

What the Bible teaches about Money

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The common understanding of money is simple: Money is a neutral means of exchange for goods and services. "I want this [money] for these [goods or services]" or "I will give you this [money] for those [goods or services]." The Scripture clearly understands money to far more than that. Money is absolutely not neutral. It is a power. See Matt 6:24

Jesus makes the comparison: Money is a "god", with the name of "Mammon". He said people can not serve (worship and obey) God and Mammon. It will be one or the other. Mammon is not an indifferent thing made of paper or gold that can be counted, sorted, bundled and stashed away. Money wants to be our Master, our all and end all, controlling our lives. It gets this power from us. We bestow it. We are made to worship and obey the one true God and refuse to do so. We meet our inner need for God by creating another one, such as Mammon (there are others). Once created, human faith in it (and dependence on it) grows. Though it is really only a means of exchange it assumes a life of its own and becomes far more. It takes over our lives and becomes a living god of our own making. Every thing people say about God, they say about Mammon: we love it, want it, can't live without it, would die for it- or kill for it. We must have it. (See my Essay on Idolatry available elsewhere on this website.) Psychology (and common sense) confirms that money has great psychological importance and power in our lives, even dictating how, where and with whom we live. It is a god because people look to it for security and power. They have faith it will make their lives meaningful, bringing them love or freedom. By definition, a "god" is a person or thing deified or excessively honored and admired. The word "worship" means to attribute worth to something or some one. To the degree we worship Money we make it a god and it acts like one!. Never mind the God of the Bible, Money seems to be more than anything else what makes the world go round. It is the reason the United States and many other nations today (Fall 2008) are all consumed with the Economy, Banks, Credit, the Stock Market. All the news all day is now about Mammon. Ironically, in these times of fiscal distress, Mammon is having a heyday!

The Biblical understanding of Money is simple: It is not evil. It is good, a means for Ministry. (Think of the good Samaritan who used his money to care for the man beaten and left to die in a ditch.) Mammon is removed from its throne when it is clothed as a servant. Make all the money God enables you to with the gifts and opportunities He provides, just as long as you use it to minister to others, which includes caring for your family's needs. The Tithe and offerings should be given directly to support the work of the Lord's servants and the poor. Let Him direct you in what you do with the rest. Of course it all came from Him and we must be good stewards of it. He will hold us accountable.