

THE (RIGHT or) KINGDOM ATTITUDE TO RICHES

I have asked God many times what should the church do to get His people to understand His ways with money and riches and in my heart there is always and only one resounding answer.... **TEACH WHAT JESUS TAUGHT** without compromise!

‘My sheep listen to MY VOICE.. I know them and they follow ME’ (Jn 10:27)

Luke 12:13-15 ‘Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a mans life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions’

Note The applies to covetousness as much as greed - both are defined as idolatry (Col 3:5)

Note People today with wealth KNOW the emptinessit does not bring joy or life!

Luke 12:16-21 The parable of the rich fool has a few key issues by which Jesus undermines the belief that riches will bring joy and security:-

Vs 17 The problem and worries of **safely** hoarding.....esp. when we know what Jesus says in Mat 6:19 ‘Do not store up for yourself treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and thieves break in and steal’

Vs 18 Hoarding rather than generosity is greed and selfish...this is clearly not the way of God

Vs 21 Riches hoarded will blind our spiritual focus...and put us in grave danger

Vs 20 The futility ‘You FOOL! This very night your life will be required from you’.

1 Tim 6:7 ‘For we bought nothing into this world and we can take nothing out of it’

The world today is set up to try and get people to part with their money by internal and external pressures.....and many people in the world see the Church as no different!

Jesus makes no compromise but His way is different. Because He says ‘Make me the LORD of your life’ rather than saying ‘GIVE ME YOUR MONEY’ people know they have a choice to make...the Kingdom of God or not

The Rich Young Ruler

Luke 18:18-27 Jews under the Law looked to keeping the commandments as the way to be saved. They saw primarily the external observation as the requirement without looking at the heart. From the question asked 'What must I **do** to inherit eternal life?' it is clear that observing the Law had brought no satisfaction to him.

He claimed to have kept the Law by observing those commandments which involved relationships with people but Jesus by pointing out what he lacked and suggesting the remedy effectively asked the key question 'Is your love of money greater than your love of God?'and hit the raw nerve.

Jesus does not compromise on this point 'You cannot serve God and mammon/money/riches'

I got saved 30 plus years ago when I was an almost penniless student but after having an encounter with God last year I realise that this issue is still a 'no-brainer'. If you let money become your God you cannot have God in your life.....HE DOES NOT TAKE SECOND PLACE (Mat 10:39)

IF YOU HAVE EVER KNOWN GOD YOU WILL FIND NO SATISFACTION IN A LIFE WITHOUT HIM

To the rich person who wants to find God and thereby eternal life there is no other answer.....you have to accept God as the LORD and your first priority (You shall have no other Gods before me) and you have to follow Jesus (Mat 10:37-39 taking up your cross daily ...ie death to the self centred life and living the God centred life)

WHAT AN ANATHEMA IT IS TO SEE MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL WHO APPEAR TO LIVE A LAVISH AND WORLDLY LIFE! (but be honest, they are very few and far between!)

Vs 25 'How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the Kingdom of God. Indeed it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of the needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God'

Note 'Who then can be saved?'ie all men are rich in some way.....we all have things we have to let go of to be able to follow Jesus

Note 'What is impossible with men is possible with God'when God draws us he empowers us to make the decision....ie what choice do we really have (Jn 6:68 'Lord to whom shall we go...you have the words of eternal life')

**THE KEY IS THAT OUR SURRENDER IS TO GOD AND NOT TO MEN.....
WE MUST ACCEPT THAT WE ARE ONLY STEWARDS OF
THE RICHES AND AS SUCH HAVE A KINGDOM FOCUS**

**Generosity is a non-negotiable response as a reality of having experienced Gods
gift of salvation through Jesus to us (ie Zaccheus)**

Mat 5:42 Give to him who asks you and do not turn away from the one who
wants to borrow from you

Note This would not be for his greeds, wastes or to support his addictions
but for his **NEEDS**

Luke 10:25 The parable of the good Samaritan shows who we should be
helping.....those who through no fault of their own are in trouble

**GOD PUTS POOR PEOPLE IN OUR WAY TO TEST OUR HEARTS
ie Lazarus at the rich mans gate (Luke 16:19)**

Heb 13:1-2 'Let brotherly love continue, do not forget to entertain strangers for by
doing so some have unwittingly entertained angels'

It is not our religiosity which counts but our generosity

**GOD HAS ORDAINED THAT HIS MINISTERS SHOULD BE SUPPORTED
(1Cor 9:14)**

Mat 10:40-42 'He who receives you, receives me and he who receives me receives
him who sent me'

Vs 42 'and if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones
because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose
his reward'

**THE ONLY RICHES YOU CAN TAKE WITH YOU ARE THOSE THAT YOU
ACCUMULATE IN HEAVEN BY YOUR GENEROSITY ON
EARTH AND BY SOWING INTO HIS KINGDOM**

Mat 6:1-4 'Be careful not to do your acts of righteous before men to be seen by
them. If you do you will have no reward from your father in heaven'

'so that your giving may be in **SECRET. Then your Father who sees
what is done in secrete will reward you.**

1 Tim 6:17-19 Charge those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to
trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us all things
richly to enjoy

Let them do good, that they may be rich in good works, ready to give and willing to share

Storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life

Luke 16:9 'I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourself, so that when it (and your life) is gone you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings'

Note In the same way as the dishonest steward did, in the worldly sense, we as children of the light should use our masters wealth wisely with an eye to the future ie eternity

RICHES HAVE THEIR GREATEST VALUE WHEN WE CAN SEE THEM AS A MEANS TO BE A BLESSING TO OTHERS AND TO HAVE THE PRIVILEGE TO BE ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE WORK OF THE KINGDOM....AND FOR THIS WE OURSELVES WILL BE BLESSED!

The Widows mite

Luke 21:3-4 The key to this is that the widow gave freely all she had.....as an expression of her faith..... 'God I have nothing left to live on ...no wealth of my own and I am trusting you to look after me and supply my need'

The poor should have the freedom to give what they can and as they want to.....so the rich too should freely give what they can....and as they want to

The parables of the 'Talents' and the 'Sheep and the Goats'

Mat 25:14-31 and 31-46 are an essential read.....and very seldom preached today

Please notice the emphasis about these talents is that God expects us to work productively and wisely with what HE provides us in life (ie the 'Talents'). It is HE who provides us with our skills and opportunities and servants know all belongs to HIM (Deut 8:17&18)

The sheep and the goats are distinguished by one criteria.....their demonstration of love for those who are need ..physically and spiritually!.

? How much do you want to hear Jesus say "Well done thou good and faithful servant....come and share in your masters happiness" and "Come blessed by my Father, take your inheritance in the kingdom"

LOVE FOR CHRISTS BRETHREN & THE LOST EXPRESSED THROUGH GENEROSITY TO THEM AND HIS WORK IS NON-NEGOTIABLE – IT IS THE PROOF OF FAITH

(Heard the joke about rich man who tried to take his money with him...and the doctor, lawyer & pastor?)

