**Life Shines in Money: A Step Up 4 Life Bible Study**

The Bible talks a lot about money. While the Scriptures outline no step-by-step framework for financial management or spending and saving allocations, Jesus does have a great deal to tell us about wealth, riches, possessions, and treasures. Sometimes it even makes us uncomfortable!

On the one hand, we cannot avoid dealing with property and commerce. In fact, it seems, Almighty God would have us engage in these enterprises both to enjoy His blessings and to extend His kingdom. On the other hand, we ought not idolize these things. Fortune greatly tempts the mortal and sinful human heart toward misplaced trust and even selfishness. Nevertheless, what humankind wields for evil, God can redeem to serve His purposes and deliver His gifts. So currency can declare the sanctity of human life.

1. What would you characterize as the best purchase or investment you’ve ever made? The worst? What has resulted from them that leads you to assess them as you do?
2. What’s the most important message your household of origin communicated to you about money? How has it affected your adulthood for better and for worse? What one family perspective toward money from your formative years have you sought to depart from? Why?
3. How would you summarize what Matthew 6:24, Matthew 21:12, Acts 8:20, and 1 Timothy 6:10 indicate about one’s funds? How does this make Exodus 12:43-44, Exodus 30:16, Deuteronomy 23:19, and Malachi 3:10 sound strange to contemporary Christian ears?
4. Money, of course, derives its value more from what it represents than from what it actually consists of. The paper and metals make promises and testimonies of greater realities. How do Psalm 50:8-13, Job 41:11, and 1 Corithians 15:27 relate this to all material goods? What does it reflect about ownership?
5. Everybody comes into contact with money to some degree and deals with purchase and exchange. What does money’s abundance and proximity say of God’s demeanor concerning what belongs to Him (Matthew 5:45; 6:33; 7:11)?
6. How do Exodus 16:11-12, Matthew 6:26-30, and Matthew 26:26-28 indicate that God encounters and interacts with us through commodities? What responses does this invite and encourage (1 Timothy 4:4-5)?
7. What financial terms do Proverbs 1:19, Mark 10:21-22, Luke 12:15-21, and Matthew 6:12, 19-21 and 18:32-35 employ to describe humankind’s sinful condition? What ultimately makes money problematic (Mark 7:15, 21-22)?
8. How does fiscal language capture and convey the grace of God in 1 Corinthians 6:19, 1 Peter 1:18-19, Matthew 13:44-46, and Luke 7:41-42? Why do we rejoice so much in notions like ransom, redemption, purchase, and price?
9. So Jesus expects His people to have and use money for much more than the passions of the flesh. What would He have us invest and convert our incomes and expenditures into (1 Timothy 6:17-19, Luke 14:13-14, Proverbs 19:17, and Luke 16:9)? What favorite ways have you developed for doing this? What new ones interest and excite you to try?