



Is Christianity a Greedy Religion?

Luke 12:15: (NASB) *Then he said to them, Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions.*



Jesus loves you! This is a true, simple and potentially life changing statement. Once we accept what that three-word sentence means, it can become a steering mechanism for every day of our lives, pointing us to righteousness, godliness and self-sacrifice. Jesus loves you. Pointed and refreshing, but what does it really mean? Does Jesus' love for us guide us in our everyday experiences? Yes! Does his love for us mean that he wants the best for us? Of course! Okay, so if he wants the best for us, does that refer to comfort and abundance in our lives? Does Jesus' love for us bring us to better living conditions, more financial stability, a much better present and a brighter future?

The answers to these questions will vary wildly depending on whose brand of Christianity you look at, and this just confuses the matter. Instead of asking different Christians about the role of comfort and abundance in a Christian's life, let's find the answer from Jesus' teachings and the Apostles' words.

Our Premise: Jesus wants us to live abundantly! What is Christian abundance? It is not what many people think and is very well-defined in Scripture.

We will begin by looking at a perspective we are *not* in favor of.

Introduction, *Megachurch False Pastors Living Like Rock Stars, I-Squad*

- (News anchor) *Here's Lisa Guerrero and the I-Squad with a look at some who have been preaching prosperity who are living large. They are some of the most popular TV preachers in the country. They urge the faithful followers to donate generously, and in return the Lord will bring them prosperity.*
- (Pastor) *I'm not going to be going to heaven and be broke when I get there!*
- (News anchor) *And there's no denying some people have prospered handsomely, the pastors themselves. They live like rock stars, with huge mansions, private jets, and fancy cars. Their lifestyles are so lavish, six of them have been investigated by the U.S. Senate.*

A megachurch is an American term for a Protestant Christian church with an unusually large congregation, having 2,000 or more people in average weekend attendance. We will be discussing the principles of what is behind many megachurches and the principles of Christ.



Jesus had a pointed experience with a man who had an inheritance question. This occurs right after he explained the sacredness of the Holy Spirit and a few verses later he said, *the very hairs of your head are numbered:*

Luke 12:13: (NASB) *Someone in the crowd said to him, Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.*

(Source: Biblical commentary by Adam Clarke) Among the Jews, the children had the inheritance of their fathers divided among them; the eldest had a double portion, but all the rest had equal parts. It is likely the person complained of in the text was the elder brother;



and he wished to keep the whole to himself – a case which is far from being uncommon. The spirit of covetousness cancels all bonds and obligations, makes wrong right, and cares nothing for father or brother.

The oldest brother in a family would normally inherit a double portion. Perhaps this event is a younger brother complaining that his brother received twice as much. He possibly wanted to know if Jesus saw the injustice also.

We will be following the parable from Jesus in Luke 12 to learn what Jesus teaches about Christian abundance.

It is hard to say if there is any injustice here or simply an attempt to get more:

Luke 12:14: (NASB) *But he said to him, Man, who appointed me a judge or arbitrator (an apportioner or administrator) over you?*

(Source: Biblical commentary by James Coffman) Although no fault could be found with this man's request, Christ absolutely refused to accede to it. Jesus did not approach the problems of social injustice by an assault upon established institutions. He did not take the man's part against those who had wronged him.

Why would Jesus not get involved? Would his wise reasoning and judgment not have resolved the issue? The following Scripture is nearing the time of Jesus' crucifixion and he explains his role in the world:

John 18:35-36: (NASB) ³⁵*Pilate answered, I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered you to me; what have you done?* ³⁶*Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then my servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, my kingdom is not of this realm.*

Jesus did not get involved because he knew it was not his place to get involved. Christians, take note!

John 14:2-3: (NASB) ²*In my Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.* ³*If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, there you may be also.*



Our Christian abundance is a heavenly reward.



The megachurches want to grow and attract people so they teach, "Jesus wants you to have what is best for you materially." This causes confusion for many people.



A caller from the Philippines suggests: Psalm 37:4: (NASB) *Delight yourself in the LORD; And He will give you the desires of your heart.* If you are delighting in the Lord, your heart's desire will be to serve Him, not about what you can get.



A caller from Georgia contributes: Thank you for inviting me to call in response to my email regarding this subject. We all have to make a living. What if you were very good at preaching and see there is a river of money there? Do you take it or not? Some people get into that with the right intentions. Their perspective is that they need to make a living, but do they need all that? They will justify it to a degree and it starts to make Christianity look bad to non-Christians and negatively impacts Jesus' message. Greed is very subtle and powerful and we need to speak out against it.

**Jesus decisively shot down the question.
Does he just leave the man with that hard answer?**

His very next statement is one that begins to give context to his answer:

Luke 12:15: (NASB) *Then he said to them, Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed...*

Notice how specific this statement is: *Beware* (discern clearly), *and be on your guard* (watch) *against every form* (all, any, every) *of greed* (avarice, fraudulency, extortion).

Merriam Webster Online Dictionary: **Avarice**
Excessive or insatiable desire for wealth or gain.

Jesus is clear: Be painfully aware and informed of what greed is in all its forms. Why?

Luke 12:15: (NASB) *...For not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions.*

This is one of the most profound tests for someone who has abundance! Having a lot is not necessarily a sin. What you *do* with the abundance is the question.



Observation:

The tenor of Jesus' answer perhaps leans toward the questioner having asked for Jesus' help to gain a greater share than he may have been entitled to.

Jesus is saying everything we imagine about a wealthy life *can be deceiving*, for our lives consist of much greater treasures than any earthly possessions we could ever hope for or hold.

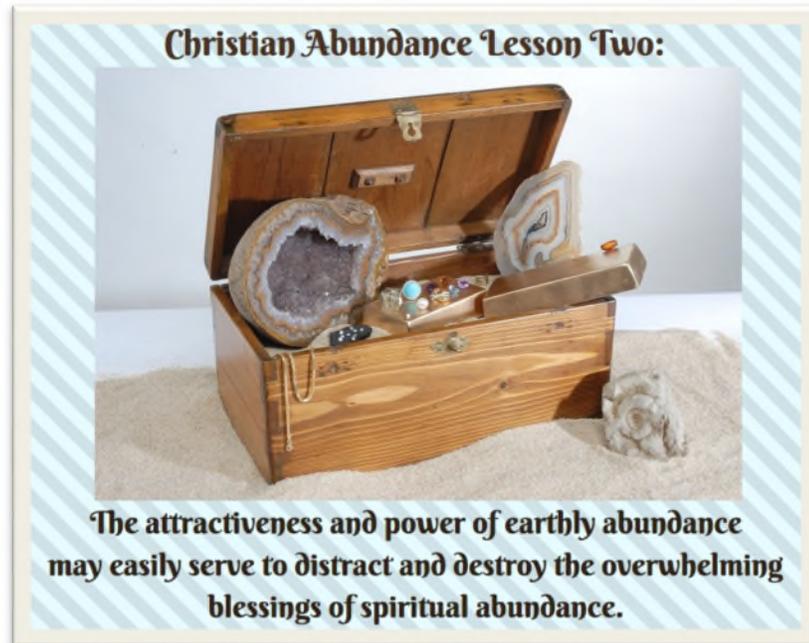
Remember the parable of the sower?

Luke 8:14: (NASB) *The seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity.*



This goes back to the comment from our caller from Georgia. The true value of Christianity gets lost when looking at the wealth.

The seeds that fall among the thorns take a little root but they do not have enough strength to grow. Too many other things get in the way.



Airport and planes, *Megachurch False Pastors Living Like Rock Stars, I-Squad*

- *But when it comes to opulence, few religious leaders compare to Kenneth Copeland.*
- *He lives in this home outside Fort Worth, Texas. It has beautiful water views and comes complete with a boathouse. But that's not all. Copeland is an avid pilot and here's his pride and joy, a 20 million dollar Cessna Citation Jet. It's the fastest private jet which money can buy. He said he needed it to better serve the Lord and proudly did a fly-by for his followers after the church bought it. But it's not just one plane, we found a fleet of planes registered to the church and you won't catch him waiting in line at the airport because he's got his own. (The Kenneth Copeland Airport.)*



This is such a different and tragic picture of the original gospel.



As is usual for Jesus, he does not stop here but now begins to tell a story that will reinforce the power and importance of his answer:

Luke 12:16-17: (NASB) ¹⁶And he told them a parable, saying, *The land of a rich man was very productive.* ¹⁷And he began reasoning to himself, saying, *What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?*

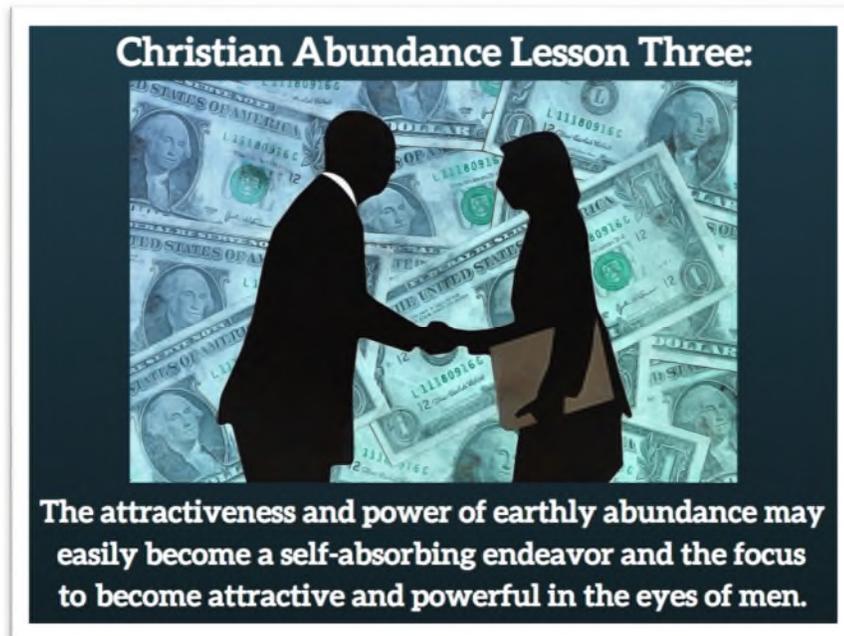


Jesus uses a parable and the character in the story to teach a moral, spiritual and life lesson.



Observations:

- This rich man would presumably be wealthy through honest work and gain.
- The productivity of his land would presumably be a result of meticulous attention and work.
- His thoughts would also be the wishes of anyone who is not wealthy - "I have SO much!"
- It is beginning to look like it is all about him and him alone.



Tax free - no cure, *Megachurch False Pastors Living Like Rock Stars, I-Squad*

- *(Ole Anthony) Televangelism alone is at least a two-and-a-half to three billion-dollar industry, untaxed, unregulated.*
- *(Reporter) That's right. By law, religious groups like Copeland's are exempt from federal taxes and they don't have to report how they spend their money to anyone. Copeland's church takes in tens of millions a year, through donations and selling books and DVD's to his donors.*





- (Kristi Parker) *She sent them a lot of money, a whole lot of money.*
- (Reporter) *When Kristi Parker's mother died of cancer, she said she found diaries that showed her mother sent Copeland most of her life's savings, hoping her faith and donations would cure her of her terminal disease.*

It sounds like the congregation is under a spell. The congregations are under a "good spell" of a good talker and not the gospel.

Perhaps we should find other "self-fulfilling prophecies" to focus on:

Ecclesiastes 11:1-2: (NASB) ¹*Cast your bread on the surface of the waters, for you will find it after many days.* ²*Divide your portion to seven, or even to eight, for you do not know what misfortune may occur on the earth.*

Be generous! Christians are supposed to *cast their bread on the surface of the waters* and have an attitude of giving.

There is a difference between giving something your attention and giving it your focus.

**Which is better - the security of too much
or the fulfillment of being generous and caring?**

Luke 12:18: (NASB) *Then he said, This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.*



Observations:

- **Barns and storage already exist, but this is now an opportunity bigger, better and more powerful than any before.**



For those who follow Christ, where and how should we be seeking our opportunity?

Proverbs 19:20-21: (NASB) ²⁰*Listen to counsel and accept discipline, that you may be wise the rest of your days.* ²¹*Many plans are in a man's heart, but the counsel of the LORD will stand.*

The important thing for Christians is *the counsel of the LORD* - what God is teaching us through Jesus.

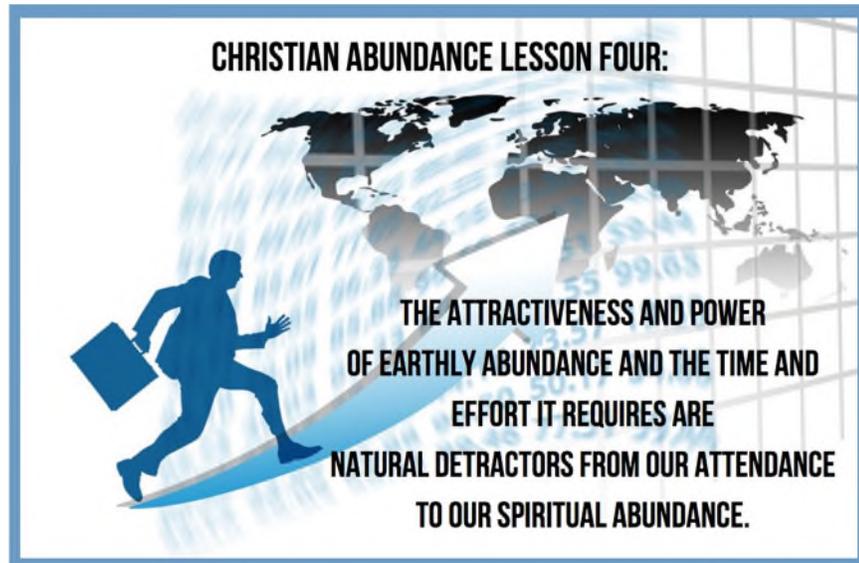
- **Plans must be carefully laid and thought deeply upon to house this abundance.**

Our time is not our own. What process should we follow to lay out and think upon plans for life?

James 4:13-17: (NASB) ¹³*Come now, you who say, Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.* ¹⁴*Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.* ¹⁵*Instead, you ought to say, If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.* ¹⁶*But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.* ¹⁷*Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.*

Our homework assignment is to look up this Scripture and read it again because it will help us make the right decisions when faced with the things of life. We always need to look for the Lord's will.





A caller from Connecticut suggests: The whole idea of money, greed and power is contrary to God's ways. 1 Kings 3:11-12: (NASB) *God said to him, Because you have asked this thing and have not asked for yourself long life, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have you asked for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself discernment to understand justice, behold, I have done according to your words.* Matthew 8:20: (NASB) *Jesus said to him, The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.* This is the example we should copy.

Jesus did not have a place to lay his head. He went through life without earthly possessions. He started his life with a robe at baptism and ended his life with that same robe at his crucifixion.



Let's go back to the previous Luke Scripture and make another observation: Luke 12:18: (NASB) *Then he said, This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.*

- "I" and "my" are mentioned six times in this verse alone. He is not including anyone but himself. That is what happens with the power of abundance.

Our focus and attention should absolutely be upward first:

James 4:6-10: (NASB) *⁶But He gives a greater grace. Therefore, it says, God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. ⁷Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. ⁸Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.*

God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Having riches is not the sin, it is the attitude in which you manage those riches. The true "god" in our life is determined by to who or what we pay the most attention.

- No mention of a sacrifice of thanksgiving or of giving to those in need.

James 1:17-18: (NASB) ¹⁷Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow. ¹⁸In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.



When our egos are enabled, that disables our true focus. In Joshua 24:15 Joshua says, *Choose you this day whom ye will serve. Are you going to serve God or the gods of this world?*

 **Copeland interview, *Megachurch False Pastors Living Like Rock Stars, I-Squad***

- (News anchor) *Copeland refused our request for an interview, so we caught up with him at an event in North Carolina.*
- (Reporter) *Why are you living such a lifestyle of luxury off of church donations?*
- (Copeland) *I don't think we have time for this. Thank you.*
- (Reporter) *Why won't you answer our questions?*
- (News anchor) *A hotel employee tried to prevent us from taping.*
- (Reporter) *It's a simple question, sir.*
- (Copeland) *Yes, and I'm going to give you a simple answer.*
- (Reporter) *Thank you.*
- (Copeland) *My lifestyle follows the Scripture. We give, we believe, we're open.*
- (Reporter) *You have a fleet of private jets. Why is that necessary; you're a minister? How many private jets do you have?*
- (Copeland) *That is none of your business.*
- (Reporter) *Right after that he walked away.*

We disagree with that lifestyle being scriptural for a Christian! It is not the church of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the church of a "good spell" cast by a good talker!



James 1:5-6: (NASB) ⁵*But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. ⁶But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind.*

We see a strong contrast between the gospel of prosperity and the gospel of Jesus. What are we giving to the Lord? Should you be paid for the work you do in the gospel or have a house given to you for the work you do in the gospel? Do Christianity and greed ever belong together? No! Where is your heart and what are you doing with what you have?

The same megachurch money problems exist throughout the world - this one is in Australia:

 **Eternal life - no tax, Another Greedy Megachurch Twisting Scripture**

- (Reporter) *There's money to be made in Jesus, lots of it.*
- (Brian Houston) *One cash offering of \$7.7 million.*
- (Reporter) *And the best part is it's all tax free.*
- (Member) *Who wouldn't want to start up an organization that gives you eternal life and freedom from taxes as well.*

You cannot be focused on accumulating earthly things and continue to grow spiritually. The important thing is what you do with what you have accumulated.



Luke 12:19: (NASB) *And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.*

He is saying, "I have done a good job for me!" There is nothing wrong with doing well and supporting your family. The important point is, *where is your heart?*



Observations:

- The arrogance that *can* come with earthly abundance shuts out the needs of the world around us.

God knew right from Israel's beginning that He wanted to bless them *in basket and in store*. He also knew the dangers of such blessing and warned them early on:

Deuteronomy 8:11-18: (NASB) ¹¹*Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes which I am commanding you today;*

How easily might we forget the power of God in our lives when we have abundance?

- The imagination that *can* come out of earthly abundance creates a false sense of security.

¹²*otherwise, when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built good houses and lived in them, ¹³and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold multiply, and all that you have multiplies, ¹⁴then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ¹⁵He led you through the great and terrible wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water; He brought water for you out of the rock of flint.*



This is like King Nebuchadnezzar who became arrogant, and God punished him for that attitude.

If my church is telling me that riches are my destiny, what happens to my instinctive leaning on God?



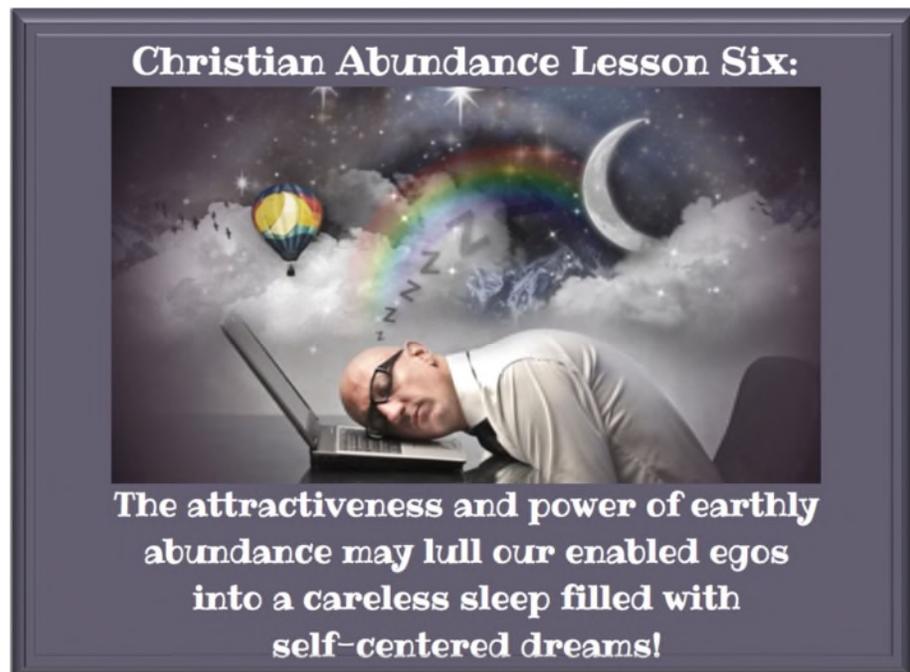
A caller from Washington suggests: Two words that came to my mind are *filthy lucre* mentioned in 1 Timothy 3:3,8 and Titus 1:11. The word *lucre* means gain. What is *filthy lucre*? I love Albert Barnes' Bible Commentary on this topic. "They make it their first object to acquire influence as ministers of religion and then abuse that to take money from the people. This they would doubtless do under many pretenses such as, that it was needed for the support of the gospel or for the relief of the poor, or perhaps the assistance of distant Christians and persecution. Religion is the most powerful principle that ever governs the mind." He wrote this in 1870, so this is not something new. I will leave you with Matthew 6:2,6,16.

- The ease that can come from earthly abundance creates an undisciplined and meaningless life.

Israel had dramatic history to rely upon when they needed to reassess their godliness:

¹⁶In the wilderness He fed you manna which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do good for you in the end. ¹⁷Otherwise, you may say in your heart, My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth. ¹⁸But you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day.

God took care of their needs as they wandered for 40 years. God takes care of our needs, not our wants.





**How does the story end?
What is the lesson to be learned?**

Luke 12:20: (NASB) *But God said to him, You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?*



Observations:

- The reality of the foolishness of a misapplied earthly abundance focus is harsh.

God was specific and clear - He must come first in the lives of His chosen people Israel:

Deuteronomy 8:19: (NASB) *It shall come about if you ever forget the LORD your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I testify against you today that you will surely perish.*

For the Christian, it is the same and nothing in our lives should ever obstruct our view of God:

Mark 12:29-31: (NASB) ²⁹*Jesus answered, The foremost is, Hear, O Israel! The LORD our God is one LORD; ³⁰and you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. ³¹The second is this, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*

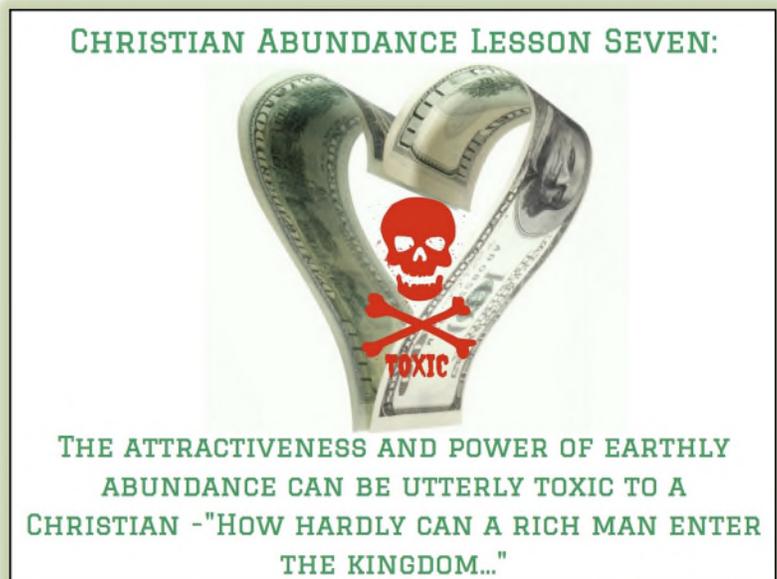
God must come first for Israel and for spiritual Israel (those who are following in Jesus' footsteps as closely as possible.)

- The irresponsibility that may develop from earthly abundance is embarrassing.

Think of being one who was part of the deliverance of Israel and then ignoring your deliverer:

Deuteronomy 8:20: (NASB) *Like the nations that the LORD makes to perish before you, so you shall perish; because you would not listen to the voice of the LORD your God.*

We have also been miraculously delivered - the same lesson applies!





Slick and self-created, Another Greedy Megachurch Twisting Scripture

- (Reporter) *What kind of person is Brian Houston?*
- (Man being interviewed) *He's a very slick creation of his own making, I think. He would have been successful in almost any business but he found Christianity and that's been his real bonanza, I think.*
- (Brian Houston) *Don't look back! Be committed to turn it into pools of blessing.*
- (Reporter) *Here you have to give to receive and the more you give, the more God will like you.*
- (Brian Houston) *Sowing so that we could reap, so that we could sow, so we could reap!*
- (Reporter) *Every Sunday there are 84 services like this held around Australia and the world, each one raking in tens of thousands at a time.*

Tithing is *not* scriptural. There has never been a Christian command for us to tithe. Tithing was never about money - it was for crops and animals that were needed to help others. Tithing was for Israel and not for Christianity.

Please see the **Bonus Material** for information on tithing.

To understand and to handle earthly abundance we first need blessing from on high:

James 3:16-18: (NASB) ¹⁶For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. ¹⁷But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. ¹⁸And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

Philippians 4:11,12: (KJV) ¹¹I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. ¹²I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound.

(Source: Biblical commentary by C.T. Russell) Let us, then, as the apostle did, learn how to abound, not allowing the abundance of earthly good things to swerve us from our consecration vows; and learn also how to be in want (need) and yet not to want anything beyond what the Lord's wisdom and providence see best to give - to be content.



A CQ live chat listener wrote: **Matthew 6:19-21:** (The Living Bible) *Don't store up treasures here on earth where they can erode away or may be stolen. Store them in heaven where they will never lose their value, and are safe from thieves. If your profits are in heaven your heart will be there too.*

Managing earthly abundance also requires us as Christians to not make up new rules as we go:

1 Timothy 6:3-9: (NASB) ³If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, ⁴he is conceited and understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, (advocating different doctrines and not agreeing with the words of Jesus) ⁵and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, **who suppose that godliness is a means of gain** (Hijacking the gospel of Jesus Christ and making it a "good spell" of a good talker.) ⁶But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. ⁷For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. ⁸If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. ⁹But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.



Is your church teaching you to seek after wealth? Jesus never taught us to do that. Stay on target with doctrine, look out for those who would abuse Christianity for their own gain and master the art of contentment.



Bottom line, how do we become rich toward God?

The dominating factor in your life must be how to be like Jesus and walk in his footsteps.



Luke 12:21: (NASB) *So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.*

We must be aware of the effect of our possessions and realize they can easily derail our purpose in life. Use what you have for the glory of God. There are examples of those in Scripture who were well-off and still acceptable before God.

James 2:1-3: (NASB) *¹My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism. ²For if a man comes into your assembly with a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and there also comes in a poor man in dirty clothes, ³and you pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, You sit here in a good place, and you say to the poor man, You stand over there, or sit down by my footstool.*

There is no difference in the body of Christ between wealthy and poor. They can come together on equal footing.



New way to tithe, Another Greedy Megachurch Twisting Scripture

- (Pastor) *Don't give in the sense of like, well what I did last year. How about let's have a new way, a new way of giving.*
- (Reporter) *It's Sunday morning and we're under cover at this undercover Hillsong service. Within minutes the talk turns to money.*
- (Pastor) *Tithe this year and if you do tithe how about you do it online, it's a new way. It's different.*
- (Reporter) *We're told to give more than we've ever given before in the form of a tithe.*
- (Pastor) *So, how about this year do a new way. Give in a new way, give joyfully, give online, give cheerfully and you'll find, I tell you what, God will bless you. It's a new year, it's a new year and let's expect that.*



This is twisting Christianity!

So, what are the godly riches we ought to strive toward?

Generous giving:

2 Corinthians 9:6-15: (NASB) *⁶Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver (directly supporting the poor.)*



The Apostle Paul worked for a living and supported himself. He collected for the poor and he never took anything for himself. Our abundance is in what we give, not what we get!

Acceptance:

⁸And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed; ⁹as it is written, he scattered abroad, he gave to the poor, his righteousness endures forever. ¹⁰Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness; ¹¹you will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God.

Out of that giving attitude comes the acceptance of God's supplies so we can continue our giving.



Christian Questions does not have a payroll. Many contribute money to Christian Questions, but it never goes to any individual. It ALL goes to the putting forth of the Gospel. Everyone on the Christian Questions staff is a volunteer. It is a privilege and a blessing to serve God through Christ!

Service:

¹²For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God. ¹³Because of the proof given by this ministry, they will glorify God for your obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ and for the liberality of your contribution to them and to all, ¹⁴while they also, by prayer on your behalf, yearn for you because of the surpassing grace of God in you. ¹⁵Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

Contribution and thanksgiving - our abundance is reflected in the glory that goes to God, not to us.



Tithing explained, Another Greedy Megachurch Twisting Scripture

- (Reporter) What's the idea behind tithing and where does it come from?
- (Woman church member) Ten percent of your pre-tax income of whatever that is. It's this idea if you don't give you're robbing God and you don't want to rob God, do you?
- (Reporter) What about people who can't afford to give? The unemployed, people on disability pensions, single parents, are they off the hook?
- (Woman church member) No, everybody has to tithe. They will tell you that it goes back to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and that's why Cain killed Abel because he didn't tithe.
- (Reporter) The lights dim and the buckets go around. People handing over cash and credit card details.
- (Reporter) How much do you give the church?
- (Woman member) As much as I can.
- (Woman member) I give 10 percent as a base and I give more.
- (Woman member) I've seen much, much more blessing than I could ever have if I didn't give that 10 percent of my income to God.

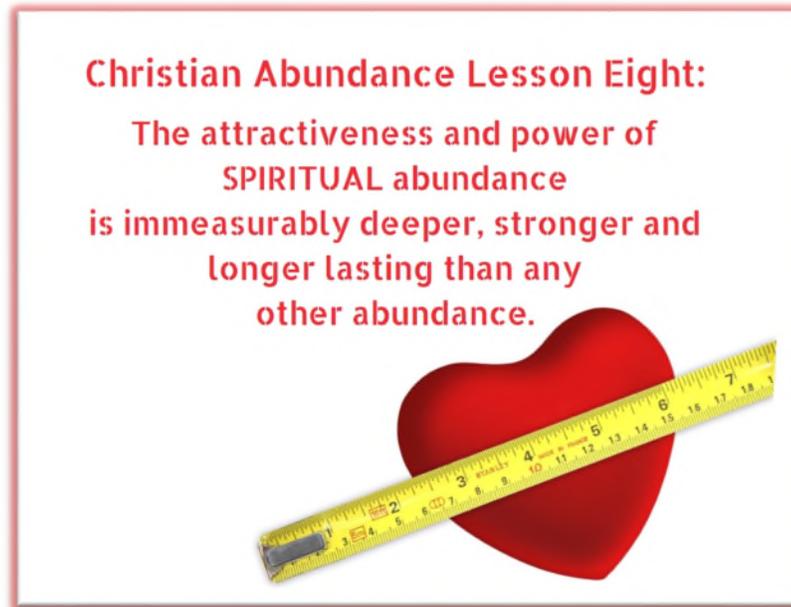


They are using guilt to convince people to tithe.



Contentment:

Luke 12:27-32: (NASB) *27Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; but I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. 28But if God so clothes the grass in the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will He clothe you? You men of little faith! 29And do not seek what you will eat and what you will drink, and do not keep worrying. 30For all these things the nations of the world eagerly seek; but your Father knows that you need these things. 31But seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you. 32Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom.*



Put aside the earthly things and focus on the spiritual. Bring glory to God!

*So, is Christianity a greedy religion?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*

*And now even more to think about...
only in the **Full Edition** of CQ Rewind!*



With the massive corruption in Christianity, it is no wonder this next quote exists:

All religion, my friend, is simply evolved out of fraud, fear, greed, imagination and poetry. — Edgar Allan Poe

An extensive look at Old Testament tithing shows us tithing belongs in the Old Testament.

The Law of the Jews:

Leviticus 27:30: (NASB) *Thus all the tithe of the land, of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S; it is holy to the LORD.*



The tithes were to come from the land that God would give them, and those tithes would be considered holy before God:

Numbers 18:20-21: (NASB) ²⁰Then the LORD said to Aaron, You shall have no inheritance in their land nor own any portion among them; I am your portion and your inheritance among the sons of Israel. ²¹To the sons of Levi, behold, I have given all the tithe in Israel for an inheritance, in return for their service which they perform, the service of the tent of meeting.

The Jewish people were to give a tenth to support the Levites, who had no inheritance in the land - no land ownership - therefore no way to sustain their lives.

The Levites also had a responsibility to offer a tenth:

Numbers 18:25-30: (NRSV) ²⁵Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²⁶You shall speak to the Levites, saying: When you receive from the Israelites the tithe that I have given you from them for your portion, you shall set apart an offering from it to the LORD, a tithe of the tithe. ²⁷It shall be reckoned to you as your gift, the same as the grain of the threshing floor and the fullness of the wine press. ²⁸Thus you also shall set apart an offering to the LORD from all the tithes that you receive from the Israelites; and from them you shall give the Lord's offering to the priest Aaron. ²⁹Out of all the gifts to you, you shall set apart every offering due to the LORD; the best of all of them is the part to be consecrated. ³⁰Say also to them: When you have set apart the best of it, then the rest shall be reckoned to the Levites as produce of the threshing floor, and as produce of the wine press.

So, the Levites had to give the BEST tenth to the priesthood - Aaron and his sons.

So far, the giving of tithes was limited to the following conditions:

- They were of the increase from the land only, either of the harvest or cattle (both of which grew because of the land).
- Tithes were given to those who had no land, but who served the people spiritually instead.

There were other tithes on top of the tithes given to the Levites, for a total of three:

1. The tithe given to support the Levites. (Numbers 18:21)
2. The tithe to be used by the tither to be able to worship the Lord throughout the year. (Deuteronomy 14:23) You have heard of “emergency funds”? This was a “Worship fund”!
3. The tithe - once every three years for: (Deuteronomy 14:27-29)
 - a. Levites in your hometown
 - b. Strangers in your hometown
 - c. Fatherless or orphans in your hometown
 - d. Widows in your hometown

These tithes were required by the same Levitical Law and ALL tithes were “land based.”



Tithes were NEVER money. They were ALWAYS harvest or cattle:

2 Chronicles 31:5-6: (KJV) ⁵And as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and of all the increase of the field; and the **tithe <04643>** of all things brought they in abundantly. ⁶And concerning the children of Israel and Judah, that dwelt in the cities of Judah, they also brought in the **tithe <04643>** of oxen and sheep, and the **tithe <04643>** of holy things which were consecrated unto the LORD their God, and laid them by heaps.

Tithe: Strongs #4643 tenth part

Jesus did NOT teach tithing for the Christian.

Let us look at another New Testament text that confirms that Jesus could NOT have perpetuated such a ritual:

Hebrews 7:11-13: (NRSV) ¹¹Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood—for the people received the law under this priesthood—what further need would there have been to speak of another priest arising according to the order of Melchizedek, rather than one according to the order of Aaron? ¹²For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. ¹³Now the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar.

The inability of the Law and its priesthood (due to sin) to bring the people to God caused a change - now there would be a new High Priest and a new priesthood:

1 Peter 2:9-10: (NASB) ⁹But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a Holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

What kind of inheritance was this new priesthood given?

John 14:2-3: (NASB) ²In my Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

Notice, the core point of Old Testament tithing was *the land* of Israel that God gave to His people. This is no longer a part of the conversation.

If tithing were a New Testament command or continuation, then consider the following:

- Gentiles were being converted in droves.
- Gentiles were pagan and had no sense of the Jewish Law, including tithing.
- This caused many major conflicts, especially concerning the rituals of the Law relating to the Gentiles.
- The conference in Acts 15 targeted the most major conflicts between the two cultures.
- Tithing was NEVER even mentioned at this conference.
- Gentiles had never tithed and were NOT being asked to tithe.