

john 15:4  
**A b i d e** in **ME**



Bible studies for disciples who make disciples

Loudonville Community Church

Volume 3 - Number 24  
The week of May 20, 2018

Sermon Series: *Money Matters*  
Guarding: Finding Your Joy in God  
Luke 12:13-21; 1 Timothy 6:17-19

**THIS WEEK'S CORE PRACTICE**

**Generous Giving:** Disciples of Jesus Christ freely give of their time, talents, and treasure to fulfill God's purposes.

The following article is comes from an interview conducted by Jo Kadlecck with Ted Wood during the financial crisis that occurred almost a decade ago.

**On The Economy: What Would John Wesley Do?**

**WENHAM, MA** - In the midst of challenging economic times, people look for advice and help from experts to navigate their way. If they were to ask Ted Wood, Gordon College professor of economics and business, what he'd say about today's crisis, he would point to John Wesley.

Yes, *that* John Wesley, the 18<sup>th</sup> century British preacher best known for founding the Methodist movement.

According to Wood, Wesley enjoyed the security of wealth largely because he wrote theological pamphlets and sold them for a penny during the 1700s. But it is one of Wesley's sermons, *The Danger of Riches*, that Wood believes offers particular relevance for today. In it, Wesley issues three principles for financial success, steps that could fit easily in today's self-help books: "I gain all I can, without hurting either soul or body. I save all I can, not willingly wasting anything. I give all I can, so I am effectually secured from laying up treasures on earth."

Wood, who is also co-director of Gordon's new Center for Nonprofit Organization Studies and Philanthropy, says Wesley's advice is especially worth heeding during times when many feel confused or distraught about finances.

"My take (on Wesley's sermon) is that the way to financial peace is this: Earn a little. Spend a little. Give a lot. Save a lot," Wood says. "These four steps, of course, often lead to a pretty simple lifestyle, but one that is free from anxiety."

Earn a little means that we should work to provide for ourselves and our families. Wood cites the woman in Proverbs 31 as an example of a hard working business person who buys vineyards, weaves her cloths, sells them in the marketplace and takes care of her family-all before sunrise. So what does it mean to earn only a little?

"The question is how much is enough? When making money is our principal goal, then there may be a problem," Wood says. "It comes down to the management of time and energy and what we value most. When a friend's son was a senior in high school, he made sure he went to every one of his son's basketball games. If his goal had been to earn a lot, he may have given up going to the games in favor of work."

Spend a little, according to Wood, means living a simple lifestyle with contentment. Again he cites a proverb on the subject, "Love of pleasure leads to poverty." Learning not to be impressed by wealth but to be content with the simple gifts of everyday life can help refocus a person's priorities.

Give and Save a lot might sound paradoxical, Wood says, but it's actually economically sound advice in preparing for the future. He says that wisdom often means saving for what's ahead with an eye on the needs of those around us. In contrast, fools too often spend all they have or hoard their possessions so tightly they miss the opportunities to help their neighbors.

"The key is to hold loosely onto that which we've been given," Wood says. "In the process, it's important to remember there's a difference between financial peace and financial freedom."

Wood says someone might have great wealth or financial freedom but carry an unhealthy amount of anxiety or greed with it. On the other hand, Wood finds it almost surprising - and certainly pleasant - to observe those whose lives are peaceful though their financial resources are limited. They are without the means to live extravagantly but somehow maintain a peace and genuine enjoyment.

"In the first case there is financial freedom but without peace, and in the second, financial peace even without freedom," Wood says. "The key is to know the difference, and Wesley's mandate - to gain, to save and to give - is at the heart of that."

## STEP ONE . . .

**READING** what the passage says  
(Read it at least three times)

Luke 12:13-21

<sup>13</sup>Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." <sup>14</sup>But he said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?" <sup>15</sup>And he said to them, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." <sup>16</sup>And he told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man produced plentifully, <sup>17</sup>and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' <sup>18</sup>And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. <sup>19</sup>And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.'" <sup>20</sup>But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' <sup>21</sup>So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

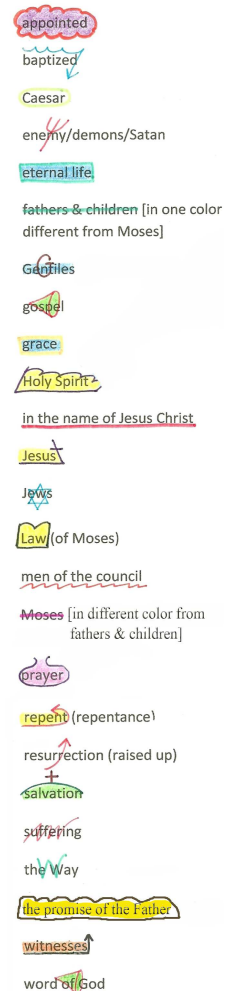
I Timothy 6:17-19

<sup>17</sup>As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. <sup>18</sup>They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, <sup>19</sup>thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

## STEP TWO . . .

**OBSERVING** how the passage moves  
Return to the passage and **mark key words, phrases and movements:**

- Circle all of the words in these passages that speak of the Triune God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit, etc.).
- Underline the significant verbs/action words in these passages.
- In Luke 12:14, underline the phrase "who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?"
- Highlight Luke 12:15.
- Highlight each occurrence of the personal pronoun "I" in Luke 12:17-19
- In Luke 12:19, underline the phrase "Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry."
- In Luke 12:20, underline the phrase "Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?"
- Highlight Luke 12:21.
- Highlight I Timothy 6:17.
- In I Timothy 6:18, underline the phrases "do good," "be rich in good works," and "be generous and ready to share."
- In I Timothy 6:19, underline the phrase "take hold of that which is truly life."



**STEP THREE . . .**

**Ask the five “W” questions and the one “H” question:**

1. **WHO** is speaking? Who is this about? Who are the main characters? And, to **whom** is it speaking?
2. **WHAT** is the subject of the passage? What does the passage say about the subject?
3. **WHEN** do or will the events occur? When did something happen to a particular person, people, or nation?
4. **WHERE** did or will this happen?
5. **WHY** is something said or mentioned? Why would or will this happen? Why at this time? Why this person?
6. **HOW** will it happen? How is it to be done? How is it illustrated?

**THIS WEEK'S  
COMPLEMENTARY PASSAGE**

Proverbs 30:7-9

<sup>7</sup>Two things I ask of you;  
deny them not to me before I die:  
<sup>8</sup>Remove far from me falsehood and lying;  
give me neither poverty nor riches;  
feed me with the food that is needful for me,  
<sup>9</sup>lest I be full and deny you  
and say, “Who is the Lord?”  
or lest I be poor and steal  
and profane the name of my God.

## STEP FOUR . . .

### UNDERSTANDING what the passage means

*This commentary is intended to enhance your own study of the text.*

#### Luke 12:13-21; I Timothy 6:17-19

##### Luke 12:13-21

**12:13** - “Someone in the crowd said to him.” Apparently this man broke into Jesus’ teaching session to ask a trivial question related to family inheritance. He did not think anything unusual about this because these were common questions addressed to rabbis, and it seems to relate to Deuteronomy 21:15-17.

**12:14** - “But he said to him, **“Man.”** This phrasing is a term of mild reproach (cf. 22:58, 60; Romans 2:3; 9:20).

**“Who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?”** Jesus is rejecting the idea that He is just another rabbi or local Levite. His task of proclaiming the arrival of the Kingdom of God took precedence over all other issues of life. The term “arbitrator” is only used here in the New Testament, but it is common in Greek literature.

**12:15** - “Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness.” This is a very emphatic statement in Greek. Greed (or covetousness) is the attitude and lifestyle of “more and more for me at any cost” (cf. Romans 1:29; Ephesians 4:19; 5:3; Colossians 3:5)! It is the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil! Greed kills (1 Tim. 6:9-10)!

**12:16** - “And he told them a parable.” The following context deals with right and wrong attitudes toward earthly possessions. This parable emphasizes the false security that money and possessions provide. There was a Roman proverb that says, “Money is like sea water, the more you drink, the more you want!” The problem here is not money, but the love of money, the priority of money, the self-sufficiency that money seems to provide (cf. Mark 8:36-37).

**12:17** - “And he thought to himself.” This phrase can be understood in two ways. (1) The rich man of Jesus’ parable began to reason or (2) the rich man reasoned within himself over and over again.

**12:19** - “Soul.” This is the Greek term *psuchē*, which reflects the Hebrew term *nephesh*. This refers to our being, our self, our personhood (cf. Acts 2:41; 3:23; Romans 13:1) or life force connected to this planet, this physical sphere of existence.

**“Relax.”** The theological emphasis here is on the frailty and presumption of human plans (cf. Proverbs 27:1; James 4:13-15). True life is much more than physical prosperity!

**12:20** - “Fool!” This man was not a theological atheist, but he lived his life in practical atheism, as so many in the church today (cf. Psalm 14:1; 53:1). The New Testament book of James is a good New Testament commentary on the priority of wealth! This is a different word for “fool” (*aphrōn*, cf. 11:40; 12:20; 1 Corinthians 15:36) and not the word “fool” (*mōros*) of Matthew 5:22, which reflects the Aramaic *raca*. Jesus Himself uses *mōros* in Matthew 23:17, 19.

**“And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?”** This is a penetrating question for materialists (cf. Psalm 39:6; 49:10; Ecclesiastes 2:18-23).

**12:21** - “Rich toward God.” It is so hard to keep time and eternity in proper balance in a fallen world with the residual effects of the fall in all of us (cf. 12:33; Matthew 6:19-34).

##### I Timothy 6:17-19

**6:17** - “As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty.” This phrase warns those who have money against putting their faith in it and not in Christ (cf. Matthew 6:19-21; 13:22; 19:23-30; James 1:9-11; 5:1-6).

**“Nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches.”** Humans tend to trust in their resources, not God’s resources (cf. 4:10; 5:5). Some of Jesus’ strongest words were directed at the wealthy (cf. Luke 18:18-30).

**6:18** - This verse contains Paul’s threefold guidelines for those who have worldly goods: (1) continue doing good (cf. 5:10; 2 Tim. 2:21; 3:17; Titus 3:1, 8, 14); (2) be ready to share; and (3) be generous (cf. 2 Cor. 8-9).

**6:19** - This verse reminds one of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, especially chapter 6 (cf. Luke 12:15). It uses two metaphors: (1) storing up riches and (2) building a sure and strong foundation. The wise use of wealth does both! By them believers take hold of true life (i.e. eternal life, cf. v. 12).

Resource for Commentary: Robert James Utley’s *Study Guide Commentary Series* from Logos Software.

## STEP FIVE ...

### SUMMARIZING the Message

It often surprises people when they discover how much Jesus spoke about money. Obviously, He wasn't afraid to discuss what most people would rather avoid talking about. It's appropriate to talk about money within the context of a local church because money is a spiritual issue.

#### The Setting

One day thousands of people were pushing and shoving one another just to get a glimpse of Jesus. In the bustle of it all, Jesus had been warning them to be on their guard against pharisaical phoniness (cf. Luke 12:1-12). Suddenly, one man's voice rang out above the chaos of the crowd: "Teacher," he shouted, "Tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." Here is a man who had one shot to ask Jesus anything he could. Instead of asking Him about how to have a relationship with God, he squandered his moment by attempting to drag Jesus into a family dispute over money (13). Jesus refused to play along. Instead, He detected something in the man's words (indeed, the man *commanded* Jesus to order his brother to do what he thought was just) and his attitude that disturbed Him. The man was greedy. Jesus spoke to him sternly (14) and candidly. He warned him of the menace of greed or covetousness (15). The force of Jesus' words carried the idea of fighting off a formidable foe. Greed is like a ravenous monster. It always wants more. It is never satisfied. Enough is never enough.

His appeal to the man was proverbial: "For one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (15). The issue was not wealth in and of itself. The Bible doesn't say that it is sinful to be wealthy. The point Jesus is making is that wealth and possessions will neither make our lives secure nor validate our self-worth. The stuff of life is not about having more stuff.

#### The Parable

After Jesus rebuffed the man, He told the crowd a parable (16-21). He described a story about a rich farmer who, like so many others, equate material abundance with happiness. This farmer had a very good year. His bumper crop exceeded his barn's storage capacity. So far, he's done nothing wrong. He sowed his seed and then reaped an abundance. Alas, a series of missteps quickly followed. His first mistake was that he thought to himself (17a). His second mistake was that he thought he was in control of his future. He used the personal pronoun *I* six times. He assumed he had the power over his own life. His third mistake was that he actually thought he owned his stuff. Four times he used the relative pronoun *my*. His fifth mistake was that he forgot how fragile life is. Life is shorter than we think. As we are today is not how we always will be. He failed to factor in his own death. Our souls are God's sole possession and He can demand them back at any moment. Sixthly, he lived foolishly, as if there was no God (cf. Psalm 14:1). He never asked God what he should have done. He saw himself as the master of his possessions rather than a steward of them.

#### The Lesson

The point of the parable is to challenge us on how we make financial decisions. Jesus taught that we have two options. We can either stockpile treasures for ourselves or we can be rich towards God (21).

The problem is that we don't see greed as the serious sin it is. God deemed greed to be so odious that He listed it among the Ten Commandments (cf. Exodus 20:17). Greed is a condition of the heart, a divided and diseased heart. It craves things that are temporal and devalues things that are eternal. Greed does not mesh well with the gospel. Life is not about getting what we want. The pattern of the gospel is the practice of self-sacrifice and giving. "God so loved the world that He *gave* ..." Giving is God's antidote to greed.

## STEP SIX . . .

### EXPLORING the passage through discussion

*Please try and read the entire passage before gathering with your Growth Group.*

#### Questions

**Icebreaker Question:** If time and money didn't matter, what would you spend your days doing?

1. Have you ever warned someone who was unaware of some dangerous situation they were about to face? What happened?
2. Read Luke 12:13-15. What is Jesus warning us to be on guard against in this passage?
3. Define greed. Why do we tend to dismiss greed as a lesser offense than other “big” sins?
4. Read Luke 12:16-21. Why does Jesus tell this story after his exchange with the man in the crowd?
5. What did the rich farmer do well? In what ways was he foolish?
6. Truly, living for the farmer was about getting as much as he could so that he could live as care-free as he could. What’s wrong with this approach to life?
7. In light of this passage, how do you sense God calling you to give from the wealth you possess?
8. Read 1 Timothy 6:6-19. Why is giving an antidote to greed and the secret to true gain?

**STEP SEVEN ...**

**APPLYING** the passage to my life

*Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the Word but doers ~ James 1:22*

When you apply God’s Word, you are thinking about what God might be saying to you through the Scriptures. Application involves action. Application makes your reading become a reality in your own life. Make your applications specific (state who, what & when). You are encouraged to use the **S.P.E.C.K.** method to apply God’s Word to your life. Remember that each passage of Scripture may not lend itself to answering all five of these questions.

**S - SINS** to confess and avoid (Are there sinful actions, attitudes or thoughts that you need to confess to God based upon your study of these Scriptures?)

**P - PROMISES** to claim (List God’s promises for you from these Scriptures.)

**E - EXAMPLES** to follow (What examples, for right thinking or right actions, can you take for your own life from these Scriptures?)

**C - COMMANDS** to obey (List God's commands for you from these Scriptures and seek to be obedient to them.)

**K - KNOWLEDGE** of God to apply (God's character is visible throughout the Scriptures as an example to us. What attributes and/or attitudes does God display that you can apply to your own life?)

### THE MISSION OF LOUDONVILLE COMMUNITY CHURCH

We are committed to reaching and teaching people to become devoted followers of Jesus Christ, connecting them to one another and sending them to serve their families, communities and world.

#### 10 CORE PRACTICES OF A DISCIPLE

**Undiluted Worship** *Matthew 22:37-40*

Loving the Lord God with all of our physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual vigor and, my neighbor as myself.

**Constant Abiding** *John 15:1-11*

Abiding in Christ in order to be faithful and bear fruit.

**Bible Study** *Hebrews 4:12*

Reading the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for daily life.

**Desperate Prayer** *Psalms 66:16-20*

Praying to God to know Him, laying requests before Him and, finding direction for daily life.

**Biblical Community** *Acts 2:44-47*

Fellowshipping with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, other people's lives and, in the world.

**Spiritual Gifts** *Romans 12:4-6*

Using my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

**Total Forgiveness** *Ephesians 4:30*

Practicing forgiving others as God has forgiven me in Christ.

**Tangible Compassion** *Matthew 25:31-46*

Showing compassion to those in need and so minister to Jesus Himself.

**Generous Giving** *2 Corinthians 8:7*

Giving away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

**God Space** *Ephesians 6:19-20*

Increasing the quantity and quality of our gospel conversations.

Sermon Notes:

2018: BOOK-AT-A-TIME ONE YEAR BIBLE READING PLAN  
(on LCC website)

Sunday, May 20 thru Saturday, May 26, 2018  
1 Samuel 16-19, Proverbs 27:1-14; 1 Samuel 20-22, Proverbs 27:15-27  
1 Samuel 23-25, Proverbs 28:1-14; 1 Samuel 26-28, Proverbs 28:15-28;  
1 Samuel 29-31, Proverbs 29:1-14; Philippians 1-4, Proverbs 29:15-27

**Memory Verse**

**<sup>15</sup> And he said to them, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."**

**Luke 12:15**