

Series: Living Well with Wealth

Series Theme: John Wesley's principles on money: 1) Earn all you can., 2) Save all you can., and 3) Give all you can.

Sermon #1: "Earn All You Can"

Book: Earn. Save. Give. Wesley's Simple Rules for Money by James A. Harnish

Scripture: 1 Timothy 6:1-10

Theme: God's people see their money as God's, and are compelled to earn faithfully so that they provide for themselves and their loved ones, and have the resources to be generous.

Text: Proverbs 12:11 "Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits lacks sense."

Sermon Blurb: It's time to talk about money...and it's good that we do. Every day we struggle with how to handle our money well, so we need to come back to God and ask how we can do it better. But you might be surprised this Sunday. Rather than hearing about how we should learn to live on less and be content with that, we're discovering that God's word teaches us to be industrious and hard-working, earning, as John Wesley says, "all you can." What? Does this mean we should be work-oholics, and focused on our earning potential? Come this Sunday to learn how to live well with our wealth!

Gathering Song: *Chain Breaker*

Welcome: Pastor David

Worship Set: Sanctify

*Oh For a Thousand Tongues to Sing*

*Beautiful Things*

*The Same Love*

Worship prayer: Andrew

Kids to Kid's Church

Missions Moment: Brother Jeff and Palawan Ministry

Prayers: David

Serve Moment: Trunk-or-Treat - Julianne Benson

Offering: Emily Masterjohn

Message: "Earn All You Can" -Pastor David

**PP#1:** *Image of a person buried in lots of money.*

Living Seusically for God taught us that as Jesus-followers we live differently, day-to-day. Living for Jesus transforms our hearts, and because of that, it transforms our lives. So, for the next three weeks, we're going to hone in on something we all wrestle with every day: money. How does living for Jesus transform how we live with money?

Yes, I've spoken on this before. And I promise you I will speak on it again. Money is something that if we don't pay attention to it, it will get out of hand (pun intended!). It's kind of like owning a vehicle. If you don't keep up on service and maintenance, it will stop working for you.

**PP#2:** *Image of money with strong arms, with the idea of your money working for you!*

And that's kind of it, isn't it. We want our money to be working for us. And I don't mean in the investment sense. I mean, we want our money to be a well-serviced tool doing what we want it to be doing, helping us live the way we desire.

I've named this series on money, "Living Well with Wealth." We all live with wealth, even if it doesn't really seem that way at times. But we all have lots. We all have sufficient. We have more than we need. Maybe not all the same way, but we are all wealthy!

**PP#3:** *Image of Wesley & money quote:* <http://www.epm.org/blog/2014/May/14/john-wesley-giving>

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, identified three biblical principles of money. Living God's way, you see, does help people grow in wealth: it calls us to limit our extravagances, to give up wasteful habits, to be honest, reliable and have integrity, and to work hard. It's still true! In 2015, one in every four United Methodists earn at least \$100,000 a year!

Wesley's three biblical rules for money, said in Wesley's simple way, are: One: Earn all you can. Two: Save all you can. And three: give all you can. Today we take up the first.

**PP#4:** Living Well With Wealth

"Earn All You Can"

"Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits lacks sense." -Proverbs 12:11

Earn all you can. Our text is Proverbs 12:11. "Whoever works his or her land will have plenty of bread, but he or she who follows worthless pursuits lacks sense." -Proverbs 12:11

**PP#5:** *Bonsell's picture of the person floating in an inner tube.*

I want to begin with a massive shift. I think the only way we can actually talk right about money is by first changing our foundational assumptions.

Last week Andrew gave a powerful visual. You see, most of us have this assumption of what life is supposed to be like. Life is supposed to be basically fun, pleasant, and happy. Our mental picture of life is something like this guy floating down the river. It's all good! The focus is on if we are having a good time. Are things going well? Are we enjoying ourselves?

**PP#6:** *Bonsell's picture of a person swimming.*

But Andrew said that Christians should think about life more as a swimmer: with a focus, with a drive, working hard at our calling. We are here with a purpose. Yes, life is fun and enjoyable. But God has given us a calling. Life is not all about our pleasure. It's about our mission.

**PP#7:** *Both of Bonsell's images: floater and swimmer.*

So, this is the massive shift we need when it comes to money. The Bible's teaching on money only makes sense to the swimmer. It does not work for the floater. If we continue to believe that our money is ours and that we can spend it and manage it however we want, in ways that work best for our enjoyment, then the Bible really doesn't make sense.

So often we try to manage our money the way we want, and then we go to the Bible and have

it tell us how we can become better at getting what we want out of our money. So, when we are honest with ourselves, we usually ask some form of, “What do I have to do so that God will bless my money?” I have to give? Well, how much? How much do I have to give so that God will bless me the way I want? What is the amount? Is it a dollar figure? Is it a percentage? What’s the number?

Tithing is giving 10%. Hmm. That’s a lot. My neighbor is only giving 5% and he is living the way I want. So, sounds like the other 5% is just to make me feel good about being a giver, and I would prefer to feel good about my new snow machine.

**PP#8:** How we handle our money is determined by how we live:

	<b>Floaters:</b>	<b>Swimmers:</b>
<b>Control:</b>	Me. It’s about me.	Jesus. It’s about His mission.
<b>Blessing:</b>	I do what I need to so God will bless me.	I am called to be a blessing.
<b>Generosity:</b>	I give from my leftovers.	I give because it’s my identity.

The radical switch for Christians is that we are called to get out of the tube. We aren’t floaters. We’re swimmers. Floaters look at life, and their money, as all about them. They’re in charge. Their money, like everything else in their control, has to service them. Swimmers put Jesus in charge. We strive to the goal that He has set out before us. It’s not about us, it’s about His mission.

Blessing, for floaters, is managed so it is channeled towards them. I will do whatever the Bible says about money so that I will get the blessing. I will do what I’m supposed to do, so I can be a good person and don’t miss heaven. Swimmers live this life on mission, on mission to be a blessing. We wake up every day and ask God to...what did Andrew say last week? “Bring it on!” Our catch phrase to God is not “Bless me God,” but “At your service, God!”

Generosity stems from the first two. Floaters give from their leftovers. At the end of the month, they try to find a little something to put towards good causes. And, if their hearts are tugged on a bit, they might be persuaded to give a little more. Swimmers, however, like everything else they do, give methodically. Giving is one of their great joys in life. And they ask God to push them, and push them some more, challenging them to give more and more. They pray for God to make them generous, and they practice the discipline of increased giving.

**PP#9:** Earn all you can.

1. Our money is an extension of who we are.

The massive shift with how we think about money is that our money is an extension of who we are. This might not seem like a big shift...it may even seem obvious. But if we take this seriously, this massively shifts everything about us and money.

Hear me, church: Jesus-followers don’t come to the Bible asking for advice on how to manage their finances. That’s what a floater does. Jesus followers come to the Bible asking Jesus how to surrender their wealth to Him.

**PP#10:** Earn all you can.

1. Our money is an extension of who we are.
2. Jesus is Lord over all of us, including our wealth.

Are you with me church? Have you survived the massive shift? Everything we talk about is

going to be based on this crucial principle: We ask Jesus to be the Lord of our money! If you aren't on board with this, nothing will make sense. The Bible's teaching on money starts with making Jesus truly Lord...Lord of your life, Lord of your time, Lord of your resources, Lord of your family.

**P#11:** Earn all you can.

1. Our money is an extension of who we are.
2. Jesus is Lord over all of us, including our wealth.
3. Earn all you can.

So, if I've truly made Jesus Lord of my life and my finances, then Wesley is right in his first rule of money: earn all you can.

Now, you might expect a sermon on money to tell us to stop being slaves to money. We should not let money consume our lives. We should learn to focus less on material things and focus more on spiritual things, like what really adds meaning to life. Millennials are doing this. They look at older generations and see us way too money-centered. We work all day to earn more money to buy more things. But they see that's just not a rich life. They see older generations *living to work*. They're smart enough to learn from those mistakes. Instead, they are *working to live*. They only work as much as they need to in order to have what only money can buy, but they're not compelled to have all the stuff money *could* buy.

Yet, even to the millennials, the Bible warns against becoming floaters. They, also, are in danger of living too much for themselves, even if on less money.

Wesley taught that the biblical principle of living for Jesus in our world means working with God to make God's world more the way God wants it to be. And we really don't do that if we work more so that we can buy ourselves more luxuries, or if we work less so that we can spend more time with our best friends hanging out doing nothing.

Yes, the Bible also teaches a strong teaching on Sabbath, and work-life balance, and how luxuries in this life are blessings from God. But our goal isn't to have more or do less. Our goal is to manage our lives, and our monies, so that God can have more to work with in our lives.

**PP#12:** Earn all you can.

1. Our money is an extension of who we are.
2. Jesus is Lord over all of us, including our wealth.
3. Earn all you can.
4. Generosity is God's ultimate intention for our wealth.

Generosity is the ultimate goal God has for our relationship with money. God gives us money and our ability to earn money so that we can have what we need, so that we can have blessings and luxuries, so that we can provide for those in our care, but under all of this is the grand principle of generosity. We are made to be generous. God is generous, and we are made in His image. And one very effective way Satan keeps us from living into our God-image is to encourage us to be more selfish rather than generous. We need to earn all we can so that we have more opportunities to be generous, and in that, God can work through us, and our monies, to make a difference.

We need to make generosity a daily battle. We need to make becoming more generous a daily prayer. Every time we grab our debit card, or click the "add to cart" button, we need to ask God to make us more generous. When we go to work, on our way there, we can thank God for our jobs, not just so that we can provide for our families and have what we need, but so that we can supply our

generosity addiction. Only when we are crazy-generous will be finally be managing our money well, and we will discover that we are truly blessed. No, not irresponsibly. God wants us to be wise. But certainly crazy-generous when considered by the reasoning of this world.

My wife is crazy-generous. I am naturally wise...well, frugal...well, cheap. But together, I think, we make a great pair! Christmas is my wife's favorite time of year. And it really has nothing to do with Christmas. It's because it's at the end of the year. You see, we save up all year, putting extra money aside, beyond our normal tithe and offerings, so that we can give extra money away at the end of the year. And my wife's job is to find places to give that money to. She loves it! The regular monthly giving I make sure we do, is boring to her...it's so already planned. She loves the finding of places to give money to in ways that honors God. That is one of the reasons why my wife works: so she can be generous! It's my job to make sure she doesn't give away our savings, our emergency fund, the car!

Now, the Bible doesn't say that every person must work. I think it's talking more about generous households. Some people God is calling *not* to work out of the home. But generosity is still the goal, whether it be the money of the household, or time, or other resources.

Well, we haven't gotten to our Scripture yet. If you want an outline of the Bible's teaching on managing our money, see Paulette. She's leading the Financial Peace University class. She has all the Bible passages and verses. Maybe I can get her to post them on our church's web site for us.

But let's take a closer look at one passage of Scripture. Turn to 1 Timothy 6. In this chapter Paul is talking to his younger pastor-friend Timothy about how to live well with wealth. He starts by telling those who are slaves to obey their masters. That's kind of a hard place for us to start. So, I'm going to suggest that we start at the end, and work backwards. It might help us, who are eavesdropping on this passage written in a different time, to hear the godly principles at play here.

**PP#13:** 1 Timothy 6 (CEB)

9 But people who are trying to get rich fall into temptation. They are trapped by many stupid and harmful passions that plunge people into ruin and destruction. 10 The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. Some have wandered away from the faith and have impaled themselves with a lot of pain because they made money their goal.

So, go down the chapter to verse 9. We'll start there. Paul warns that trying to get more stuff, and money, and riches, doesn't work. "9 But people who are trying to get rich fall into temptation. They are trapped by many stupid and harmful passions that plunge people into ruin and destruction. 10 The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. Some have wandered away from the faith and have impaled themselves with a lot of pain because they made money their goal."

These are floaters. They want more. They have made money their goal. They want their money to do what they want. The focus is on them. But, as Paul says, this is not the blissful life they hope for. In fact, money becomes a snare to them, and causes them pain. It robs them of their joy.

Swimmers, in stead, have a different goal in mind. Their money sits under the Lordship of Jesus in their lives. Verse 6.

**PP#14:** 1 Timothy 6 (CEB)

6 Actually, godliness is a great source of profit when it is combined with being happy with what you already have. 7 We didn't bring anything into the world and so we can't take anything out of it: 8 we'll be happy with food and clothing.

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When we live with Jesus as our Lord of our money, we have enough. We are free from needing to have more and more. We are content with enough. And that principle, if we keep hanging on to it when wealthy, frees up more money for generosity!

Let’s go back to the floaters. Verse 3.

**PP#15:** 1 Timothy 6 (CEB)

3 If anyone teaches anything different and doesn’t agree with sound teaching about our Lord Jesus Christ and teaching that is consistent with godliness, 4 that person is conceited. They don’t understand anything but have a sick obsession with debates and arguments. This creates jealousy, conflict, verbal abuse, and evil suspicions. 5 There is constant bickering between people whose minds are ruined and who have been robbed of the truth. They think that godliness is a way to make money!

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Ouch. Floaters go to the Bible to discover principles they can use to make more money. But they don’t put their money under the Lordship of Jesus. They are conceited...focused on themselves. They argue over how much they should be giving, how much is enough.

So, Paul is encouraging followers of Jesus to live a different way with money. Jesus is Lord of our money, too. That’s godliness. Beware being addicted to more, and trying to use God’s principles just to squeeze out more for ourselves. Instead, be content. Be at peace. That frees you up to be generous.

Now, let’s go back to verse 1. Paul says that slaves are to do their work faithfully, treating their masters as people deserving God’s grace, loving them. Now, I don’t believe this passage condones slavery. But if you have slavery, how are Christians to live in it?

What if we heard this passage as talking about our work. We feel like slaves sometimes, don’t we? How should we treat our work? Our employers, our coworkers? Listen for that.

**PP#16:** 1 Timothy 6 (CEB)

1 Those who are under the bondage of slavery should consider their own masters as worthy of full respect so that God’s name and our teaching won’t get a bad reputation. 2 And those who have masters who are believers shouldn’t look down on them because they are brothers. Instead, they should serve them more faithfully, because the people who benefit from your good service are believers who are loved. Teach and encourage these things.

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believers who are loved. Teach and encourage these things.”

Our work masters are worthy of full respect. They are our brothers and sisters. How we work witnesses our faith to them. And there is one more reason why we should earn all we can. As we work, we witness. We help others see what it looks like to follow Jesus.

**PP#17:** *Image of the swimmer, with*, “Whoever works his or her land will have plenty of bread, but he or she who follows worthless pursuits lacks sense.” -Proverbs 12:11

Money: put it under the Lordship of Jesus. Earn all you can, for generosity’s sake. Not to acquire more for yourself, but so that you have resources to use as a blessing. Use well the time and talent God has given you, investing it like the story of the talents, so that it’s reward will compound to others. Feel good about your work. And do it with your best. And as you do, God will use you as a witness.

Amen.

Closing Song: *Jesus Paid It All*

Benediction: Pastor David

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