

Stuck

Week of January 17

Life Group Lesson for the Week of January 17, 2016

Why would any one of us want to win the lottery when we know clearly from Scripture (and from history!) that money is not the answer to life's challenges? The more money one has, the more problems one has to manage. "Greedy people try to get rich quick but don't realize they're headed for poverty" (Proverbs 28:22). Instant wealth without wisdom is a dangerous combination. But an honest income earned through diligence and hard work, is a good thing if managed well.

Making more money doesn't have to be a problem if we learn to manage our resources wisely—realizing everything we have is a gift from the Lord—we tithe, learn to save, spend less than we earn, and absolutely refuse to live forever in debt. If we astutely apply the Biblical principles clearly outlined in Scripture, our finances don't have to be burdensome, but can truly be a blessing. The Lord blesses His children so they can in turn be a blessing to others.

Name some things that are particularly rewarding about good, hard, honest work.

Before the Fall of Genesis, chapter three, the rhythm of work and rest was already a part of God's creation and human existence (see Genesis 2:1, 15). Why is this God-given rhythm of work and rest in direct opposition to today's get-rich-quick schemes?

The Plain Truth states: "Life is not about what you have, but Who has you." Something or someone has us—the question is to "whom" or "what" are we actually giving our allegiance and devotion. What does the Plain Truth imply regarding full surrender to the Lord?

Think for a moment about the hard feelings that can ensue upon families at the reading of a will when a loved one dies. What makes money (income, wealth, earthly treasures) so emotional and potentially volatile?

Read Luke 12:13-21

Jesus warns: "Beware! Guard against every kind of greed. Life is not measured by how much you own" (v15)... "Yes, a person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God" (v21). Why is it that we often overlook greed as a "big sin" when Jesus says it is?

First Timothy 6:10 states: "For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows." What has the Lord taught you personally about the dangers of "loving money" over everything else? (Share briefly as you feel comfortable. Please share from personal experience only.)

Joe Sangl, author of *I Was Broke. Now I'm Not*, uses a ladder as a metaphor to climbing out-of-debt because with each ascending rung, our perspective changes. He says: "As I climbed out of my financial mess, I became so fired up that I began teaching other people to implement the same principles I was following... For many years, I worked to define the steps I took to gain control of my money and position myself to prosper. This effort has resulted in a financial tool called the I Was Broke. Now I'm Not. Ladder – *9 Rungs To A Fully Funded Life*." (p. 24 – *I Was Broke. Now I'm Not*, by Joe Sangl. NIN Publishing)

With the help of your fellow Life Group participants, your own sermon notes, or perhaps directly from Joe Sangl's book – complete the ladder rungs below. (Work from the bottom up.)

- Rung 9 _____ a great life!
- Rung 8 Place _____% of gross income into tax-advantaged investments
- Rung 7 Pay off house and business _____
- Rung 6 Place _____% of gross income into _____-advantaged investments
- Rung 5 Build savings to a minimum of _____ months of _____
- Rung 4 Eliminate all non-house, non-business _____
- Rung 3 _____ enough to capture full company match (or \$100 – or whichever is greater)
- Rung 2 _____ money (build a wall of protection)–Start with \$ _____
- Rung 1 Set _____

God doesn't bless His children so we can remain self-absorbed. He wants to bless us so we can in turn be a blessing to others. Jesus said, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it" (Mark 8:34-35).

Money is a test. Throughout the Bible the number 10 represents "test" – are we being faithful with the tithe, trusting God and passing the test? Or do we live in fear and hoard away our possessions? Do we find our purpose – our true identity in the Lord – or are we trying to fill the empty places of our hearts with stuff? It seems we so often crave the things this world offers, "Yet true godliness with contentment is itself great wealth" (1 Timothy 6:6).

In closing, read Psalm 23. Write out your dreams and your confession to the Lord. First, thank the Lord for all He has given you. Confess that you have not trusted Him fully and that you want to be a good steward of your life on-loan. What dreams do you have? What kind of work would you enjoy? Talk with the Lord about the desires of your heart and trust Him to help you (see Psalm 37:4-5). A rich relationship with God through Jesus Christ is the best treasure of all!

One Year Bible Reading

Jan. 17: Genesis 35:1-36:43, Matthew 12:1-21, Psalm 15:1-5, Proverbs 3:21-26
Jan. 18: Genesis 37:1-38:30, Matthew 12:22-45, Psalm 16:1-11, Proverbs 3:27-32
Jan. 19: Genesis 39:1-41:16, Matthew 12:46-13:23, Psalm 17:1-15, Prov. 3:33-35
Jan. 20: Genesis 41:17-42:17, Matthew 13:24-46, Psalm 18:1-15, Proverbs 4:1-6
Jan. 21: Genesis 42:18-43:34, Matthew 13:47-14:12, Psalm 18:16-36, Prov. 4:7-10
Jan. 22: Genesis 44:1-45:28, Matthew 14:13-36, Psalm 18:37-50, Proverbs 4:11-13
Jan. 23: Genesis 46:1-47:31, Matthew 15:1-28, Psalm 19:1-14, Proverbs 4:14-19

STUCK

Text: Luke 12: 12-21

The Plain Truth:

Life is not about _____ you have, but _____ has you.

1. _____ all you can.

2. _____ all you can.

1) Set Goals

2) Save money - Start with one month expenses (minimum \$2500)

3) Invest enough to capture full company match (or \$100 per month, whichever is greater)

(*from Joe Sangl's book "I Was Broke. Now I'm Not.")

3. _____ all you can.

A) 10%- _____

B) 10%- _____

C) 80%- _____ expenses

Online Resources:

www.IWBNIN.com

www.daveramsey.com

Classes being offered at CC:

I Was Broke, Now I'm Not classes

Wednesday Nights @ Mountain View Campus - 6:30 PM

Beginning Feb. 4th @ Statesville Campus - 6:30 PM

Beginning Feb. 7th @ Lincolnton Campus - 6 PM - Lincoln Charter School

January 16 & 17, 2016