

Sermon Series: **Hilarious Generosity—Lord of Life Lutheran Church-- 9/24/2000**

Title: “Managing Money God’s Way”

Text: (Selected Proverbs)

Introduction: *Illus.: “Money Management for Dummies”*

Theme: Yet, how we handle our wealth directly impacts how open and able we are to be generous with the gifts God has given us. So, today we take Jesus’ advice, “*let him who has ears to hear, let him hear,*” and we apply spiritual truths to a very material thing.

Principles for Managing Money God’s Way. . .

Principle # 1: Those who honor God with their wealth are blessed in return

- C **Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine. Prov 3: 9-10**
- C If God told us to buy some piece of real-estate or invest in a mutual fund, would we be more inclined to do it?
- C This principle deals with more than how to make a fast buck—it deals with who or what is the God in our life.
- C **No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money. Luke 16: 13**
- C Setting aside a “**FIRST**” portion of God’s gifts to return back to Him for spread Gospel or care for other’s needs
 1. It carries God’s blessing to never let your resources go dry to accomplish that
 2. It carries God’s promise to overflow your supply so that you enjoy this “*hilarious generosity*”
 3. All these promises come as a result of a relationship
 4. **“And my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.” Phil 4: 19**

Principle #2: Eternal perspectives in investing your wealth will help gain more than your lose

- C **Do not wear yourself out to get rich; have the wisdom to show restraint. Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle. Prov. 23: 4-5**
- C Keep your focus on life’s purpose and goal rather than on the riches at hand
 1. **ILLUS.: WHAT MONEY WILL BUY**
 2. At the heart of this is a resurrection hope—I don’t have to cram all of life into this temporal life
 3. What focuses our vision is a *realism* about a sin-filled world and *optimism* of a grace-full God
- C Guard your emotions from get-rich-quick fixes rather than long term growth—physical and spiritual
 1. **ILLUS.: A BILLIONAIRE FOR A DAY**
 2. A word about the destructive lie about gambling, lotteries, and high risk investments
 3. **“But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction . . .and pierce themselves with many sorrows.” 1 Tim. 6: 9-10**
 4. Dwindle effects of *money-crazed decisions* on relationships, health, happiness, and spiritual life (you&family)
- C Make prayer your first and best investment tool
 1. Praying for spiritual discernment of those things only God can see and know
 2. Praying for common sense and the courage to listen to it when everyone else around us has abandoned it
 3. **Choose my instruction instead of silver, knowledge rather than choice gold, for wisdom is more precious than rubies, and nothing you desire can compare with her. Prov. 8:10-11**

Principle #3: Increased riches bring increase complications and increased responsibility

- C **“And from everyone who has been given much shall much be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.” Luke 12: 48**

- C Assessing the risks, complications, and hard work that is involved in being financially wealthy
 1. *False security in wealth*– **The wealth of the rich is their fortified city; they imagine it an unscalable wall. Pro18:11**
 2. *A covey of “fair-weather friends”*-- **The poor are shunned even by their neighbors, but the rich have many friends. Prov. 14: 20**
 3. **ILLUS.: KNOWING WHO YOUR FRIENDS ARE**
 4. *The danger of pride and arrogance*– **A poor man pleads for mercy, but a rich man answers harshly. Prov 18: 23**
- C Stepping up to the challenge of being God’s manager of His resources—for you and others around you
- C **“Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things, enter into the joy of your master.” Matthew 25: 21**

“MONEY MANAGEMENT FOR DUMMIES”

Simplicity. That’s what most of us want when it comes to learning, isn’t it? Good, helpful information, user-friendly, wrapped in layman’s terms. A company called IDG Books Worldwide has tapped into the need for simplicity. You may have seen some of their “*For Dummies*” books at your local bookstore. They have *PC for Dummies*, *College Planning for Dummies*, *Everyday Math for Dummies*, *Personal Finance for Dummies*, *VCRs and Camcorders for Dummies*, *Politics for Dummies*, and *Parenting for Dummies*. IDG Books, isn’t thee only place to look for lessons made simple. Just take a look at the Proverbs. Concise, pity, uncomplicated, bite-sized nuggets of wisdom. But, oh so profound. We could subtitle Proverbs, “*The Spiritual Life for Dummies*.”

WHAT MONEY WILL BUY

A bed BUT NOT sleep	Medicine BUT NOT health.
Books BUT NOT brains.	Luxuries BUT NOT culture.
Food BUT NOT appetite.	Amusement BUT NOT happiness.
Finery BUT NOT beauty	A crucifix BUT NOT a Savior.
A house BUT NOT a home	A church-pew BUT NOT heaven.

BILLIONAIRE FOR A DAY

Jeff Ferrera of Waukegan, Illinois, was reconciling his checkbook and called First National Bank of Chicago to get his current balance.

"Your primary checking account currently has a balance of \$924,844,204.32," droned the electronic voice. Ferrera was one of 826 customers who were almost billionaires for a day because of the biggest error in the history of U.S. banking. The goof amounted to almost \$764 billion, more than six times the total assets of First Chicago NBD Corporation. "I had a lot of people saying in jest to transfer it to the Cayman Islands and run for it," Ferrera said. But like most of the others, he simply reported the error to bank officials, who could say only that it was a "computer programming error." It pays to remember that all earthly wealth is just as temporal.

KNOWING WHO YOUR FRIENDS ARE

Years ago, the story goes, a San Diego bank hired a private investigator to track down a bank robber and retrieve stolen funds. The search led to Mexico. The investigator crossed the border and then, realizing he would need a Spanish interpreter, opened up the telephone book and hired the first interpreter listed in the Yellow Pages. After many days, he finally captured the bandit and, through the interpreter, asked him, "Where did you hide the money?" In Spanish, the thief replied, "What money? I have no idea what you're talking about." With that, the investigator drew his pistol, pointed it at the suspect, and said to the interpreter, "Tell him that if he doesn't tell me where the money is, I will shoot him where he stands." Upon receiving this message, the bank robber said to the interpreter, "Señor, I have hidden the money in a coffee can, under the fourth floorboard, in the second-floor men's room of the Palacio Hotel on Via D'Amador in La Paz." "What did he say?" the investigator asked the interpreter. "Señor," said the interpreter as he thought for a moment, "he says he is prepared to die like a man!"