

EXECUTED

TO SUPPRESS

HIS MESSAGE



Volume 10

Scriptures: Money & the Church

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Introduction

When seeking God's will on a certain issue, it's helpful to read all the relevant Scriptures, then come to your own conclusions.

Here you will find most of the Old and New Testament Scriptures directly related to the use of money within God's religion. Unless otherwise indicated, these passages are quoted from the New American Standard Bible.

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## 1 — What Jesus Said

I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand [Greek: *wage worker*], and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. *He flees because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep (John 10:11-13).*

No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. *You cannot serve God and money (Luke 16:13 — ESV).*

The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. *And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables; and to those who were selling the doves He said, “Take these things away; stop making My Father’s house a place of business” (John 2:13-16).*

So Jesus said to them again, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. *All who came before Me are thieves and robbers*, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:7-10).

I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. *He flees because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep (John 10:11-13).*

Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and love respectful greetings in the market places, and chief seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets, *who devour widows’*

*houses, and for appearance's sake offer long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation (Luke 20:46-47).*

*Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence (Matthew 23:25).*

*Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give. Do not acquire gold, or silver, or copper for your money belts, or a bag for your journey, or even two coats, or sandals, or a staff; for the worker is worthy of his support [Greek: *nourishment*] (Matthew 10:8-10).*

*And He said to them, "Take nothing for your journey, neither a staff, nor a bag (for food), nor bread, nor money; and do not even have two tunics apiece. Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that city" (Luke 9:3-4).*

*No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money (Luke 16:13 — ESV).*

*And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables; and to those who were selling the doves He said, "Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a place of business" (John 2:14-16).*

*And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves. And He said to them, "It is written, 'MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER'; but you are making it a ROBBERS' DEN" (Matthew 21:12-13).*

*Then they came to Jerusalem. And He entered the temple and began to drive out those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves; and He would not permit anyone to*

*carry merchandise through the temple.* And He began to teach and say to them, “Is it not written, ‘MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL THE NATIONS’? *But you have made it a ROBBERS’ DEN*” (Mark 11:15-17).

*Jesus entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling, saying to them, “It is written, ‘AND MY HOUSE SHALL BE A HOUSE OF PRAYER,’ *but you have made it a ROBBERS’ DEN*” (Luke 19:45-46).*

When they came to Capernaum, those who collected the two-drachma tax came to Peter and said, “Does your teacher not pay the two-drachma tax?” He said, “Yes.” And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect customs or poll-tax, from their sons or from strangers?” When Peter said, “From strangers,” Jesus said to him, “*Then the sons are exempt*. However, so that we do not offend them, go to the sea and throw in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for you and Me” (Matthew 17:24-27).

Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: *freely ye have received, freely give* (Matthew 10:8).

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2 — What the Apostles and Disciples Wrote

The Apostle Peter

But Peter said, “I do *not* possess silver and gold (forms of 1st Century money), but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene — walk!” (Acts 3:6).

But there were false prophets also among the people, *even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying [Greek: contradict, disavow, reject] the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not* (Peter 2:1-3 — KJV).

Therefore, I exhort the elders [Greek: *older people*] among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd [Greek: *tend*] the flock of God among you, exercising oversight [Greek: *watching over*] not under compulsion, *but voluntarily*, according to the will of God; *and not for sordid gain [Greek: greedy for money]*, but with eagerness (I Peter 5:1-2).

The Disciple Jude

For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness [Greek: *worldly vices*] and deny [Greek: *contradict repudiate, reject*] our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ (Jude 4).

But these men revile the things which they do not understand; and the things which they know by instinct, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed. Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and for pay [Greek: *wages, pay for service*] they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

These are the men who are hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted; wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever (Jude 10-13).

These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; they speak arrogantly (they are preachers), *flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage* [Greek: *profit or benefit*] (Jude 16).

The Apostle Paul

“For the love of money is a root of *all sorts of evil*” (I Timothy 6:10).

For we are not like many, peddling [Greek: *acting as a retailing huckster*] *the word of God*, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God (II Corinthians 2:17).

I have coveted no one’s silver or gold (1st Century money) or clothes. *You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my own needs and to the men who were with me*. In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:33-35).

For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel. For if I do this voluntarily, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have a stewardship entrusted to me. What then is my reward? *That, when I preach the gospel, I may offer the gospel without charge*, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel (I Corinthians 9:16-18).

For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, *how working night and day so as to not be a burden to any of you*, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God (I Thessalonians 2:9).

For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example, because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you, *nor did we eat anyone’s bread without paying for it, but with labor and hardship we kept working night and day so that we would not be a burden to any of you* (II Thessalonians 3:7-8).

If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we reap material

things from you? If others share the right over you, do we not more? *Nevertheless, we did not use this right, but we endure all things so that we will cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ (I Corinthians 9:11-12).*

Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat the *food* of the temple, and those who attend regularly to the altar *have their share from the altar*? So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living (food) from the gospel. *But I have used none of these things. And I am not writing these things so that it will be done so in my case; for it would be better for me to die than have any man make my boast an empty one (I Corinthians 9:13-15).*

For, I think, God has exhibited us apostles last of all, as men condemned to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are prudent in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong; you are distinguished, but we are without honor. *To this present hour we are both hungry and thirsty, and are poorly clothed, and are roughly treated, and are homeless; and we toil, working with our own hands (I Corinthians 4:9-12).*

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### 3 — Old Testament Scriptures

Thus says the LORD *concerning the prophets who lead my people astray*; When they have something to bite with their teeth, They cry, “Peace,” But against him who puts nothing in their mouths They declare holy war. Therefore it will be night for you — without vision, And darkness for you — without divination. The sun will go down on the prophets, And the day will become dark over them. The seers will be ashamed And the diviners will be embarrassed. Indeed, they will all cover their mouths because there is no answer from God. On the other hand I am filled with power — With the Spirit of the LORD — And with justice and courage To make known to Jacob his rebellious act, Even to Israel his sin. Now hear this, heads of the house of Jacob And rulers of the house of Israel, Who abhor justice And twist everything that is straight, Who build Zion with bloodshed And Jerusalem with violent injustice. *Her leaders pronounce judgment for a bribe, Her priests instruct for a price And her prophets divine for money*. Yet they lean on the LORD saying, “Is not the LORD in our midst? Calamity will not come upon us” (Micah 3:5-11).

“Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; *And you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk Without money and without cost*” (Isaiah 55:1).

For thus says the LORD, “You were sold for nothing and *you will be redeemed without money*” (Isaiah 52:3).

Buy [Hebrew: *get, acquire*] truth, and *do not sell it* (Proverbs 23:23).

Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say to those shepherds, Thus says the Lord GOD, “*Woe, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flock?*” (Ezekiel 34:2).

As I live, declares the Lord GOD, surely because My flock has become a prey, My flock has even become food for all the beasts of the field for lack of a shepherd, and My shepherds did not search

for My flock, but rather the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock (Ezekiel 34:8).

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4 — The Origins of Money and Trade

The previously-quoted Scriptures describe how the Lord voiced harsh criticisms against the religious authorities of His day. Yet the manner in which Jesus addressed monetary issues was most unusual. To Jesus, what the religious officials were doing was not simply inappropriate or wrong, it was incredibly evil.

So specifically what had angered Jesus?

Here is the answer: the Temple officials were operating God's religion as a *business* — that is, an institution that extracted money from worshipers in return for providing a place to practice their faith.

So *why* was Jesus so upset over the Temple being operated as a money-funded business?

What follows will answer that question.

There are many kinds of sin, but there's a particular type of sin that is totally opposed to all that God represents. And this is what Jesus witnessed in the Temple: a total and violent opposition to God — an especially intense evil, something similar to Mark 3:29, where Jesus addressed blaspheming the Holy Spirit.

We can trace this great evil back to Ezekiel 28:13-16, where the prophet discusses how sin first entered God's creation:

You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The ruby, the topaz and the diamond; The beryl, the onyx and the jasper; The lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald; And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, Was in you. On the day that you were created They were prepared. You were the anointed cherub who covers, And I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire.

Consider who was present in the Garden of Eden: Adam, Eve, God and Satan. And only one of these beings was a created and anointed cherub (angel). Obviously, Ezekiel was writing about the Devil.

Let's continue:

You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created
Until unrighteousness was found in you. *By the abundance of your
trade You were internally filled with violence, And you sinned;*
Therefore I have cast you as profane From the mountain of God.
And I have destroyed you (the Hebrew more properly means
“caused to wander away”), O covering cherub, From the midst of
the stones of fire.

Through the prophet Ezekiel, we learn that sin first entered God’s perfect
creation through a system called “trade,” which the Hebrew language
defines as *merchandising*: the exchanging of products and services for
money.

*Satan’s created a monetary trading system that brought sin into God’s perfect
universe.*

And God does not want Satan’s monetary system used inside Christ’s
Church:

For thus says the LORD, “You were sold for nothing and you will be
redeemed *without money*” (Isaiah 52:3).

Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; *And you who have
no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without
money and without cost.* (Isaiah 55:1).

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