

## Cash Values *Matthias Media*

### 3. PRUDENCE -

Glancing back over studies 1 and 2, we could summarize the main points like this:

- a. God owns the money. It is his. Money and wealth are part of God's good creation given for our benefit.
- b. Mankind perverts God's good purpose by setting up money as an idol or false god. We end up serving the created thing rather than the creator. Greed is idolatry.
- c. We need to be wary of money's seductive power, and to not chase after it.
- d. We ought to be content with what God has given us.

This brings us to the next question: What should we do with our money? Given that we are thankful to God for his generosity, and that we are being careful not to be lured into serving money, how should we spend what we have? What principles should guide us?

The book of Proverbs has quite a bit to say about money. Some of its advice is ethical or moral in nature, but much of it is simply in the category of commonsense. Christians would do well to heed its advice. Becoming a Christian doesn't magically give us the ability to handle money and know how to manage it; the mess that many Christians make of their finances gives ample testimony to this. Indeed, quite often, the problems that we have with money stem from a basic inability or even naivety in the daily use and management of what God has given us.

Proverbs gives very straightforward advice and instructions from the Maker himself, and, as always, his guidelines have value for this life and for "the life to come" (1 Tim 4:8).

Let's look at some of the key things that Proverbs can teach us about money.

## INVESTIGATE

1. Read the following passages from Proverbs. What do they say about the right way and the wrong way to earn and manage money?

Proverbs 1:10 – 19

Proverbs 6:6 – 11

Proverbs 12:11

Proverbs 24:27

Proverbs 27:23 – 27

Proverbs 28:20, 22

The right way:

The wrong way:

2. Read the following passages and write down what they tell us about right and wrong attitudes to money.

Proverbs 11:4, 28

Proverbs 23:4-5

Proverbs 30:7-9

Right attitudes:

Wrong attitudes:

3. Relations between the rich and the poor also figure prominently in Proverbs. The following passages illustrate the main ideas. Read them and then answer the questions.

Proverbs 10:15

Proverbs 14:20-21

Proverbs 28:27

- a. Is being poor a good thing in itself?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. What is the reality of life for the poor? How do they usually get treated?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- c. What is the right response to the poor?

#### **THINK IT THROUGH**

- How would you describe your own record in managing the money God has given you?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- What principles from Proverbs particularly need applying to your life? What practical steps can you take?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- How might Proverbs' teaching affect a Christian view of work? Are there some jobs we should avoid?

- Compare the insight of Agur in Proverbs 30:7 – 9 with Paul's words in 1 Timothy 6:6 – 8. What does this teach us about Christian living?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- How might a generous spirit towards the poor be worked out in practice in your church? Is there anyone in need among God's people (Gal 6:10)?

#### **GIVE THANKS AND PRAY**

- Thank God for the material and spiritual riches he has given you.
- Ask him to forgive you for the times when you have been unfaithful to him with your money.
- Ask God to help you cultivate godly attitudes towards money (e.g. contentment, generosity, diligence). Ask him to help you sow generously and wisdom to manage your finances in a way that honours Him.