

"NO STORED/LAID-UP FINANCES"

The First-Century Gospel Church/Philadelphia

(S98R)S210R

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The natural state of mind that all people are born with, is just the opposite of what the Scriptures teach. In fact, to begin with in this life, we know nothing about what the Scriptures teach, so we are not on Scriptural grounds in any part of our life. Most people get settled in those wrong ideas before coming to know God and His Word, which teaches and instructs us how we should live our life on earth.

However, when we come to God and allow Him to get possession of our life, He will begin the tedious process of teaching us to learn what the Scriptures have in store for us, as we permit God to instruct us to know those things that we all need to learn in order to live our life in obedience to His Word. The Scriptures do not register with us at first, and they could seem like water running through a sieve, but if we will hold steady in trusting God to enable us to grow spiritually and be developed in the Truth, the Scriptures will become plainer and clear (and we will begin to get some real understanding of them).

It can be a long, tedious process for a person to learn and fully understand the Scriptures and accept the fullness of their teaching. (The late Pastor said) that is the reason why some people think that the principles of Truth we have learned and have been led to teach others, is our own teaching and not founded on both the teaching and practice of the New Testament, and God's Scriptures on the whole. One of the first principles of Truth that people who are not yet taught by God will want to dispute, is that of not owning property and having stored (laid-up) finances to depend on (instead of depending on God).

However, after one has been in the Truth (in real touch with God's Word for many years), they come to know all about that principle of Truth, because they have been taught by God, Himself via learning experiences. Within that long space of time, God has had opportunity to use many circumstances to give them a real knowledge of the Scriptures and understanding of the real meaning of the Scriptures. This explains that big difference between the full Truth God has given to 'Believers', and the attitude taken by a 'compromiser' of the Truth (one who professes to be a true believer but is not). The truth is, that they have never gotten down to the Word of God (to be able to learn of its fullness), and so have not grown spiritually with each step, which is only learned through a trusting faith on God's Word and the power of the Blood of Christ that stands behind it. (2 Cor.1:20-21) "For all the promises of God, whatever their number, have their confirmation in Him; and for this reason through Him also our "Amen" acknowledges their truth and promotes the glory of God through our faith. But He who is making us as well as you steadfast through union with the Anointed One, and has anointed us, is God,".

God will lead us away from trusting on 'stored up money and 'financial assets' and will lead us quickly into His financial plan. He will lead us to the extent that we trust Him, instead of trusting on man and his plans to insure financial security for unbelievers.

"In a personal experience that God used to begin working with me after I had first received my healing" (the late Pastor said), "I was away from my home for a time and desperately needed some money for postage and other expenses. I had already learned that I could not ask another living soul for a cent. Before I got ready to mail my letters, I settled it in my mind to trust God for money for that postage. About ten minutes before I left to take the letters to the Post Office, God saw to it that I received far more than the amount needed for postage, (and it was given to me by a person who had no way of knowing that I had prayed), nor that I needed the money."

That is how quickly God will work once we make our final decision to place our trust only on Him to provide our needs (on time), because this incident took place just a few months after I had been healed and became a believer on God. That is the basis of God's whole financial plan that we must follow, if we want to grow and develop in the Truth of His Word, which is trusting in God for our needs, not trust on man.

God gave us His financial plan from the Scriptures, so if anybody wants to question it they will have to have it out with God and His Word, (not with us), which is God's Word, which will judge us in the last day. (Jesus said John 12:48) "He who sets me at naught and does not receive my teachings is not left without a judge: the Message which I have spoken will judge him on the last day." (That makes it an 'eternal life issue' for us to obey the financial plan given us in God's Word, because Jesus told us that if we obey those Scriptures, we will not enter into that judgement. If we have not obeyed, we will be brought before the judgement bar of God and be shown where we ignored the plainly taught Truth given us in the Scriptures, or where we neglected and disobeyed. We will be forced to admit that our own condemnation is just and right. Then if we are so unfortunate as to go to the Lake of Fire because we were unwilling to repent of owning property and trusting on stored (laid-up) money or financial plans, it will be of our own doing, and be the result of our own misdeeds. (MP)

In His 'Sermon on the Mount', Jesus laid the foundation of God's financial teaching, in fact it is the foundation of His Gospel Message for mankind to accept and follow in life. He said (Matt.6:19-21) "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." [Jesus meant that if our treasure is laid up on earth, we will be controlled by self and the devil. If it is laid up in Heaven we will be controlled by the Holy Spirit.]

Jesus explained (Luke chapter 16), that if we are not Scriptural financially, neither will we be Scriptural spiritually, nor will we

get eternal life. That makes it very important indeed for us to be Scriptural in financial matters and not to have valuable things that could be treasured and depended on if money were needed. We can easily say that something is not a treasure to us, but how we dispose of the money when we sell that (or any other) possession, or, how we react when something is taken from us, — we will prove for ourselves whether or not it was a treasure to us.

Jesus does not want any treasure to become an idol in our life, because anything that we may treasure (or that we can trust or depend on in time of need), can easily become an idol to us, and idols can be in a multitude of forms. However, God commanded us (Exod. 20:3-4) "You shall have no other gods before (Or besides, me). "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below."

(Again, anything we can place our trust on instead of on God, can become an idol to us, and can prevent us from receiving eternal life if it is not repented of and gotten rid of).

Jesus gave us the story of the unjust steward who wasted his employer's money. He was called in and told that he was to be discharged from his stewardship (and that is what truly exposed the serious idol of false places of trust in his life). (Luke 16:3-4) "Then the steward said within himself, 'What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. 'I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.'" (He called his employers debtors to him and discounted their unpaid bills, so they would return the favor and give him a home when he lost his job).

Jesus applied that story to professing Christians of today's world, in saying (vs.8) "The master praised the dishonest steward for his shrewdness; for, in relation to their own contemporaries, the men of this age are shrewder than the sons of Light." (Being shrewd would not be something for a Christian to be proud of, as it really means in many instances that a person is dishonest and cannot be trusted).

(He meant) they handle their money to procure a home for the future when they don't have a salary coming in. That is saving up for a rainy day in the future, instead of believing that God will provide and care for our needs. But those professing 'children of God' do not handle their money in a way which will get them a home in Heaven.

Jesus followed up by giving us the basics of God's financial plan for us, (vs.9) "But I charge you, so to use the wealth which is ever tempting to dishonesty as to win friends who, when it fails, shall welcome you to the tents that never perish." (He meant), Scripturally use the money that passes through your hands in this life and believe His Word that God is preparing a permanent home in Heaven for you. He "shall welcome you to the tents that never perish."

Jesus then told us the reason why one would or would not have a home prepared that will 'never perish' (vs.10) "The man who is honest in a very small matter is honest in a great one also; and he who is

dishonest in a very small matter is dishonest in a great one also. If therefore you have not proved yourselves faithful (means Scriptural) in dealing with the wealth that is tainted with fraud, who will entrust to you the 'true good'?" (means true spirituality). (vs.12) "And if you have not been faithful in dealing with that which is not your own" (it belongs to God), "who will give you that which is your own?" (Meaning Eternal Life for being Scriptural about handling money).

(Luke 12:13) a man asked Jesus to "speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me." But He said to him, (vs.14) "Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?" (vs.15) "And He said to them, 'Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.'" (He was speaking about one's eternal life, which could not be possible to obtain if they have possessions which they can trust on instead of trusting on God to provide, (just as a child trusts on its parents to provide for them), because Jesus told everyone, that 'where your treasure is, there will your heart be also'. We all need to ask ourselves where does our heart really put its trust?... and then decide if we have a false place of trust in our life.

(Vs 16-21) "Jesus spoke a parable to them, saying: 'The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' "So, he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods.' (He would store up wealth for his future, he thought). "And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.'" (Take a long vacation from work and enjoy your wealth instead of helping other less fortunate persons). "But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?'" (Not only would someone else enjoy the wealth that he had accumulated, but God said, that his soul would be taken from him, and we know that our soul can only end up in one of two places,.. (Heaven for those who place their trust on God,... and the Lake of Fire for those whose trust is on some person, or place, or thing other than God).

Jesus qualified his teaching very clearly in (vs.21), "So is he who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich (in faith) toward God." (He left no doubt where the soul of a person who stores up things to depend on and is unrepentant of false places of trust— will spend eternity). They will not be welcomed into the tents that never perish (which God is preparing for all those whose trust is centered only on Him like a child to its parents).

(Vs.22-23) "Then He said to His disciples (meaning, those who believe on His almighty power to provide), 'Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on.'" (In other words, don't store up things for tomorrow). "Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing.'" "

He meant, if these wonderfully-made bodies would be given to us freely by God, how is it possible that He would not give us the lesser gift of clothing to cover. If He freely gave us life in these bodies without any condition on our part, how would it be possible that He would not give us the much lesser gift of food to sustain them.

To make the point clear to His listeners (those who trust on His power to provide for them) He gave them (including us) an example, (vs. 24-28) "Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life, {Or single cubit to his height}? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest? Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little (feeble) faith!"

We may think of ourselves, that we are full of faith and are righteous in God's sight. However, Jesus said "you of little faith!" because He knows what is in each person's heart (and whether or not we are really willing to trust on Him for everything in our life). Jesus knows that if we have stored up finances or other things to depend on, we will not be faithful in trusting on God's power to provide for us. (Vs 29), "Therefore, do not be asking what you are to eat nor what you are to drink; and do not waver between hope and fear."

That is why the Spirit inspired apostle James to tell us, "Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?" (James 2:5) And Jesus assured every 'believer' (Luke 12:32) "Dismiss your fears, little flock: your Father finds a pleasure in giving you the Kingdom."

Jesus proceeded to give us God's financial plan of trust, as He admonished us (vs.33-34) "Sell your possessions and give alms" (that means give to needy ones). "Provide yourselves with purses that will never wear out, a treasure inexhaustible in Heaven, where no thief can come, nor moth consume. For where your wealth is stored, there also will your heart be."

That means, when we sell our possessions and give the money to the poor, it is placed to our credit in Heaven's bank, and it gives us the right to draw from it during our entire life. It is drawing against God's inexhaustible wealth and could never be overdrawn. (Phil.4:19) "But my God—so great is His wealth of glory in Christ Jesus—will fully supply every need of yours."

Some, however, may ask the question, is money stored up in a house really a treasure laid up on earth? Well, what else could we call it? Common sense tells us that if we would have \$10,000 dollars stored up in a house (it is certainly not laid up in Heaven)—it is laid up on earth—and it could and would be depended upon. It is

exactly the same as having \$10,000 dollars in cash in a bank (as far as our support goes), and it becomes part of our living. That is why Jesus told us to sell (instead of buying), which should be plain for everybody to understand. "Sell your property and give proceeds to the poor", Jesus said, (and that is plain language for all of us to understand). To do so, would be removing those things that we would trust in and depend on. "For where your wealth is stored, there also will your heart be." Jesus said., He knew exactly what He was talking about (as stored up finances will keep a person from entering God's Kingdom, if they will not repent of that false place of trust in life.

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S98R/MAIN POINTS:

- 1... Before coming to a knowledge of the Truth which reveals God's plan of trust for 'believers', most people would have already placed their trust on laid-up finances, or some other human being, place, or thing to depend on instead of depending on God.
- 2... Jesus laid out the basis of God's financial teaching in His 'Sermon on the Mount', "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth",... "for where your treasure is there your heart will be also." That was spoken in clear and plain language so we could not mistake its meaning, and every true believer in Christ should regard that as a command from the One and only Savior who will determine where they will spend eternity. (John 12:48, Jesus said) "He who sets me at naught and does not receive my teachings is not left without a judge: the Message which I have spoken will judge him on the last day."
- 3... That means laid up finances and having treasures on earth that could be depended on, is an Eternal Life issue, which can keep a person out of Heaven if not repented of. False places of trust must be repented of, and our heart must be willing to trust on God alone to provide the needs, cares, and Scriptural requests in our life.