

Double-Entry Christianity: $\$Money = \sqrt{\sum Evil?}$

By David L. Burris

- The love of money is the root of all evil. That is the fundamental truth that I have verified through 3 decades of empirical, investigative, legal, academic research trying to answer some fundamental questions about human existence and why we behave the way we do, why we think the way we do, why we act the way we do...It is the love of money that has the potential to exterminate- to render extinct- the entire human race. – Michael Ruppert

Gilligan's Island was a very popular 1960's situational comedy. Part of its appeal was how it reduced to microcosm many social problems and simplified through satire the complexities of civilization. One of my favorite episodes aired in 1965 Season Two Entitled – "The Little Dictator." The title reveals the storyline – a deposed Latin American Dictator is exiled to Gilligan's Island because the usurpers believe it abandoned; The ex-dictator is provided a loaded revolver for "protection;" Once he finds he is not alone he takes over at the point of gun. The shipwrecked islanders count the ex-dictator's expenditure of bullets – awaiting to rebel after the sixth bullet. About mid-story "The Little Dictator" of Gilligan's Island decides the island needs its own monetary system. He announces that he will use tree bark and denominate its worth with his signature. When the islanders object to the worthless currency he enforces its acceptance at gunpoint.

The satire is in the simplification of the **debt backed - paper printed - fiat currency** of worldwide convention. In that there is no longer any link to precious metals with traded value like gold

and/or not having any traditional “representative value” - today’s currencies are not exchanged *voluntarily but by force* of government. Since paper comes from trees – they have as much intrinsic value as signed tree bark. Actually, given the germs, drugs, and embedded feces present in this *filthy lucre* – especially legal tender of lower denomination – the tree bark would actually be better!

Edward Griffin in his renowned book outlining the history of the U.S. Federal Reserve - “The Creature from Jekyll Island” - begins with a world history by way of currency typology. Barter being considered Pre-Money, Griffin categorizes the historic mediums of exchange in four part – Commodity Money, Receipt Money, Fiat Money, & Fractional Money. On page 139 he traces the transition from the barter of staples to the first primitive forms of exchange by currency: “Ornaments were prized when the food supply was ample, and there is evidence of some societies using colored sea shells and unusual (Quartz) stones for this purpose.” Note: Animal Teeth or Tusks & Beads or Decorated Feathers also have a long history.

The internet website – [The History of Money](#) - gives special attention to *King Henry the 1st About the Year 1100*. This first King Henry “produced sticks of polished wood, with notches cut along one edge to signify the denominations. The wood stick was then split full length so each piece still had a record of the notches. The King kept half for proof against counterfeiting, and then spent the other half into the market place where it would

continue to circulate as money. Because only Tally Sticks were accepted by Henry for payment of taxes, there was a built-in demand for them, which gave people confidence to accept these as money. He could have used anything really, so long as the people agreed it had value, and his willingness to accept these sticks as legal tender made it easy for the people to agree. Money is only as valuable as people's faith in it, and without that faith even today's money is just paper. The tally **stick system worked really well for 726 years**. It was the most successful form of currency in recent history and the British Empire was actually built under the Tally Stick system."

In other words, by agreeing to the signature authority of this printed processed tree bark, society imputes value to what would just as easily have been produced into tissue wipe.

However, individuals within society differ as to this printed paper's perceived value relative to securing treasure on earth and in its inverse relationship - to storing treasures in heaven.

Money horizontally focused moves from instrument to idol.

Colossians 3: 5 – "Therefore, put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and *covetousness, which is **idolatry***." - i.e. Baal Worship.

Money vertically focused moves from mammon to manna.

Matthew 6: 24 & 1st Timothy 6: 9–11 both reference “The Love of Money.” According to *Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* the two Greek words translated for “love” found in these money topical verses are either *philarguria* or *philarguros* – both being ancient and classic words specific for love and lovers of money. The closest term of translation in English is “avarice”; Applied contextually, within these verses, “avarice” is signifying – “an excessive or inordinate desire for gain” or “a great desire to be rich.” Moreover, 1st Timothy 6: 10 links this avarice love to evil influence: “*It (money) is a root of all (kinds of) evil.*” Told in story form, money’s potential for evil & good is well illustrated in the **Parable of the Unjust Steward**.

NKJV @LUKE 16:1 He *also* said to His disciples: "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. **2** So he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.' **3** 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. **4** I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.' **5** So he called every one of his master's debtors to him, and said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' **6** And he said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' So he said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' **7** Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' So he said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' **8** So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light. **9** And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home. **10** He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. **11** Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? **12** And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your own? **13** *No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.*" **14** Now the Pharisees, who were **lovers of money**, *also heard* all these things, and they **derided Him**. **15** And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but **God knows your hearts**. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God. [NOTE: Verses 1 & 14 indicate that this proverb is in relationship to the prior three – especially that of the one previous – The Prodigal Son. In other words, there should not have been a chapter break here between chapters 15 and 16. The audience is the same although there has been a shift in proximity to the speaker reflecting the intended target of the last parable – the disciples.]

The Honor-Shame Societal Setting of Reciprocity Obligations:

Patronage and Friendship

“Numerous examples of **brokerage** can be found in the letters of Cicero, Pliny the Younger and Fronto, correspondence providing windows into public policy from the late republic through the second century of the empire. Pliny’s letters to the emperor Trajan (dating from A.D. 111–113, the time during which Pliny was governor of Bithynia) contain attempts by Pliny to procure imperial favors for his own friends and clients. In one such letter (*Ep.* 10.4), Pliny introduces a client of his, named Voconius Romanus, to Trajan with a view to getting Voconius a senatorial appointment. He addresses Trajan clearly as a client addressing his patron and proceeds to ask a favor for Voconius. Pliny offers his own character as a guarantee of his client’s character, and Trajan’s “favorable judgement” of Pliny (not Voconius, whom he does not know) would become the basis for Trajan’s granting of this favor. Should the favor be granted by the emperor, Voconius would be indebted not only to Trajan but also to Pliny, who will, in turn, be indebted further to Trajan.⁶ The broker, or mediator, at the same time incurs a debt and increases his own honor through the indebtedness of his client. Brokerage—the gift of access to another, often greater patron—was in itself a highly valued benefit. Without such connections the client would never have had access to what he desired or needed. This is especially apparent in the case of Pliny’s physical therapist, Arpocras, who gains both Roman and Alexandrian citizenship by means of Pliny, who petitions Trajan on his behalf (*Ep.* 10.5–7, 10). Pliny gives this local physician access to the emperor, the fount of patronage, which he would never have enjoyed otherwise. Brokerage could even intervene in the judicial process. Both Cicero⁷ and Marcus Aurelius (*Ad M. Caes.* 3.2) use their connections of friendship with a judge to secure favorable outcomes for their clients, on whose behalf they write.

The Social Context of Grace

We have looked closely and at some length at the relationships and activities that mark the patron-client relationship, friendship and public benefaction, because these are the social contexts in which the word *grace* (*charis*) is at home in the first century A.D. Today, *grace* is primarily a religious word, heard only in churches and Christian circles. It has progressed through millennia of theological reflection, developments and accretions (witness the multiplication of terms like “justifying grace,” “sanctifying grace” and “prevenient grace” in Christian theology, systematizing the order of salvation). For the actual writers and readers of the New Testament, however, *grace* was not primarily a religious, as opposed to a secular, word. Rather, it was used to speak of reciprocity among human beings and between mortals and God (or, in pagan literature, the gods). This single word encapsulated the entire ethos of the relationships we have been describing.

First, *grace* was used to refer to the willingness of a patron to grant some benefit to another person or to a group. In this sense, it means “favor,” in the sense of “favorable disposition.” In Aristotle’s words (*Rhetoric* 2.7.1 [1385a16-20]), “Grace [*charis*] may be defined as helpfulness toward someone in need, not in return for anything, nor for the advantage of the helper himself [or herself], but for that of the person helped.” In this sense, the word highlights the generosity and disposition of the patron, benefactor or giver. The same word carries a second sense, often being used to denote the gift itself, that is, the result of the giver’s beneficent feelings. Many honorary inscriptions mention the *graces* (*charitas*) of the benefactor as the cause for conferring public praise, emphasizing the real and received products of the benefactor’s goodwill toward a city or group. Finally, *grace* can be used to speak of the response to a benefactor and his or her gifts, namely, “gratitude.” Demosthenes provides a helpful window into this aspect in his *De Corona* as he chides his audience for not responding honorably to those who have helped them in the past: “But you are so ungrateful (*acharistos*) and wicked by nature that, having been made free out of slavery and wealthy out of poverty by these people, you do not show gratitude (*charin echeis*) toward them but rather enriched yourself by taking action against them” (*De Corona* 131). *Grace* thus has very specific meanings for the authors and readers of the New Testament, meanings derived primarily from the use of the word in the context of the giving of benefits and the requiting of favors. The fact that one and the same word can be used to speak of a beneficent act and the response to a beneficent act suggests implicitly what many moralists from the Greek and Roman cultures stated

explicitly: grace must be met with grace; favor must always give birth to favor; gift must always be met with gratitude.

Responding with Grace

As we have already seen in Seneca's allegory of the three Graces, an act of favor must give rise to a response of gratitude—grace *must* answer grace, or else something beautiful will be defaced and turned into something ugly. According to Cicero, while initiating a gift was a matter of choice, gratitude was not optional for honorable people, but rather an absolute duty (*De Offic.* 1.47–48). Receiving a favor or kindness meant incurring very directly a debt or obligation to respond gratefully, a debt on which one could not default.³⁶ Seneca stresses the simultaneity of receiving a gift and an obligation: “The person who intends to be grateful, even while she or he is receiving, should turn his or her thoughts to returning the favor” (*Ben.* 2.25.3). Indeed, the virtuous person could seek to compete with the giver in terms of kindnesses and favor, trying not merely to return the favor but to return it with interest like the fruitful soil that bears crops far more abundant than the seeds that were scattered on it.³⁷

Ingratitude is something to be avoided in itself because there is nothing that so effectually disrupts and destroys the harmony of the human race as this vice. For how else do we live in security if it is not that we help each other by an exchange of good offices? It is only through the interchange of benefits that life becomes in some measure equipped and fortified against sudden disasters. Take us singly, and what are we? The prey of all creatures. (*Ben.* 4.18.1, LCL)

Responding justly to one's benefactors was a behavior enforced not by written laws but rather “by unwritten customs and universal practice,” with the result that a person known for gratitude would be considered praiseworthy and honorable by all, while the ingrate would be regarded as disgraceful. There was no law for the prosecution of the person who failed to requite a favor (with the interesting exception of classical Macedonia), but, Seneca affirmed, the punishment of shame and being hated by all good people would more than make up for the lack of official sanctions.⁴² **Neglecting to return a kindness, forgetfulness of kindnesses already received in the past, and, most horrendous of all, repaying favor with insult or injury—these were courses of action to be avoided by an honorable person at *all* costs. Rather, gifts were always to be remembered, commemorated first of all in the shrine of one's own mind, and always to be requited with gratitude. The social sanctions of honor and shame, therefore, were important bulwarks for the virtue of gratitude and exerted considerable pressure in this direction.** As we consider gratitude, then, we are presented with something of a paradox. Just as the favor was freely bestowed, so the response must be free and uncoerced. Nonetheless, that response is at the same time necessary and unavoidable for an honorable person who wishes to be known as such (and hence the recipient of favor in the future). Gratitude is never a formal obligation. There is no advance calculation of or agreed on return for the gift given. Nevertheless, the recipient of a favor knows that he or she stands under the necessity of returning favor when favor has been received. The element of exchange must settle into the background, being dominated instead by a sense of mutual favor, of mutual goodwill and generosity.⁴⁸

Manifestations of Gratitude

“**Returning a favor**” could take on many forms, depending on the nature of the gift and the relative economic and political clout of the parties concerned. Cities or associations would show their gratitude for public benefactions by providing for the public recognition (honoring and increasing the fame) of the giver and often memorializing the gift and the honors conferred by means of a public inscription or, in exceptional cases, a statue of the giver or other monument.

A second component of gratitude that comes to expression in relationships of personal patronage or friendship is **loyalty to the giver**, that is, showing gratitude and owing one's association with the giver even when fortunes turn, and it becomes costly. Thus Seneca writes about gratitude that “if you wish to make a return for a favor, you must be willing to go into exile, or to pour forth your blood, or to undergo poverty, or,...even to let your very innocence be stained and exposed to shameful slanders” (*Ep. Mor.* 81.27). Wallace-Hadrill writes that despite the fact that, in

theory, clients were expected to remain loyal to their patrons, in practice, if a patron fell into political trouble or if his or her fortunes began to wane, the patron's entourage of clients would evaporate.⁵¹ Such practice, however, was contrary to *the ideal of gratitude, according to which a person would stand by (or under) the person's patron and continue to live gratefully even if it cost the individual the future favors of others, or brought him or her into dangerous places and worked contrary to self-interest. The person who disowned or dissociated himself or herself from a patron because of self-interest was an ingrate.*

The principal of loyalty meant that clients or friends would have to take care not to become entangled in webs of crossed loyalties. Although a person could have multiple patrons, to have as patrons two people who were enemies or rivals of one another would place one in a dangerous position, since ultimately the client would have to prove loyal and grateful to one but disloyal and ungrateful to the other. "No one can serve two masters" honorably in the context of these masters being at odds with one another, but if the masters are "friends" or bound to each other by some other means, the client should be safe in receiving favors from both.

The Dance of Grace

Such mutually contradictory rules (forgetting and remembering, being silent and bearing witness, and the like) are constructed so as to keep the giver's mind wholly on what is noble about patronage (generosity, acting in the interest of others) and the recipient's mind wholly on what is noble for the client (namely making a full and rich return of gratitude for favors conferred). They are devised in order to sustain both parties' commitment to acting nobly within the system of reciprocity. The ultimate goal for these ancient ethicists, after all, was not perfect systematization but virtuous conduct. Grace, then, held two parties together in a bond of reciprocal exchanges, a bond in which each party committed to provide what he or she (or they) could to serve the needs or desires of the other. Though often profitably compared to a dance that had to be kept "grace-full" in a circle of giving and receiving, these relationships were far more than ornamental or recreational (as dances are). They formed the bedrock of society, a person's principal assurance of aid and support in an uncertain and insecure world."¹ (Source)

You cannot serve God and mammon. (Matt. 6:24; Lk. 16:13). *"Mammon" was the Aramaic term for money, wealth, or material possessions. In contrasting "mammon" to God, Jesus represents money as an active and personified spiritual power antithetical to God. Money becomes a deified spiritual power, a false-god, when it is employed in the context of the foremost false-god, Satan. Satan, the "god of this world" (II Cor. 4:4) reigning over the world-order of fallen mankind, invests money with his diabolic self-orientation which was evidenced in his aspiration to "be like the Most High God" (Isa. 14:14) and in his temptation of men that "they, too, could be like God" (Gen. 3:5). Such self-orientation that sets oneself up as their own center of reference and claims to be independent, autonomous, self-determining and self-producing is the evil spiritual character of the diabolical employment of money as a spiritual power.*

"When Jesus polarizes God and mammon in the dichotomy of serving one or the other (Matt. 6:24; Lk. 6:13), He establishes an antithetical either-or of contrast and opposition. In the polarization of God and Satan, good and evil, God and mammon, we can observe an either-or of spiritual mastery, spiritual love, spiritual attachment and spiritual power.

"No one can serve two masters," Jesus declared. There is an either-or of *spiritual mastery* or spiritual control under the lordship (*kurios*) of God or mammon. In juxtaposing God and mammon in this manner, Jesus sets up the

¹ deSilva, D. A. (2000). [*Honor, patronage, kinship & purity: unlocking New Testament culture*](#) (pp. 94–119). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

dichotomy of spiritual authority that money can have within the diabolic energizing of the devil in contrast to the authority of God. We will "love the one and hate the other, or hold to the one and despise the other," Jesus said. Mammon, or money, does indeed attempt to "master" us. Though we, in our independent, autonomous and self-determining orientation, claim to "use" money, the spiritual power of money often "uses" us, making us its servants, using us as slaves to its ends. The mastery (*kurios*) of mammon becomes a despotic (*despotes*) mastery.

In "loving the one, and hating the other" there is an implicit reference to the either-or of *spiritual love* between God and mammon. The "love of money" is antithetical to the "love of God", thus being "the root of all evil" (I Tim. 6:10). What does it mean to "love God" or *vice versa* to "love money"? To "love God" is not just an assent to the existence of God, nor is it merely a fondness, affection or preference for God. Rather, to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength" (Matt. 22:37; Mk. 12:30; Lk. 10:27) implies a total giving of oneself to God, uniting oneself in spiritual union with God, accepting God as the central basis of one's life, and allowing God to be in control of one's life. If that is what the "love of God" means, then the "love of money", as here set in contrast to the "love of God," likewise does not mean merely a fondness, affection or preference for money, but a total giving of oneself to a spiritual union with mammon and its diabolic spiritual energy, whereby money becomes the central basis of one's life controlling all that one does. It is not hard to see, then, how "the love of money is the root of all evil" (I Tim. 6:10), "plunging men into ruin and destruction" (I Tim. 6:9) as the Evil One seduces men into the false-love of money which will result in everything contrary to faith and its manifestations of righteousness, godliness, etc. (I Tim. 6:10,11).

Even religion can collectively fall into the same false-love as is evidenced by the Biblical assertion that "the Pharisees were lovers of money" (Lk. 16:14,15). Interestingly enough, the Hebrew word for money, *keseeph*, was etymological derived from the root word, *kasaph*, meaning "to desire or yearn for", and the propensity of the Hebrew peoples to lapse into the worship of Baal with its selfish desire and false-love of money is abundantly documented. The spiritual love of money, even in religious forms, sets one apart from God and can never bring the fulfillment that God intends for man. That is why the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews explains, "Let your character be free from the love of money, being content with what you have" (Heb. 13:5).

Connection with either God or mammon establishes and exposes the either-or of *spiritual attachment, spiritual union, and spiritual identity*. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also," Jesus explained in the same context of His hilltop sermon (Matt. 6:21). If one's "treasure" is money or mammon, then he is spiritually attached or united with the "ruler of this world" (Jn. 14:30; 16:11). Orientation toward material treasures evidences one's spiritual treasure. The selfish and "evil man, out of his evil treasure, brings forth what is evil" (Matt. 12:35), and his spiritual identity will be formed on the basis of material things, subordinating who he is to what he has. In contrast, the spiritual treasure, attachment, union and identity of the Christian is not to be based on money, but in the person of the living Lord, Jesus Christ. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God" (II Cor. 4:7).

The antithetical contrast between God and mammon that Jesus posited reveals an either-or of *spiritual power*. Mammon or money is a spiritual power employed by Satan, one of the "schemes of the devil" (Eph. 6:11). So it is that "our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against rulers, against powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12). What kind of power does money have? Money has the power to dehumanize people in slavery and poverty. Money has the power to destroy life as people subordinate their physical, psychological and spiritual lives and health to money and its concerns. Money has the power to tempt and corrupt, even to the extent of causing people to betray those closest to them for money, as illustrated by Joseph being sold to the slave-traders by his own brothers (Gen. 37:18-28) and Judas selling-out Jesus for thirty pieces of silver (Matt. 26:14-16; Mk. 14:10,11; Lk. 22:3-6)." – James A. Fowler

Right Attitude Toward Wealth by Way of The Unjust Steward

Richard Chenevix Trench's Notes on the Parables of Our Lord provide the most exhaustive exposition of *The Unjust Steward* story because he quotes and examines from commentary of both literal application and symbolic spiritualized interpretation – revisiting the earliest writers and including those through the Protestant Reformation up until the book's publication in 1902.

Pgs. 236,237 – Trench Examines Comprehensive “Mammon of Unrighteousness”

This '*mammon of unrighteousness*' has been sometimes explained as wealth unjustly gotten, by fraud or by violence, 'treasures of wickedness' (Prov. 10:2). The phrase so interpreted would be easily open to abuse, as though a man might compound with his conscience and with God, and by giving some small portion of alms out of unjustly acquired wealth make the rest clean unto him. But plainly the first command to one who finds himself in possession of this would be to restore it to its rightful owners, as Zacchaeus, on his conversion, was resolved to do (Luke 19:8); and out of such there could never be offered acceptable alms to Him who has said, 'I hate robbery for burnt offering.' Only when this restoration is impossible, as must often happen, could it be lawfully bestowed upon the poor. Others understand by '*mammon of unrighteousness*' not so much wealth by the present possessor unjustly acquired, as wealth which in a world like this can hardly have been gotten together without sin somewhere without something of the defilement of that world from which it was gathered clinging to it; if not sin in the present possessor, yet in some of those, nearer or more remote, from or through whom he received it: which being so, he that inherits the wealth inherits also the obligation to make good the wrongs committed in the getting of it together. But the comparison with ver. 12, where '*unrighteous mammon*,' a phrase equivalent to '*mammon of unrighteousness*,' is set against '*true riches*' these '*true*' being evidently heavenly enduring goods, such as neither fade nor fail, makes far more like that '*mammon of unrighteousness*' is uncertain, unstable mammon, one man's today, and another's tomorrow; which if a man trust in, he is trusting in a lie, in that which sooner or later will betray his confidence (1 Tim. 6:17), which he must leave (Eccles. 2:18, 19; 5:15), or which must leave him (Prov. 23:5). **And '*mammon of unrighteousness*' it may in a deeper sense be justly called, seeing that in all property a principle of evil is implied; for in a perfect state of society, in a realized kingdom of God upon earth, there would be no such thing as property belonging to one man more than another.** In the moment of the Church's first love, when that kingdom was for an instant realized, 'all that believed were together, and had all things common' (Acts 4:32-35); and this existence of property has ever been so strongly felt as a witness for the selfishness of man... And thus, however the present owner of the wealth, or those who transmitted it to him, may have fairly acquired it, yet it is **not less this '*unrighteous mammon*,' witnessing in its very existence as one man's, and not every man's, for the selfishness of man, for the absence of that highest love, which would make each man feel that whatever was his was every one's, and would leave no room for a *mine* and *thine* in the world.** With all this, we must not forget that the attempt prematurely to realize this or any other little fragment of the kingdom of God, apart from the rest, the corruption and evil of man's heart remaining unremoved, and being either overlooked or denied, has ever proved a fruitful source of some of the worst mischiefs in the world. The words, '*that when ye fail*,' are an euphemistic way of saying, '**that when ye die.**' [DOUBLE ENTRY] But indeed there is another reading, '*that when it fails*,' that is, the mammon (cf. Luke 12:33); which is to be preferred. Many have shrunk from referring what follows, '*they may receive you*,' to the friends who shall have been secured by the aid

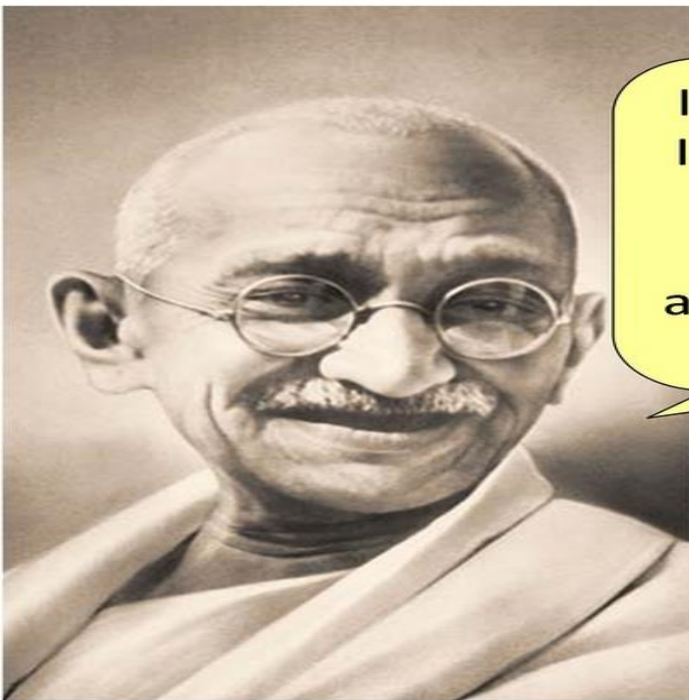
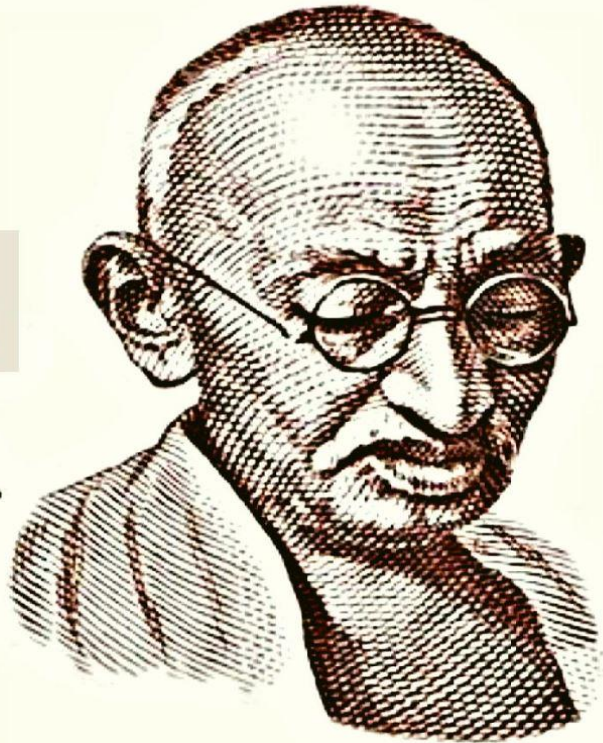
of the unrighteous mammon; such reference seeming to them to ascribe too much to men and to their intercession, to imply a right on their parts who have received the benefits, to introduce their benefactors *'into everlasting habitations,'* and so to be trenching on the prerogative which is God's alone. For some who have entertained these misgivings *'they'* are the angels, as we find angels (ver. 22) carrying Lazarus into Abraham's bosom; others understand that it is God and Christ who will *'receive,'* while for others the phrase is impersonal (cf. 12:11, 20; 23:31); *'they may receive you'* being equivalent to *'you may be received.'* But if we regard this verse, not as containing an isolated doctrine, but in vital connection with the parable of which it gives the moral, we shall at once perceive why this language is used, and the justification of its use. The reference to the debtors is plain; they, being made friends, were to receive the deposed steward into temporary habitations; and the phrase before us is an echo from the parable, the employment of which throws back light upon it, and at once fixes attention on, and explains its most important part. It is idle to press the words further, and against all analogy of faith to assert, on the strength of this single phrase, that even with God's glorified saints, with any except Himself, will reside power of their own to admit into the kingdom of heaven; but idle also to affirm that *'they may receive you,'* in the second clause of the sentence, can refer to any other but the friends mentioned in the first which no one, unless alarmed by the consequences which others might draw from the words, could for an instant call in question. The true parallel to this statement, at once explaining and guarding it, is evidently Matt. 25:34-40. The heavenly habitations, being *'everlasting,'* are tacitly contrasted with the temporary shelter which was all that the steward, the child of the present world, procured for himself with all his plotting and planning, his cunning and dishonesty, also, it may be, with the **temporary stewardship which every man exercises on earth, from which it is not long before he fails and is removed: how important therefore, the word will imply, that he should make sure his entrance into a kingdom that shall not be moved** (cf. Eccles. 11:2).

On page 238 - in discussing verses ten through thirteen - he pieces it all together:

"In the verses which follow (10 -13), and which stand in vital coherence with the parable, it is very noteworthy that not prudence, but fidelity, in the dispensation of things earthly is urged; putting far away any such perversion of the parable, as that the unfaithfulness of the steward could have found a shadow of favor with the Lord. The things earthly in which men may show their faithfulness and their fitness to be entrusted with a higher stewardship, are slightly called *'that which is least,'* as compared with those spiritual gifts and talents which are *'much,'* they are termed, ***'unrighteous,' or deceitful 'mammon,' as set over against the heavenly riches of faith and love, which are 'true' and durable 'riches;'*** they are ***'that which is another man's,'*** by comparison with the heavenly goods, which when possessed are our own, a part of our very selves, being akin to our truest life. Thus the Lord at once casts a slight on the things worldly and temporal, and at the same time magnifies the importance of a right administration of them; since in the dispensing of these, which He declares to be the least, to be false and with no intrinsic worth, to be alien from man's essential being, He at the same time announces that a man may prove his fidelity, show what is in him, and whether he can fitly be entrusted with a stewardship of durable riches in the kingdom of God. And in ver. 13 He further states what the fidelity is, which in this stewardship is required: it is a choosing of God instead of mammon for our Lord. **For in this world we are as servants from whom two masters are claiming allegiance: one is God, man's rightful lord; the other is this unrighteous mammon, given to be our servant, to be wielded by us in God's interests, and in itself to be considered as slight, transient, and another's;** but which, in a sinful world, has erected itself into a lord, and now challenges obedience from us. Thus if we yield, we shall not any longer lay out according to God's will that which He lent us to be merely a thing beneath us, but which we shall then have allowed a will and a voice of its own, and to speak to us in accents of command. We shall not any longer be stewards and servants of God; for that usurping lord has a will so different from his will, gives commands so opposite to his commands, that occasions must speedily arise when one will have to be despised and disobeyed, if the other be honored and served; **God, for instance, will command a scattering, when mammon will urge to a further heaping and gathering; God will require a laying out upon others, when mammon, or the world, a laying out upon ourselves.** Therefore, these two lords having characters so different, and giving commands so contrary, it will be impossible to reconcile their services (Jam. 4:4); one must be despised, if the other is held to; the only faithfulness to the one is to break with the other: ***'Ye cannot serve God and mammon.'*** Such appears to me the connection between ver. 13 and the two which go before, and between all these and the parable of which they are intended to supply the moral."

Seven Dangers to **HUMAN VIRTUE**

1. Wealth without work
2. Pleasure without conscience
3. Knowledge without character
4. Business without ethics
5. Science without humanity
6. Religion without sacrifice
7. Politics without principle



I like your Christ,
I do not like your
Christians.
Your Christians
are so unlike your
Christ.

According to Phin Hall in his Bible Study entitled “The Parable of The Shrewd Manager” – Jesus Teaches a Lesson in Four Stages:

Luke Chapter Sixteen Verse 8 – *The Problem is Stated* –

Page 16 – As His disciples we are not wise when it comes to providing for our eternal future in the age to come.

Luke Chapter Sixteen Verse 9 – *The Solution is Given* –

Page 21 – To provide for our eternal future, we must use our worldly resources to provide for those in need.

Series in Contrast Verses 10-12 – *Introduces Incentive* –

Page 26 – By using our worldly resources to provide for those in need we are providing for ourselves eternal treasure in heaven.

Real Issue Is Revealed Verse 13 – *@Divided Loyalties* –

Pages 27 & 28 – In this passage, Jesus calls us to open our eyes and look at our lives, to consider how we use the worldly resources God has entrusted to us. By using them in His service, not only do others benefit as we provide for them, not only do we benefit as we earn eternal, true riches in heaven, not only does God look great and draw people to Himself, but we keep Him in His rightful place at the center of our lives, with worldly possessions our servant instead of our master. This is why Jesus calls each one of us to be a shrewd manager.

- Proverbs 30: **7** Two things I request of You (Deprive me not before I die); **8** Remove falsehood and lies far from me; *Give me neither poverty nor riches* – Feed me with the food allotted to me; **9** 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.

Covetousness Versus Contentment.
God’s Provision Against Poverty.
Ingratitude Versus Gratitude.
Handling Money as Manna.

The Apostle Paul’s Reference to Manna and Money -

“The Apostle Paul connects manna and money so that his readers can live faithful lives that focus on God and not the gifts of God. In his second letter to the Corinthian church, he is earnestly pleading with them to meet the needs of the poor Christians in Jerusalem. He tries to persuade them in different ways (the example of Macedonian giving, the example of Jesus giving, the resulting praise God will receive, the profit they will gain, etc.) and is deeply concerned that they give with generosity.

As Paul is trying to persuade them to give, he references God’s intent when he gave manna to the camped Hebrews

For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have. For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened, but that as a matter of fairness your abundance at the present time should supply their need, so that their abundance may supply your need, that there may be fairness. As it is written, 'Whoever gathered much had nothing left over, and whoever gathered little had no lack.' – 2 Corinthians 8:12-15

The last sentence in this passage (v15) is a direct quote from Exodus 16:18 – the manna story. Paul didn't want the Corinthian Christians to be impoverished so that the Jerusalem Christians could have more than they needed. He wanted God's provision to be enough for everyone. Paul saw a voluntary flow of resources from those with excess to those in genuine need as an issue of fairness. Just as the Hebrews were to be content with God's daily provision in the desert, Paul was asking the Corinthians to be satisfied with having enough, so that those in Jerusalem would also have enough... There is a direct link between manna and money. We all have a disposition for surplus and independence and an "it's mine" way of thinking. Just as it was difficult for the people in Exodus and Corinth - it's difficult for us also. We have surplus in order to meet the needs of others because this is God's purpose in excess." – *Money & The Gospel*

On Our Way To The Promised Land: While there are many important lessons to this story, the primary point is that God faithfully gave the Hebrews food so they would focus on Him.

The prosperity gospel is worldly -

“The prosperity gospel is a belief or a conviction that God would have his children experience financial prosperity. In a positive sense, this means that God’s design is to bless his children, here and now, with economic benefits that others do not have. Another way to say this might be: if we live out God’s design for us, and if we are in the center of his will (whatever that means), we can expect financial success that is not normal. **In a negative sense, it’s an expectation that Christians will not – or should not – experience the financial hardship that others might.**

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. – Matthew 6:19-21

The prosperity gospel embraces a worldly vision of what life in Christ should look like. It pushes God’s design for us – living out the gospel as Jesus did – into the corner and replaces it with greed and idols. Instead of striving for a self-sacrificing, love-at-all-cost, live-by-faith, everything-belongs-to-God life, the expectation includes material wealth as proof of God’s favor.

The prosperity gospel ignores Jesus’ example and his instruction to embrace a humble, self-sacrificing life. And, it ignores countless numbers of faithful Christians who’ve lived steadfast, Christ-exalting lives while absorbing all the pain and rejection

and poverty this world can dish out (Mat. 5:11; 10:22, 39; 19:29; Acts 5:41; 9:16; Rom. 8:17; 2Cor. 1:7; 4:11; 12:10; Phil. 1:29; 3:10; Heb. 11:25; James 5:10; 1Pet. 3:14; 4:16; 5:10). Instead, the prosperity gospel seems to follow the desires of Simon (Acts 8) who thought that the gospel was the key to worldly success.

God's design for us is to find sufficiency in Jesus as the world propagates its war of pain and destruction and we pursue the Christ-exalting, other-oriented, walk-by-faith mission we're on. We are not exempt from the struggle but are here to showcase the beauty of Jesus while we're in this broken world." – *M & G*

Toward a Theology of Money -

Edward Griffin in his book "The Creature from Jekyll Island" documents how with the process of debt monetization the Treasury Department, Federal Reserve & Regional Banking System "makes money out of thin air." For about the last century, our legal tender or fiat currency, printed with signature authority - has not had any representative value. It is a magical mystical **debt dependent system**. As power resides in perception of power – public perceptions determine money's worth.

**** DOUBLE-ENTRY CHRISTIANITY ****

What Does **Redemption** Mean to Christians?

The Christian use of redemption means Jesus Christ, through

his sacrificial death, purchased believers from the slavery of sin to set us free from that bondage.

Another Greek word relating to this term is *exagorazo*. Redemption always involves going **from** something **to** something else. In this case, it is Christ freeing us **from** the bondage of the law **to** freedom of a new life in him.

The third Greek word connected with redemption is *lutroo*, meaning "to obtain release by the **payment of a price**." *The price (or ransom), in Christianity, was Christ's precious blood, obtaining our release from sin and death.*

Debt-Backed Double-Entry Stewardship.

Philosophers throughout human history have debated two great questions – “What makes for a good life?” and “How does one live a life balanced & free of excess?” In my opinion, both these great questions find their answer in the Parable of the Unjust Steward. *Answer to Question One:* Right behavior is that which is within one’s enlightened self-interest. Right thinking prioritizes *instrumental goods* and items of *intrinsic value* or **tools of instrumental value**. *Answer to Question Two:* The spiritual should receive equal attention as the physical and the two should complement; The blessings of excess should be shared with the family, friends, brethren and those neighbors less fortunate. Regarding these excesses and imbalances – Christians value “being” more than “having” and “men more than money.” Where the demigod mammon dictates “heaping and gathering” – God Almighty admonishes “laying out for

others.” While money is a mere expedient to everyday living for Christians – when *Dedicated to Godly Enterprise* – it becomes an *instrument of good and takes on an intrinsic spiritual value*. Occasionally, especially during times tasking of natural disaster, “mine” and “thine” are words unheard of in social conversation among Christians and we sometimes get a small brief *glimpse of heaven*. Not only that – when we so selflessly dedicate our personal resources – Christ’s Debt Payment is *Paid Forward & Stewardship Double Entry Annotates With Heavenly Treasure*.

Principle in Practice: Rich Young Ruler is a Bad Example.

And a ruler asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.’” And he said, “All these I have kept from my youth.” When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. Jesus, seeing that he had become sad, said, “How difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel (Aramaic “Rope”) to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.” – Luke 18:18-25

Jesus was bringing this man face-to-face with his god. In the commandment-keeping that Jesus initially asked about, he didn’t ask if the man had any other gods that came before God (the first commandment). Can you imagine the response if he had asked that? I’m sure this man would have denied any other loyalties. So, Jesus directly confronts this man’s idolatry by making sure he knows that this his money god must go. If we’re to have a right relationship with God, there is no room for idols.

The story of this rich young ruler, at least for Luke, is incomplete without the contrasting story of Zacchaeus (19:1ff).

Here we have an amazing contrast between two rich people. While both were rich, the community loved one and hated the other. One was exemplary in his lifestyle, and one was reprehensible. One clings to his wealth, and one releases it. One is lost, and one is saved. The comparison of the rich ruler to Zacchaeus is not an accident. One of the strong messages here is that *we can appear to be very close to God, and still be in idolatry.*

Principle in Practice: The Good Samaritan is a Good Example.

Luke 10:25-37 New King James Version (NKJV)

²⁵ And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"
²⁶ He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" ²⁷ So he answered and said, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'" ²⁸ And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." ²⁹ But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" ³⁰ Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead. ³¹ Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³² Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. ³³ But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. ³⁴ So he went to *him* and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵ On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave *them* to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.'" ³⁶ So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" ³⁷ And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

In this parable Jesus both inclusively redefines those persons thought "neighbor," and expands on those behaviors described "neighborly." In Jesus' illustration of what it means to love your neighbor, the Samaritan not only dressed the wounded man's wounds, he also brought him to an inn where he could be cared for, ***and then paid for everything. This is how to Heavenly Hoard!***