

Chasing Carrots 2 – Money & Things

Chasing Carrots: Money Bumper Vid

Welcome back to Redemption Church. We are here in Plano Tx having a great time. Greetings to everyone joining us online. We hope you are blessed by the Word of God today. My name is Chris Fluitt and I am so blessed to share the Word with you today.

Chasing Carrots

We are in the second week of our Chasing Carrots sermon series. The culture of this world is trying to grab your attention and focus. Much like a carrot on a string can grab the attention and manipulate the direction of a donkey... there are forces in this world that want to dangle a carrot in front of you.

Last week we talked about Fame. It was a very important message and I would encourage you to find it on our website and check it out... Just head on over to RedemptionPlano.com and check out all of our sermons.

Today talking about chasing the carrot of MONEY & THINGS.

Money & Things

I want to make you a promise at the very beginning of this sermon. We are talking about money, but we are not gearing up to ask you for your money today. I have no pledge drive or big offering that I am going to hit you with. I am talking about your money today because your money is a major source of stress & worry... We think a lot about money... we worry about money.. we dream about money.. money and the things we buy with it are a major carrot in our culture.

Please allow me to talk about this important topic today. Don't shut me out.. don't think that I have an improper motive.. This subject impacts you and I know that it impacts me...

As we dive in today, I would like to get your input.

- How many of you wouldn't mind being rich? Come on let me see a show of hands.
- Do you know someone who is rich?
- Have you ever looked at rich people and thought "If I were ever rich like them I would do a better job at being rich. I would be soo much better at being rich than them."
- How many of you are really rich?

Here is what we know. We aren't really rich, but we would like to be really rich, so we are constantly drawn to this carrot... If I could just have more money... If I could just have more stuff...

This carrot is ILLUSIVE and this carrot is ENDLESS.

Here is a poll taken about what people would be willing to do to have 5 million dollars.

- 54% of people would listen ONLY to country music for the rest of their life.
- 42% would have their teeth removed.
- 50% would allow a random person to die.
- 24% would live in solitude for the next 20 years.

We want to be rich and we are willing to do strange things for it... But what do you consider rich?

Gallup did a poll on what do we consider rich.

They polled people who make 30k dollars a year on what amount of yearly income would make them feel rich. Their answer was 74k a year.

They polled people who made 50k dollars a year and they said 100k.

Some of you make that much money.. and you would tell us that you don't feel rich. That money doesn't stretch as far as you would think.

They asked people with 2 million dollars in assets what would be rich and they said \$5 million dollars in assets.

In other words...the world's understanding of being rich means to have more.

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No one in the poll said that they felt rich already... they needed to double what they had and then they would feel rich...

We want to be rich. We don't feel rich. So we pursue more.

What is rich? Rich is a moving target. Rich always means more than we have now.

I remember being younger and thinking “If I could just cross this threshold of income that will be enough...” only to cross that threshold and see it is not enough. The line moved... I always need more.

What do you need to be happy and satisfied? Most people would say “just a little bit more.”

Luke 12:15 (NIV2011) Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”

Watch out! Be on your guard! Look out for greed – the constant pursuit of more. Jesus says LIFE does not consist in an abundance of possession.

Jesus was warning us about our culture nearly 2000 years ago.

Our world tells us that what we need is what we don’t have... It is always focused on what we don’t have. Jesus tells us that LIFE is not found in the pursuit for more.

Jesus then tells us a powerful parable story about a farmer who has the most successful year of his life. He has a record year breaking year as a farmer and he considers what he should do with all this new found wealth.

The farmer in Luke 12 decides to tear down his barns and build bigger newer barns. The farmer is thinking “I can’t be happy with what I have accomplished... I must pursue more.” ...But here is what God says to the farmer.

Luke 12:20 (NIV2011) “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’

Luke 12:21 (NIV2011) “This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.”

God was NOT mad at the guy because he was rich. God was angry with the farmer because he was not rich toward God.

God was not mad at the harvest. God was not mad at the barns being torn down and built bigger and better. God was not mad at the wealth. But judgment fell because the farmer was not rich in the things that mattered most – the things of God!

The farmer thought he needed bigger barns. The farmer failed to see what he truly needed.

I have good news and bad news for you today.

1. The Good news is: You are rich!

You may not feel rich. You may not believe me when I call you rich... but you are.

Let's get some perspective. More than 3 billion people live on \$2 a day... We can't drive past a Starbucks without spending \$5. Based on how most people live in this world, we are very very rich.

You can often tell how rich you are by what bothers you...

- My shirt I bought on amazon prime took a few more hours than it should have...
- My fast food order took to long... they forgot the dipping sauce...
- My smart phone won't connect to the wifi...
- I forgot my Apple AirPods and so now I have to manually hold my phone up to my ear like a savage...

You can listen to any song in the world on your phone.

You can stream any movie.

You can play any game.

When you get hungry you can have someone bring you food.

You can drive your car... your ability to own a car puts you in the top 15% wealthiest people on the planet...

We drive our car past 20 restaurants to go to the one we prefer where we eat a meal... that someone else milked the cow, caught the fish, grew the vegetables, gathered all the ingredients and prepared it for us... and yet we don't feel rich.

The good news is you are rich. Can we acknowledge God's blessing in our life. I want you to say it out loud – I AM RICH! Say with it a smile... say it with gratitude...

If you feel uncomfortable saying you are rich you need to ask yourself why you feel that way.

Ecclesiastes 5:19 (NIV2011) Moreover, when God gives someone wealth and possessions, and the ability to enjoy them, to accept their lot and be happy in their toil—this is a gift of God.

God gives wealth & possession... God does not dangle wealth & possession like a carrot. GOD GIVES IT FREELY AND HE EXPECTS YOU TO ENJOY HIS BLESSING! This is a gift from God! I am rich!

2 The bad news is: You are rich!

Being rich actually places you at a spiritual disadvantage. This is what Jesus taught in Luke 18.

Luke 18:24-25 (NIV2011) Jesus looked at him and said, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

The good news is you are rich. The bad news is you are rich. Why?

Being rich puts you in a spiritual disadvantage because you already have a roof over your head, food in your pantry, gas in your car, and clothes in the closet... because of your wealth you have missed out on the blessing of praying “God give me today my daily bread.” (Matthew 6:11)

Being rich is also a distraction. We have so much opportunity and options we are often distracted from what matters most.

If you ever have the opportunity to do a mission trip to a developing nation you should do it.

Day 1 – You will be hit with a shocking amount of poverty and need. You will feel guilty when you remember all your abundance and are confronted with all the lack.

Around day 3 you are going to realize these people have something you don't have. You will understand that maybe you are the one lacking. They have distraction free time with people & healthy relationships. They often have an intimacy with God that we lack.

And what they don't have is a bunch of stress & anxiety & the burden of managing stuff.

And on day 5 you might find yourself jealous of their simple intimate life....
Their community and communion with God.

Being rich puts you at a spiritual disadvantage... here is another reason. The more you are given, the greater responsibility you have.

Luke 12:48 (NIV2011) ...From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

God's blessing is awesome... but it carries a heavy responsibility.

Culture is trying to lead you with a carrot... It keeps telling you that what you don't have is what you need.

Luke 12:15 (NIV2011) Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions."

We all know this is true in our heart... that we believe it... yet we don't live it day to day. I would tell you that our actions really reveal what we believe in our heart. Our actions show that we really believe more money and more things will make us happy.

Call it what it is. The thought that more will make you happy is a lie. Don't believe the lie.

The farmer didn't need more barns... He needed wealth in God.

Don't believe the lie that all you need is a little more money.

As the Notorius B.I.G. prophesied from beyond the grave – Mo Money, Mo Problems.

- Mo Money is not going to help your kids stay off drugs... mo money might enable them to buy the drugs and distract you from noticing.
- Mo Money is not going to heal you sick loved one. The pursuit for more might just rob you of the time you do have.
- Mo money won't make your depression go away...
- Mo money won't save your marriage...

Do not believe the lie!

We don't need more of what's temporary—More of what's eternal!

We don't need more money—More Jesus!

We don't need more of what is bigger & better - More Jesus.

God gives wealth. It is not wrong to be rich.

God gives possessions. It is not wrong to have things.

Do not feel guilty – Feel responsible!

1 Timothy 6:17-19 (NIV2011) Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

We are about to come talk to God in this place. I just feel the need to declare some things. Will you declare them with me?

God has blessed me with more than I need. I'm rich.

But I will not trust in my riches, but in Him who richly provides.

I am done having money in the bank but no peace in my heart!

I am done trusting in my stuff and not trusting in God as provider!

I am done buying something that only excites me for a moment. I need a glory that does not fade.

Because I have more, I will give more and do more.

The temporary things of this world promise much but do not deliver.

God you deliver. Your promises they are rich! Your promises deliver.

I want us to read this scripture one more time and then I want us to come. Get ready. We are going to read this scripture in 1 Timothy 6 and then I am going to close my eyes and pray. When I open my eyes I want to see this

entire church reaching out to God's riches and set free from the burden of money and things.

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