

“Lightning & Thunder”

(Grace & Giving)

A special series on Stewardship – Part 3

3/11/07

Text: Luke 19, Matthew 19, Mark 12

Charles Spurgeon was once invited by a wealthy man to come down and preach in a country church in order to help them raise funds to pay a debt. The man told Spurgeon he was free to use his country house, his town house, or his seaside home. Spurgeon wrote back and declined coming and said, ‘_____’.

(From Brian Kluth’s *Biblical Generosity* site).

The sheer enormity of Scripture teaching on the subject of money and possessions screams for our attention. WHY does God provide us with so much instruction on this area?

THE REALITY OF SALVATION --

Case #1 - Luke 19 – ^dHe entered Jericho and was passing through. ²And there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. ³And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small of stature. ⁴So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. ⁵And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.” ⁶So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. ⁷And when they saw it, they all grumbled, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.” ⁸And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.” ⁹And Jesus said to him, “TODAY SALVATION HAS COME TO THIS HOUSE, since he also is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost” (v.1-10).

Case #2 - Matthew 19 – ^{d6} And behold, a man came up to him, saying, “Teacher, what good deed must I DO to have eternal life?” ¹⁷And he said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments.” ¹⁸He said to him, “Which ones?” And Jesus said, “You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, ¹⁹Honor your father and mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” ²⁰The young man said to him, “All these I have kept. What do I still lack?” ²¹Jesus said to him, “If you would be perfect, go, sell what you

possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” ²²When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. ²³And Jesus said to his disciples, “Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven” (v.16-23).

Case #3 - Luke 3 – ^dIn the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar...the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins....

⁷He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. ⁹Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰And the crowds asked him, “WHAT THEN SHALL WE DO?” ¹¹And he answered them, “Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise.” ¹²Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, “Teacher, what shall we do?” ¹³And he said to them, “Collect no more than you are authorized to do.” ¹⁴Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what shall we do?” And he said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages” (v.1, 3, 7-14).

Case #4 - Mark 12 – ^{d1} And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. ⁴²And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. ⁴³And he called his disciples to him and said to them, “Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. ⁴⁴For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.”

Q. – Can we say ‘Amen!’ to the cry to deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Him with no connection and affect on our money and possessions?

Q. – Will we consider the truth that what we do with our money influences the very course of eternity?

KEY POINT: How we handle our money is a litmus test of our true character. It’s an index of our spiritual life. Our stewardship of our money and possessions becomes the story of our lives.