prior to his repentance, the prodigal *wasted* his life, but his elder brother only *spent* his life as a faithful drudge. Both attitudes are wrong, for the Christian approach to life is that we should *invest* our lives for the good of others and the glory of God.

- What might it look like for you to focus less on “*spending*” your time, talents and abilities and be more intentional with “*investing*” your possessions for others and the glory of God?

The parable of the two sons (Luke 15) brought up the subject of wealth, and in chapter 16, Jesus pursued the subject further. The Jews thought that wealth was a sign of salvation and God’s favor (Mark 10:17–27), but Jesus taught that wealth could lead to condemnation.

Like the prodigal (wasteful) son, this manager wasted his master’s goods, just as many people are doing today. All that we have comes from the Lord and must be used for the good of others and the glory of God. We are not owners; we are stewards/managers of His possessions, and one day we must give an account of what we have done with what God has shared with us.

- Discuss the difference between having an “*owner’s*” mentality toward our possessions compared with a “*manager’s*” mindset.
- The story of the shrewd manager teaches a positive lesson through a negative illustration which can be confusing for us. Since Jesus would not commend the manager for robbing his master or for encouraging others to be dishonest, what was the positive lesson for His disciples and us today?

- Share a time in your life when you may not have been faithful/trustworthy in the little things and how this became a barrier to being entrusted with greater responsibilities. What changes did you make to address this issue?

Discuss the following applications from this story and which one may be most relevant for you at this season of your life.

- Use your opportunities wisely (Luke 16:9)
- Money is a test ... be faithful in the way you use your material wealth (Luke 16:10–12)
- Be wholly devoted to God and single-minded (Luke 16:13)

“If God is our Master, then money will be our servant, and we will use our resources in the will of God. But if God is not our Master, then *we will become the servants of money*, and money is a terrible master! We will start *wasting* our lives instead of *investing* them, and we will one day find ourselves “friendless” as we enter the gates of glory.”

- Warren Wiersbe

## PRAYER

Spend time in prayer for the outreach this week (7/16-19) at the Camp at the Old Mill where our middle school and high school students will be ministering to children from Coatesville.

Pray for Carl Green’s team that leaves today for Zambia and Zimbabwe to lead two weeks of conferences for pastors, their wives, and teachers (775 people are expected to attend the conferences).

Join us this Thursday (7/20) for our Fresh Encounter Prayer Gathering at 7pm in the Loft as we seek God’s face for the needs of our church, our community, and the nations.