

ONE FROM THE HEART

Seeing Money Differently

How We See the World

Every once in a while, we have that 'aha' moment where we see our world differently. Nothing actually changes but our perspective does, how we see things changes from how we have been taught to see it or conditioned to see it.

"We see the world not as it is but as we are – or, as we are conditioned to see it." (Steven Covey, '7 habits of Highly Effective People')

The Bible talks about this as a constant renewing of the mind (Romans 12:2). Seeing things from God's perspective is essential because whether we acknowledge it or not, our culture is framing who we are and how we see things. As John Mark Comer writes in his book "Practicing the Way", *we are already being conformed or transformed*. There is no option C.

How the World Sees Us

Notice that the default setting is conformation, not transformation. Meaning, if we don't take our discipleship to Jesus seriously, if we don't try to see things from God's perspective, the odds are very high that we will become less like Jesus over time and more like "Rome" or whatever culture we live in.

When we see as God sees, we will be more inclined to do as God says. It's then that the world will see us as little Christs. To help us see the way God sees the world and how it is that we are to have relationship with Him, God sent His son Jesus into the world. Jesus is the model of living a life the way God sees the world (John 14:7)

A Strange Parable – Luke 16:1-15

One day Jesus is teaching a diverse crowd of people how God sees the world. Among the crowd were the wealthy religious elite and Jesus decides to share a parable about a shrewd manager to illustrate how God sees money.

Jesus knows that the world will conform us to its view on money if we don't allow Jesus to transform our thinking to see money like God sees money.

The manager of the rich man's money has a little bit of time and a little opportunity to plan his future before he is fired and so he uses his boss' wealth to make friends and secure his future.

A Tool to Use

Jesus is saying I want you to use what you had so that when you die and you step from this life into eternity, there will be people there who will welcome you because of what you did with what you had (Luke 16:9).

God sees our money and our possessions as a tool to use. We constantly ask the question, "what do I have to show for all my hard work." But God is asking the question "who will you have to show for it?"

A Test

Jesus says if you did not use the money and possessions that you were given for the reason and purpose it was given to you, who will trust you with true riches.

God sees money as a test. We have all been given a little bit, and God is watching to see what we are going to do with our little bit. It's all been put on loan to us, we can't take it with us, and He is looking to see who is using it in the way He intended for it to be used.

How we manage what we assume is ours reflects our devotion to the One to whom it belongs.

Choose Who You'll Serve

God's chief competitor for your heart is money. That's the culture we live in, that's why we need to have a different perspective, that's why we need to

have our minds renewed and why we need to see money God's way. Because if you're not being transformed you will be conformed to the image of this world.

A Trademark

What we do with what we have, will demonstrate whose we are. How we use our money is a trademark of who we belong to.

Jesus says that if we are trying to justify why we aren't generous, why we don't give, why we don't use what we have to make a difference for others here and now, He says, don't kid yourself – I see your heart (Luke 16:15).

Generosity has nothing to do with money. Generosity has everything to do with the heart.

There's room for all of us to better use our money and possessions as a tool for God's purposes. There's room for all of us to be more trustworthy, to allow God to examine our hearts and bring transformation so we might be more aligned with how God sees money. What we do with what we have will determine whose we are.

Discussion Questions

1. Read Romans 12:2. What is the world's view of money. If we are to be transformed into God's view of money, what are the biggest areas of difference?

