

“Jesus said, ‘It is **more blessed** to give than to receive.’” *Acts 20:35*
We have made an idol out of money.

Idol: Anything that we look to or count on for what only God can give.

“*God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing.*” — C.S. Lewis

“No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You **cannot** serve both God and money.” *Matthew 6:24*

How does idolizing money hinder generosity?

“You shall have no other gods **before** me.” *Exodus 20:3*

Troubles multiply for those who chase after other gods.
Psalms 16:4

Whoever loves money **never** has enough; whoever loves wealth is **never** satisfied with their income. *Ecclesiastes 5:10*

Money is not evil.

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**. *1 Timothy 6:10*

Money is essential to bless people.

“The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, ‘Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I’ll pay you the next time I’m here.’” *Luke 10:35*

Worship God as God.

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. **Love** the Lord your God with all your **heart** and with all your **soul** and with all your **strength**. *Deuteronomy 6:4-5*

Don’t love money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, “I will **never** fail you. I will **never** abandon you.”
Hebrews 13:5

When God is God in your life, giving comes easy.

“*If one first gives himself to the Lord, all other giving is easy.*”
— John Bonnelli

And they exceeded our expectations: They **gave** themselves **first** of all to the **Lord**, and then by the will of God also to us.
2 Corinthians 8:5

Group Prep

In preparation for small group, read Matthew 6:19-34, then answer the following discussion questions.

Introduction

Many people place a significant amount of hope in money because they believe it will bring them happiness, satisfaction, value, security or significance. Fact: The average size of the American home has tripled in the last 50 years. Fact: The average American woman owns 30 outfits, one for each day of the month. Fact: 3.1% of the world’s children live in America but own 40% of the toys consumed globally. Fact: Americans donate 1.9% of their income to charitable causes, while 6 billion people worldwide live on less than \$13,000 a year. Truth: If we look to anything other than God to fulfill our desires, that thing has become an idol.

Discussion Questions

1. Name some of the desires you have – both short term and long term. Describe idolatry and how it works. How can our strongest desires lead to idolatry?

What are some signs money is becoming or has become an idol in someone’s life? If God knows what is best for us, why do so many Christians choose a different path for their money than what God desires for them?

2. What stood out to you in Matthew 6:19-34? Why would Jesus challenge us to not “store up treasure on earth?” What does it mean to lay up treasure in heaven and how is this done? In verses 22-23, Jesus speaks to the deceptive nature of our desires. Counselors rarely have people come to them asking for help to overcome greed. Why is money such a deceptive master?

In verse 31, Jesus pleads with us not to worry about these desires. How does worry show a lack of confidence in God?

3. Read Hebrews 13:5. What does satisfaction in God look like? In verse 21, Jesus says, “Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.” Describe the desires of someone whose treasure is truly Jesus.

“No one can serve two masters.” What can we do to prioritize Jesus as Lord and keep money from becoming an idol?

Action Step

4. “If one gives himself to the Lord, all other giving is easy.” Will you join the rest of Emmanuel in the \$10 challenge? If you’ve already committed to the \$10 challenge, what other ways are you are feeling nudged to be more generous?

My action step is _____.

I will encourage and pray for _____ to follow through, and their action step is _____.

My memory verse is _____.

This coming week, I’m praying for _____.

Outreach: Groups in Action

Join us on the weekend of November 17 and 18 for the Disaster Recovery Service Opportunity. Emmanuel has committed to filling 1,000 boxes of disaster relief items that Midwest Food Bank will send to families affected by the recent hurricane in the Carolinas and future victims of disaster. For more information, visit myeclife.org.

Serve foster families and those who support foster families at the Orphan Sunday event being held at Emmanuel’s Greenwood Campus on November 18th from 6-9pm. We have opportunities in childcare, greeting, and post-event clean-up. Contact Kerry Carmichael at kcarmichael@eclife.org for more info.