

WEALTH ACCORDING TO JESUS

By David Hagni

Presented to Regent University
and Dr. Lyle Story for

Life and Teachings of Christ, BNTB 510

Spring 2000

Wealth According to Jesus

“I do not undervalue for a moment our material prosperity . . . but we must keep steadily in mind that no people were ever benefited by riches if their prosperity corrupted their virtue.” Theodore Roosevelt

We live in a culture that has recently experienced unparalleled growth in its national economy. We also live in a church culture that is being forced – both by theological argument and by need of the poor – to sort Biblical truth from error concerning issues of material wealth and poverty. On one side we hear the proponents of *faith teachings*ⁱ and on the other side we hear counter complaints of those who are against the *insidious disease*ⁱⁱ of the gospel of prosperity. What are we to do if we want to have a bedrock of understanding that will guide our ethics and beliefs, our daily financial decisions, and our long-term lifestyle commitments?

It is probably not wise to base values and judgments on a roaring economy that may crash next year. And, it is also difficult to discern what is right when so many “anointed” teachers are giving messages that do not agree. An examination of the context and content of Jesus’ teaching reveal that Christ initiated a reversal of fortune between the wicked rich and the righteous poor. Jesus calls his followers to reorder their lives according to kingdom principles governing the righteous acquisition and distribution of material wealth.

Background

Before examining texts containing Jesus' teaching on wealth, it is important to gain an understanding of the Old Testament background and Jewish mindset toward wealth. Jewish culture is the context in which Jesus thought and taught. The *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* defines "poor" as one who is destitute of wealth and of material goods, lacking in even the necessities of life. Also, metaphorically, it means the humble and the meek. There are many Hebrew words that describe the condition of being poor, but this is a good general definition to work with. Accordingly, the definition for "wealth" in the Old Testament designates the abundance of property. Two Hebrew words for wealth portray the meaning of "faculty," "ability," and "power" in relation to acquiring goods and influence.ⁱⁱⁱ

The Old Testament has a long-standing tradition of seeing wealth as a positive affirmation of God's blessing. In Genesis 13, for example, Abram is said to have been very wealthy in property and precious metals (vs. 2). In chapter 14, it is apparent that God was the One Who blessed Abram and made him prosper (vs. 19-23). The tradition is continued with Abraham's son Isaac (26:13), Isaac's son Jacob (30:43), and Jacob's son Joseph (41:40), all who became very wealthy by the favor of the Lord. Job also finds that he is twice as prosperous than before his calamities struck due to the blessing of God (Job 41:10).

On the other hand, the Old Testament does *not* give wholesale credence to prosperity without qualifications and parameters. Deuteronomy 28 states that the voice of the Lord is to be carefully obeyed or poverty will follow as a punishment for disobedience (vs. 1-2, 11, and 15). Psalm 109:10-12 extends the punishment of poverty

to those who trouble the plan of God. And, the book of Proverbs is explicit in its declaration that poverty is sometimes self-inflicted when a person becomes lazy (6:6-11), undisciplined (23:21), or out of control with his spending (21:17). As important as these principles are, there is one overriding theme found in the Old Testament concerning the rich and the poor that helps shed light on the teachings of Jesus in the gospels.

Central to Old Testament thought on the subject of wealth and poverty is that Yahweh is protector of the poor and needy.^{iv} The commandments listed in Exodus 20 mandate basic human respect. Property rights are also affirmed since the command “Thou shalt not steal” (vs. 15) assumes people have private property *to* steal. Included in the legal tradition of the Old Testament is the command to “. . . not deny justice to your poor people in their lawsuits” (Ex. 23:6) and to lend provision to the poor and needy (Deut. 15:7-11). Under the Old Covenant, God’s blessing on a person’s finances was directly tied to his benevolence to the poor (15:10). But what about those who are poor because of debt?

Mosaic Law in Leviticus 25 established the Year of Jubilee to free all debts, return ancestral lands, and free slaves. This provision gave the poor a clean slate to try again to better their lives. This is the setting in which the words were written, “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev. 19:18), which Jesus quoted as recorded in Matthew 19:19. Love in this context is not essentially a feeling, but concrete acts that meet a person’s need.^v

God as protector of the poor is also found in the writings of the prophets. The prophets, in large part, spoke to the people of Israel who had forsaken the covenant.^{vi} They spoke warnings and judgments to those who held power in order that they would

steer the people back to honoring God's commands. Loyalty to the covenant required social justice and the end of unfair taxation (Amos 5:12), theft of land (Micah 2:1-3), unjust business transactions (Amos 5:12), and the neglect of the poor and needy (Is. 1:17).

An important concept that emerges in the Psalms is the unification of the social aspect of the poor with the religious dimension. In Psalm 82, Asaph argues to defend the weak and fatherless, to maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed, and to rescue the weak and needy (vs. 3,4). Psalm 72:1-4 carries the thought of the poor praying to God for justice in the midst of their poverty. And, there seems to be more at stake than mere material goods in Psalm 35 as David talks to his Lord about the poor and needy (vs. 10). David could well have been financially sound by the time he wrote this Psalm.^{vii} Justice and capital seem to be of equal concern to David as he submits his cause to God.

Some have even gone so far as to suggest the poor and needy are a special class of people that could be called the "pious poor."^{viii} These are people poor not because of their own doing but because of becoming legitimate victims of the strong, powerful, and rich. This idea of God defending the pious poor plays heavily in the New Testament in Jesus' teaching concerning wealth.

The book of Proverbs demonstrates many different views toward wealth and poverty. There is strong rebuke to those who are poor because of laziness, foolishness, or extravagance. Yet, the Lord has sympathy for true victims of injustice and will take up their case (22:22). Proverbs sharply criticizes the rich who oppress the poor (14:31), but – as is the general consensus in the rest of the Old Testament – wealth is seen as a blessing, which is desirable and obtainable if acquired ethically and wisely.

At least four main social groups are addressed in Proverbs including the royal court, the educated urban society, prosperous agricultural workers, and small farmers (the working poor).^{ix} A synopsis of Proverbs gives three general conclusions.^x First, the presence in society of a number of poor persons will always remain. It is unfortunate, but, like sickness, poverty is something to which human society is vulnerable. Fortunately, there are measures that can be taken to eliminate or at least minimize sickness – so too poverty. Secondly, the believing community has humanitarian and religious obligations to provide protection for the poor and needy from exploitation. Acts of charity preserve the poor from starvation and exposure. Proverbs does not suggest that complete eradication of poverty is possible or commanded, but rather that assistance should be provided on a limited but caring basis for basic needs.

Thirdly, as mentioned above, Proverbs condones wealth as desirable and possible but warns of its inherent dangers and pitfalls. Wealth should not be sought after at the expense of breaking down one's body through exhaustion (23:4,5). This is similar to Jesus' challenge recorded in Matthew 16:26, "What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?" In the eighth Proverb wealth is a lower priority to wisdom, yet one of the results of wisdom is wealth. Those who want to increase their financial condition are given practical instructions in Proverbs 1-9 on how to properly climb the social ladder. And other passages in Proverbs remind the prospering to remember the less fortunate along their way to a better life (Prov. 31).

We have seen that throughout the Old Testament God reveals Himself as protector and provider of the poor and needy. It has also been suggested above that the poor and needy are people experiencing social, material, and religious oppression. The

primary concern in the Old Testament is for innocent people who unjustly and unwillingly have been subjected to the dominating wealthy and powerful. Yet, those who have inflicted poverty upon themselves are given their ticket out in Proverbs through faithful giving, diligent work and thrifty saving.

Here is one final, but crucial, comment concerning the Old Testament perception of wealth and poverty before Jesus' teachings are examined. There is a concurring theme running throughout the Old Testament that is important to understand in order to appreciate what Jesus taught about wealth. Proverbs speaks of *a reversal of fortunes* between poor and rich (24:19,20). The Psalms also echo this theme as David, for example, informs that the wealthy wicked will be brought down and the poor and needy will be blessed and inherit the land (Ps. 37).

Isaiah the prophet prophesied about the oppression over the people due to injustice (Is. 58:6-9). In chapter 61 Isaiah declares freedom to the oppressed and good news to the poor (vs. 1). Freedom and good news is made possible because the Lord saw that there was no justice (59:15) and displayed His wrath to the enemies (vs. 18). With God's intervention there is an *absolute inversion of power and wealth*. This inversion is to occur between the *wicked* wealthy and the *pious* poor. God is not interested in decimating wealth that is fairly accumulated. However, those who oppress with wealth will certainly answer to God's wrath.

In relation to this, those who abuse wise principle and suffer poverty as a consequence are *not* the "poor" for whom freedom is declared. Freedom is *already* available for those poor by following the precepts of Proverbs. And, of course, consideration for the needs of these poor is obligated as previously noted. But, it is for

the *unjustly oppressed* poor that freedom is announced in Isaiah. *An inversion of wealth and power is declared and takes place between the wicked wealthy and the righteous poor.* With these concepts in mind from the Old Testament, the focus now turns toward the New Testament and specifically the life example and teachings of Jesus Christ concerning wealth and poverty.

The Life Example and Teachings of Jesus

Jesus' first formal public address was drawn from the very passage in Isaiah just examined. The passage applied equally to the context of Isaiah's time and to the historical circumstances of Jesus' day. Jesus employed Isaiah's words to address an oppressive social and economic situation in which exploitative urbanism and powerful redistributive central institutions such as the Roman state and the Jewish hierarchy helped to keep property and power in the hands of the few.^{xi}

This context is important to the interpretation of the passage in Luke 4:18. By declaring that he was anointed to "preach good news to the poor" Jesus was not inferring that the poor would automatically become rich. Jesus also said he had come to "release the oppressed." In the dismantling of oppressive strongholds of social and religious powers, Jesus removed the obstacles to religious and economic growth. (It still remained for the poor to prosper through their own faith and industry.) Now, because of the presence of Jesus, the oppressed had the opportunity for spiritual and economic betterment.

This account of Jesus reading Isaiah also seems to be related to His words at the closing of Luke 4. In Nazareth, Jesus said he had come to preach good news to the poor

“ . . . to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor” (vs. 18, 19). Subsequently, in Capernaum Jesus said that He needed to go other places to “preach the good news of the kingdom of God” (vs. 43). The year of the Lord’s favor probably refers to the Year of Jubilee in which debts were cancelled, slaves released, and lands returned.

The jubilee year was legally and historically an aspect of military conquest of the land of Canaan.^{xii} As an incentive to fight, families that participated in the war would inherit specific pieces of land. Every 50 years, each parcel of land had to be returned to the lawful heir of the original family. The jubilee year was the year that restored the family’s lost inheritance. It symbolized the restoration of all things. It is evident why Jesus chose this particular passage for His opening address to commence His ministry.

Jesus linked the temporal concept of the Year of Jubilee with the physical arrival of the eternal kingdom of God. In doing so, He proclaimed much more than just the opportunity for material acquisition – though economic gain was definitely included in the proclamation. Jesus proclaimed the realized eschatological event of all time. This is the kingdom of God overtaking Satan’s oppressive authority on earth, through Jesus Christ – a complete inversion of power. This *is* good news!

In Christ came a totally new order spiritually, relationally, and economically – all three being interdependent. The new order is not utopian or idealistic but has very practical application. First, Jesus disclosed God as Father (John 14:9). This new spiritual order has direct bearing on one’s attitude toward the accumulation and use of wealth. Jesus taught a radical reordering of priorities in order to live in the will of God, and Matthew 6 records premier teaching of Jesus concerning wealth and its relationship with the spiritual life of faith.

The word “mammon” (King James) or “money” (NIV) in Matthew 6:24 means something ungodly that entangles.^{xiii} Mammon is a transliteration of the common Aramaic word for riches and is close to another Hebrew word meaning to be firm and steadfast.^{xiv} Jesus personifies mammon in verse 24 in order to contrast devotion to it with devotion to God. A fundamental shift in allegiance must take place in order to follow the decrees of God’s kingdom. A reordering along relational and economic lines must occur for one to experience the power of the kingdom of God. Before looking closer at Matthew 6, here is one example in Jesus’ experience of a man who would *not* reorder his life to align with kingdom principle.

It is seen in the case of the rich young man (Matt. 19:16-30) how intricately intertwined are relational and economical issues. Jesus connects economic reordering with spiritual devotion to righteousness in his challenge to the rich young man. He requires the man to sell all, give it to the poor, and follow Him. The young man’s refusal to sell his possessions exposed the kind of value he placed on God’s spiritual kingdom. Apparently, the man did not see Jesus as better than his temporal possessions – else he would have gladly sold all in order to inherit something better. On the surface this looks like an economic issue. However, as Jesus demonstrated, it contained a much deeper spiritual and relational issue.

The disciples were perplexed with Jesus’ teaching at this point. They were surprised to hear that it would be hard for the rich to enter the kingdom of God (19:23,25). They were perplexed partly because they had only seen the surface issue. They were puzzled because they functioned in the Old Testament Jewish mind-set that wealth, rightfully gained, was a desirable blessing from God. They were well aware that

many in their scriptures had great wealth including Abraham, David, Solomon, Joseph, Job, and others. “Who then can be saved?” (19:25).

Jesus calmed their fears first by saying that with God all things are possible (19:26). He then points to the central issue of the attitude of the heart. To “leave everything for His sake” (19:27) demonstrate that new priority – economic and relational reordering – has been given place in a person. The “leaving everything” is not nearly as important as the reordering of inward attitudes. In fact, the total surrender of possessions found in the gospels (Luke 5:11, 28; 14:33; 18:18-23; Mark 10:21) was a temporary demand given only to those personally asked by Jesus for the specific purposes of His earthly ministry.^{xv}

Jesus quite possibly was calling the rich young man into an earthy ministry partnership much like that which He had previously called the other disciples. They had willingly forsaken all to follow, but the rich young man was unwilling to reprioritize his life and lost the opportunity for ministry with the Master. The fact that God is good to multiply and return any possessions sacrificed for His service in this life (Mark 10:30) illustrates again that God is not interested in our permanent abandonment of wealth but rather in our total and continued obedience from the heart. Returning to Matthew 6 will give a more conclusive view of the spiritual aspect of Jesus’ teaching on wealth.

One of Matthew’s purposes in writing his gospel may have been to challenge the prosperous house churches of his day to apply Jesus’ priorities to their lives.^{xvi} The coming of Jesus brought a reordering of spiritual authorities with Satan’s defeat and the coming of the kingdom of God. The authority of Jesus Christ is to permeate every aspect

of His follower's lives. This is emphasized in Matthew 6 as Jesus contrasts the life of faith versus the life filled with anxiety.

After Jesus instructs on the futility of worry in verses 25 through 31, he gives a key statement concerning God's will in our pursuit of wealth. Denoted by the word "but" in verse 33, Jesus contrasts the difference between pagans and believers in their behavior toward material possessions. Jesus said that the pagans "seek" (King James) and "run after" (NIV) all of these material things. This "running after" speaks of addictions to cultural appetites. Michael Crosby in his *House of Disciples* calls social attitudes that control thinking patterns and behavior "cultural addictions."^{xvii} He suggests that the same steps used to break any addiction are necessary to break the addiction of consumerism. One important step in any recovery is for the addict to realize he has "bottomed out" and is in need of a higher power. Jesus taught the same concept.

In conjunction with His insistence that a person cannot serve two masters (Matt. 6:24), Jesus brought the kingdom to bear on his follower's values. Jesus said, "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." The rule and reign of God over a believer's life can break any cultural addiction. Jesus taught that it is essential to *maintain cooperation with God's reign within* in order to avoid or break the deadly trap of anxiety caused by cultural addiction to materialism.

The only way to accomplish this is to continue to "hunger and thirst" (Matt. 5:6) for God's order in our lives. Seeking God's kingdom replaces anxiety and fear with faith and trust that God will provide all that is needed and desired. Jesus' own life example and teachings affirm the ethical acquisition of wealth and teach the right use of possessions for personal enjoyment and the enhancement of the kingdom of God.

Jesus knew and operated from a positive Old Testament viewpoint of wealth. The gospel of Matthew never portrays Jesus or His disciples as unable to access resources.^{xviii} He probably owned a house (Matt. 8:5,14; 4:13; 9:1, 10, 28; 13:1, 36; 17:24, 25)^{xix} and did not classify Himself as financially poor (Matt. 26:11). His disciples were from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds but, at worst, came from lower middle class. Neither did Jesus' ministry suffer poverty as boats (Matt. 13:1), lodging (Luke 19:1-10), food (John 6:1-15) and other needs were continually provided. He considered his ministry on earth a time of festivity and enjoyed things only money can buy (Matt. 26:6-13). Judas even stole from the ministry treasury without being noticed, suggesting that there were substantial funds from which to steal (John 12:6).

Jesus' teachings left little doubt of his attitude toward the positive value that wealth can have if used correctly. In Luke 16 Jesus used the parable of the shrewd manager to show the potential in worldly wealth to attract people's favor. The manager used his wealth to win the favor of debtors and thus provide for himself in his time of crisis. In commending the manager's wise decisions (vs. 8), Jesus was calling for the right use of wealth, not the abandonment of possessions.^{xx} Jesus taught that the wise use of wealth is found in being faithful and honest with small amounts (vs. 10), using wealth in service to humanity (vs. 9), and serving God's purposes undistracted (vs. 14, 15). The person who uses money wisely can literally win friends for eternity and receive heavenly rewards (vs. 9).

Using wealth to meet needs and win people for eternity is an important theme in Jesus' teaching. Jesus encouraged his followers to give freely even to people from whom there is little hope of any return (Luke 6:35). On the other hand, He also encouraged

giving with expectation that even more would be given back in return (Luke 6:37,38).

These are not contradictory statements.

These two statements again emphasize the motive and attitude that giving should assume. Giving is to be done out of a motive of love with no strings attached (“without expecting to get anything back”). And, giving is to be done with strong faith in God that He will orchestrate an even greater return on our giving (“give and it will be given to you . . . running over”). Jesus taught that as we acquire wealth we should look for needs to meet as an investment in His kingdom. God will then handle the return on these investments!

The parable of the Good Samaritan is one other example Jesus used to teach of the correct use of the power of wealth. Love is the summation of the Law according to Jesus (Luke 10:26-28). The Samaritan used at least two days wages to provide medicine and lodging for the beaten victim. He became the supreme example of taking advantage of an opportunity for using wealth to compassionately minister to human needs.

From these examples of the life and teachings of Jesus, it is clear that He is not opposed to the ethical gain of wealth and its enjoyment, especially in light of its rightful use to minister to people’s needs. However, an understanding concerning His teaching about money would not be complete without seeing how He framed them within the parameters of sober warnings and restrictions.

In the parable of the sower (Mark 4:1-20, Luke 8:14-20, Matt. 13:1-23), Jesus describes the one who casts seed, the types of ground upon which the seed falls, and the amount of production the seed yields. The parable is followed by an interpretation of the key elements. In comparing the seed to the word, the people are the ground receiving the

word, and the yield depends on the attitude the people have toward the word sown into their hearts. Threats to the word include Satan (Mark 4:15), trouble (4:17), and persecution (4:17). In verse 19 Jesus bluntly warns that worries of this life, desires for other things, and the deceitfulness of wealth have the potential of choking off the word of God from growing in a disciple's heart and life.

The main thought is not the sower but the condition of the ground. The context of the ancient Israelite farmer allows for the possibility of the practice of casting seed prior to plowing the field.^{xxi} This would explain the apparent carelessness of the sower sowing seed indiscriminately on unproductive grounds. Jesus, as sower, sows the word to all without favoritism. According to the parable then, the person must decide whether or not the ground of their heart will be fruitful (vs. 20).

Luke's account adds "as they go on their way" and "they do not mature" (8:14) signifying an ongoing struggle with the seduction of wealth.^{xxii} Jesus is adamant that there is a very real danger of gradually allowing the worry and desire for material possessions and pleasures to choke a person's devotion to the kingdom of God. However, if a disciple maintains his reordered priorities and continues to seek first the kingdom, wealth acquisition ceases to be a distraction.

One other warning Jesus gave was against covetousness and elitism. In outward appearance, it doesn't seem that the Rich Fool of Luke 12:16-21 did much to deserve his label. The parable explains how foolish the decision was for the man to build bigger barns on the tail of a bumper crop. The foolishness was not in providing for the excess but in making the decision completely without regard to God's will or other people in need.

The man was most likely an elite landowner that lived off other people's labor and could possibly have intended to store his excess in view of a future drought in which he would charge much more than what the crop was worth.^{xxiii} Jesus considered this as covetousness and warned that a man's life does not consist of his possessions (12:15). Covetousness in this sense, from the Greek word *pleonexias*, means to take advantage of another.^{xxiv} In satisfying his own greed, the man totally neglected eternal realities of the impending kingdom of God. Jesus' teaching directly confronts human arrogance and self-centeredness and challenges listeners to keep kingdom concerns first place in the use of their wealth (12:21).

Conclusion

This has not been an exhaustive consideration of all that Jesus taught about wealth. It is, however, a sampling of His major thoughts in regard to the acquisition and use of material goods. Jesus taught from a mind-set that was generally positive toward wealth due to His roots in historic Israel and the teachings of the Old Testament scripture. His coming began the fulfillment of the promised hope of a reversal of fortunes between the wicked rich and the righteous poor. The coming of the kingdom of God demanded are reordering of spiritual, relational, and financial priorities.

Followers of Christ are expected to put kingdom interests and the needs of others ahead of their own. They are to arrange their lives in such a way as to be able to maintain primary relationships and – with their righteously gained wealth – expand the kingdom of God and minister to the basic needs of the poor. Thus, Jesus does not negate the

importance of ethically acquiring wealth, but He does insist on reasonable boundaries in its pursuit. Jesus warns of the seductiveness of riches, covetousness, and arrogance associated with material possessions. According to Jesus, temporal and material matters find ultimate value when linked to the higher and eternal purposes of the kingdom of God.

Sources Consulted

- Alexander, John F. Your Money or Your Life: A New look at Jesus' View of Wealth and Power. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986.
- Bullock, C. Hassell. An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophetic Books. Chicago: Moody, 1986.
- Burkett, Larry. What the Bible Says About Money. Brentwood, Tennessee: Wolgemuth & Hyatt Publishers, 1989.
- Crosby, Michael H. House of Disciples: Church, Economics, and Justice in Matthew. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1988.
- Davis, John Jefferson. Your Wealth in God's World: Does the Bible Support the Free Market? Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1984.
- Fee, Gordon D. The Disease of the Health & Wealth Gospels. Beverly, MA: Frontline Publishing, 1985.
- Grant, George. Bringing in the Sheaves: Transforming Poverty into Productivity. Brentwood, Tennessee: Wolgemuth & Hyatt Publishers, 1988.
- North, Gary. Inherit the Earth: Biblical Blueprints for Economics. Fr. Worth: Dominion Press, 1987.
- Oakman, Douglas E. Jesus and the Economic Questions of His Day. Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1986.
- Pilgrim, Walter E. Good News to the Poor: Wealth and Poverty in Luke-Acts. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1981.
- Ross, J. F. "Poor." In The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible. Vol. 3. Ed. George Buttrick. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962.
- Spurgeon, C. H. The Treasury of David. Vol. 1. Peabody, Massachusetts. The Bible. The New International Version.
- The Bible. The King James Version.
- Throckmorton, Burton H. Gospel Parallels: A Synopsis of the First Three Gospels. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1979.
- Vine, W. E. Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words. Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1981.
- Whybray, R. N. Wealth and Poverty in the Book of Proverbs. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990.
- Wigram, George V. The Analytical Greek Lexicon of the New Testament. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1983.
- Wimber, John. Signs and Wonders and Church Growth: Theological Foundation: the Kingdom of God. Placentia, CA: Vineyard Ministries International, 1984.
- Young, F. W. "Wealth" In The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible. Vol. 4. Ed. George Buttrick, Nashville: Abingdon press, 1962.

Endnotes

-
- ⁱ Faith teachings as proposed by Kenneth Hagin. Personally, I am not against these teachings and am, in fact, a graduate of Rhema Bible Training Center. However, my intent in this paper is not to argue or defend any view for or against. Rather, my purpose is to discover the context and content of the teaching of Jesus Himself on the issues directly related to wealth and poverty. It is hoped that these truths will inform, correct, and encourage God-pleasing beliefs and lifestyles.
- ⁱⁱ Gordon D. Fee, The Disease of the Health & Wealth Gospels (Beverly, MA: Frontline Publishing, 1985), 1.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Young, F. W., “wealth,” in The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible, vol. 4, ed. George Buttrick, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 818.
- ^{iv} Walter E. Pilgrim, Good News to the Poor (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1981), 21.
- ^v John Jefferson Davis, Your Wealth in God’s World (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1984), 64.
- ^{vi} C. Hassell Bullock, An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophetic Books (Chicago: Moody Press, 1986), 24-28.
- ^{vii} C. H. Spurgeon, The Treasury of David, vol. 1 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers), 140.
- ^{viii} Pilgrim, 30.
- ^{ix} R. N. Whybray, “Wealth and Poverty in the Book of Proverbs” Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 99 (1990): 116
- ^x *Ibid.*, 116.
- ^{xi} Douglas E. Oakman, Jesus and the Economic Questions of His Day (Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1986), 211.
- ^{xii} Gary North, Inherit the Earth (Ft. Worth: Dominion Press, 1987), 63.
- ^{xiii} Michael Crosby, House of Disciples (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1988), 192.
- ^{xiv} Vines Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, 1981 ed., “mammon”, 32.
- ^{xv} Pilgrim, 88.
- ^{xvi} Crosby, 192.
- ^{xvii} Crosby, 252.
- ^{xviii} Crosby, 263.
- ^{xix} The nature of Jesus’ itinerate ministry explains why the son of man had no place to lay his head.
- ^{xx} Pilgrim, 129.
- ^{xxi} Oakman, 106.
- ^{xxii} Pilgrim, 108
- ^{xxiii} Pilgrim, 111
- ^{xxiv} The Analytical Greek Lexicon of the New Testament, 1983 ed., “plaonekteo” , 328.