

## “I DON’T LIVE FOR MONEY...” REALLY?

Opening Questions:

- If I spend the majority of my time pursuing money or material things for myself, then am I not living for money?
- Is living for money and material things genuinely satisfying?
- Is there any significant difference between Christians and non-Christians in the U.S. when it comes to “careers” and making money?
- Can someone follow Joshua and still spend the majority of their time working for money or material things for themselves?
- What does Joshua mean when he says we must forsake all to follow him?

The simple truth is that the vast majority of Christians live for money, just like the rest of the world. Their educations – including religious – and “careers” are all about making enough money to live “the good life,” just like the rest of the people on the planet. Their currency bills might say, “In God We Trust,” but that is a lie just like most things in the world. The currency should say, “In This We Trust.” Said another way, Christians worship money and the material life just like non-theists who, while they don't claim to “worship” anything, yet never-the-less worship money and the material life—they just deny it a bit less than Christians and choke on a term that doesn't fit their worldview, i.e. “worship.”

### What is Wrong with Earning Money?

Money, or currency or the currency notes and coins themselves are not evil. There is nothing inherently wrong with paper or ink or metal.

Furthermore, if by “earning money” you mean receiving payment for honest, ethical work done, then “earning money” is not the problem. Whether you earn/receive/take a lot of money or whether you earn/receive/take very little money, how much you earn/receive/take is not the primary problem either.

Instead, living for money and the things it buys is evil and is the problem:

- Not sharing money and material things is the problem;
- Only sharing non-tax money with blood and legal relatives is the problem;
- Spending the majority of our time working FOR money is the problem;

- Not working for Joshua the majority of the time is the problem;

*Finally, and most important in this context, an unwillingness to share one's money and other material things with other disciples is **the problem**, for it is a manifestation and evidence of a lack of the most important thing – love. People's love of money and perceived material security takes the place of loving one another.*

Many Christians and Bibilians are wealthy and who spend their lives seeking to build their material wealth. There are many contemporary Bibilians and Christians who preach a very popular “prosperity gospel” whose basic message is “God wants to bless you to be materially wealthy!” The people of the world chasing after material wealth - money, wealth and the perceived material security it buys - is undoubtedly one of the things that most human beings spend their lives doing.

The term "worship" is derived from the straightforward English concept of “worth” or “worth-ship,” thus, that which is worth the most to an individual is that which he/she “worships.” So, if you are spending the majority of your time working for the food which perishes (money/material things), then you ought to use logic to conclude that you are worshipping money, all your objections notwithstanding. One does not need to bow down to an image or statue of a dollar bill to be worshipping money. In fact, the whole bowing down thing is just another outward act that does not mean the person worships the thing/person to which they bow. The proof of what we value – what we worth-ship – is proven in our daily lives...how we spend our time, how we behave, what we think about and what comes out of our mouths from our hearts.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (Matt. 6:21)

In other words, that which you value the most will take the majority of your heart's focus/attention.

Due to Christianity's errors, what is not widely known is Jesus/Joshua's position on his followers and how they should treat money and material things. The Real Light of the world's view is not widely known because it is very unpopular and goes against our natural inclination to store up wealth for ourselves or for others who we believe we might get something back from or whom we think we're obligated. Simply put, the disciples of Joshua will live a very different life regarding how they view and manage money and material things and how they live their lives with those views at heart.

## The Primary Principles of Disciples Regarding Handling of Money and Material Things

Here are the primary principles he teaches regarding money and material wealth for his followers:

*Principle 1. We share what we have with others, especially disciples.*

Thus, we are complying with two principles Joshua provides regarding this matter:

- a. "A new command I give to you, that you love one another as I have loved you; for this is how the people of the earth will know that you are my disciples IF you love/care for one another." (John 13:34-35);
- b. "So then, none of you can be my disciple who does not give up all his own possessions."

As we have observed, material things and currency are not evil, but they do provide a strong temptation to worship them or be in bondage to them (or to serve them), which temptation we overcome by our sharing with others, particularly other disciples. The sharing Joshua is talking about in the new command above *has nothing to do with the natural family*. People assume that a husband will provide for his wife and children when they are young. When an individual becomes a disciple and joins other disciples to share Joshua's Life together, the larger Family becomes the priority, not the "nuclear or natural" family. The natural family will become part of the Supernatural Family and find strength and encouragement there.

The world primarily shares only among natural or legal family members. In fact, there are Christian ministries that promote and defend focusing on the natural family and are clueless about the Supernatural Family.

The disciples share first amongst themselves and then to their "neighbors" at large, for Joshua made it very clear that the natural family is intended to mean virtually nothing from a Kingdom of God perspective. Of course, God wants people to love one another, including natural family members, but when that love rises above the spiritual family members, it becomes just another expression of selfishness. The true test of real love is if we are willing to share with those to whom we have NO natural or legal connection to, and thus don't have the perception that we "owe" each other something.

It is effortless to deceive ourselves and say, "I am not ruled/controlled/influenced by money," but the proof, so to speak, is "in the pudding" which pudding is *sharing*—and not just "convenience sharing," but everything we have got sharing—Life sharing. Sharing with others is a significant part of what it means to love other people, and the lack of sharing with one another among the Christians is both proof and a manifestation of their not listening to Joshua of Nazareth and thus their lack of love for one another.

As disciples, what we control materially comes and goes, ebbs and flows, but our practice is to share and give, not to be selfish which would mean to take and store "for me." Since this is true, a disciple will not store up large amounts of material things for themselves.

We do not live a life characterized by having better material things than the average person around where we live—we seek to live simply - not "materially above" our neighbors - and to use the material things we have in a non-wasteful, wise, selfless manner.

The following illustrations will help you understand the principles above.

Illustration: Part 1

Two men are sitting around a campfire in the woods – John and Bob. They have left living in areas with other people to “get away from the wickedness of the world to serve God.” They believe that they have “forsaken all to follow Jesus”. John has only the clothes on his back and two cans of beans. Bob has only the clothes on his back and three cans of beans. Both John and Bob are Bibilians and claim some Christian label. Since they won't “work for money” or do “secular work” since that is “not what God wants,” they ask others to give them things in trade for their religious materials, or they scavenge from what other's throw away, thus their cans of beans. Their “gospel” is primarily one of hell avoidance and fear. John resents that Bob has one more can of beans than he has and Bob resents John's resentment.

Illustration Part 2:

Two neighbors live next to each other in an average “middle class” neighborhood in the U.S. Each have about the same amount of material things like their house and car etc. Rachel and Ryan are disciples of Joshua, and they share their house with other disciples and sometimes with other neighbors in need. They have a “three bedroom, single-family house,” but they have four other disciples living with them, and they use their only other bedroom for the occasional down-and-out young women they find in the city who needs help. They try to work as little as possible to provide food, clothing, and shelter (the lesser work) for themselves and the others they help; since they spend the majority of their time proclaiming Joshua to the people they encounter (the Greater work).

Ryan and Rachel share everything they have with the four other disciples because they consider them good friends and actual brothers and sisters. Furthermore, Ryan and Rachel are doing well trying to love their neighbor as they love themselves - thus they are living out the “new command” as well as the second greatest command. Furthermore, since they are living selflessly like that due to their faith in Joshua and his Father, they are also fulfilling the greatest command.

Next door to Rachel and Ryan are Bonnie and Harry. Bonnie and Harry are “church-going Christians” – in fact, Harry is an “elder” of the religious organization and is president of the church board - and they don't share anything they have like most other Americans, and if they do any significant sharing, it is only with blood or legal relatives. They live a life indistinguishable from the “atheists” next door and the “agnostics” across the street. They are not living out the new command, nor are they living out the first or second greatest commands even though they regularly profess to “love God”, and sing the loudest during “worship service.”

Rachel and Ryan are disliked by their neighbors for the “unconventional”, “weird”, “strange”, “religious” way they are living and sharing their material

things with non-relatives, but they are most disliked by the Christians who consider and treat Ryan and Rachel like “religious fanatics” and “cultists”.

In contrast, Bonnie and Harry are well liked by their neighbors, held up as “model citizens” and “good church going people” since their selfish lifestyle affirms their neighbor's selfish lifestyles and they almost never talk about anything but the things of the world!

Question: Who is doing better listening to Joshua - John or Bob, who have “given everything up for the lord”; the “cultists” Ryan and Rachel; or the godly churchgoers and good citizens Bonny and Harry?

*Principle 2. We don't “work for money,” which is to say that we are not working for the money itself or for the non-essential things that money can buy—we don't serve money. We work for our Father and Joshua, the Greater work, while we seek to minimize the lesser work of providing food, clothing, and shelter for ourselves and others, thus we comply with what Joshua means when he says:*

No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. (Matt. 6:24), and;

Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on him the Father, God, has set His seal. (John 6:27), and;

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matt. 6:19-21), and;

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. (Mark 10:25), and;

Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God & Woe to you who are rich, for you are receiving your comfort in full." (Luke 6:20, 24).

Before we met Joshua, we were most likely working for money to secure and multiply our material possessions. This effort is a big part of loving our lives in this world. When we “meet” Joshua, everything changes, and one of the biggest changes is that we stop working for money and the unnecessary possessions that the money buys and supports. Thus, when we first come into Joshua's Life, we must stop living for, or hang onto, our possessions—we must forsake them. What this means for some people is that we must walk away from our belongings to start following Joshua.

After we have forsaken that which was holding us back from following Joshua, we must now adjust to the new way of Life. This adjustment does *not* mean we don't accept money or material compensation for the lesser work we do. This does not mean we don't plant our gardens for food to eat or build or maintain structures to live in or do work for someone and receive payment for our work to buy something we need. Instead, it means our motivation for the lesser work we do is to provide necessary material things for ourselves and to help support others and thus support the Greater work—it means we do not store up for ourselves material possessions.

Just like a martial arts pupil has a master in the martial arts domain does not mean that the pupil never eats or drinks or maintains a shelter or works for food. Instead, it means that for what that pupil cares about – in this example learning the ways of the martial art they are studying – that domain will be primary and will shape the other non-primary domain things in his/her life even while the pupil does spend time and energy doing work not directly related to the primary domain. Or, just like the woman hired to sew garments yet who does some things above and beyond sewing garments to help others with whom she works.

Our motivation is not to become wealthy or to store up wealth or to be materially secure. Instead, we do the greater work to serve our Father and our Master and the lesser work to:

- a. Provide the things we need for life on this earth for ourselves and *thus try not to be a burden to others;*
- b. Provide for those we share his Life with;
- c. Help needy people around us.

### What the Above Principles Mean Regarding How Followers of Joshua Cannot Live

The primary manifestation of this truth is that we cannot have work or “a job” or a “career” apart from a Joshua Family that regularly takes up the majority of our day and yet has nothing to do with doing Joshua's work—that situation is normally called “my career”, “my job” or “my vocation”. If we are not participating in, nor being part of, nor actively looking to become part of a group of disciples (or Family of Joshua) and instead are living the “regular American life,” then we are not submitting to God's Leader (His Son) and are likely serving money.

Not to be part of a group of people who are sharing Joshua's Life and thus sharing their material things and doing his work, is to disobey his new command:

A new command I give you, that you love/care for/share with one another as I have loved/cared for/shared with you; for this is how the people of the earth will know that you are my disciples, IF you love/care for/share with one another. (John 13:34-35)

*The new command is the most important principle that is to be lived out, so we can call ourselves whatever we want, but if we are not obeying his new command out of love for our Master and Father and other people, then we are not following the Real, historical person of Joshua of Nazareth.*

Contrast the above truth to “Christian ministry” and “church” where such a concept is completely foreign and very much rejected and despised. Trying actually to love other people is anathema to the comfortable (selfish) American Christians who love their life in this world and will only consider sharing with their blood or legal relatives. Those who try and live out the new command will be labeled by the religious people as “cultists” and “heretics” out of the fear the religious folks have for the Light and his Way.

Furthermore, if we are not serving God through our Greater work of bringing our Father and Joshua to others, then we are not submitting to God's Leader (His Son) and are likely serving money or some other thing. Please listen to him in that regard:

Those who ignore me, I will ignore before my Father who is in heaven, while those who acknowledge me as their Master, I will confess before my Father who is in heaven. (Matt. 10:31-33)

### The Real U.S. Currency Motto, “In Money We Trust”

This author has traveled some and has seen how the United States is held up by many people in “non-industrialized” nations as the best nation to live in due primarily to the material abundance that U.S. citizens possess. The U.S. government turns down millions of requests by people to live here and become citizens, even while hundreds of thousands seek to enter the nation illegally to partake in the material security and abundance the U.S. provides.

The U.S. does have some things about it that are favorable and preferable to other alternatives. It remains one of the most politically and governmentally free places to live on the earth. The rule of law, meaning people agreeing to live by rules, remains but is fading quickly due to a relativistic worldview and the associated turning away from the moral principles that a majority of “God-fearing” religious people once held.

The capitalistic system, while generally greed motivated, can work well when there is abundance and when the people are less greedy and are instead generous and looking to help others—this too is fading quickly due to the people's selfishness.

(As an aside, different forms of human government have strengths and weaknesses, but any version of government and economic system – from democracy to monarchy, from capitalism to communism – will either thrive or fail due to the people's character, especially the leaders. If people are generous and motivated, capitalism works well. If people are greedy and motivated, capitalism does not work well but will create rich and poor social classes.



Greed – that a person desires more for me and not caring about how much others have – is synonymous with selfishness, and when greed rules people’s hearts, some socialistic principles provide better solutions.)

For those who don't have Joshua as their Leader, the democratic political system does still allow some degree of freedom to choose one's government leaders, although that too is fading quickly due to the corruption of the people turning away from even sound moral principles. All one has to do is to look at other “democratic nations,” especially in Africa, to learn that the political solution of “democracy” does not solve the basic problems. Africa is full of “democratic nations” even while those nation's people are struggling for basic material necessities primarily due to the greed and corruption of the leaders of those nations. Sad that people cannot see that the U.S. is headed right down that hole due to the people turning away from even a sound and shared moral standard. Turning away from a shared moral standard and a shared belief in some kind of God-accountability will lead to destruction due to the darkness of human nature.

But I digress a bit. While this chapter is about “money” and how disciples handle it, evidently it has broader implications. We disciples were never intended to be part of the nations of the earth. Yes, we would live in them, and yes, we should be grateful for every good thing those nations provide. But we are to be *first*, the model for humanity to see—groups of people living as human beings are supposed to live! **Love** is to be the difference between us disciples and the sad, dark world in which we find ourselves. How we handle the money and material things we get to control for a short time has everything to do with whether we actually “follow Joshua,” or not—whether we genuinely love God or not.

If we cannot love our friends, we surely will never be able to love our enemies. If we will not share our stuff with other disciples/friends and thus fulfill a vital element of the new command, then what makes us believe we will lay our lives down for them?

## The Solution to Greed

Here is Merriam-Webster’s definition of greed:

“A selfish and excessive desire for more of something (such as money) than is needed.”<sup>58</sup>

I hope the reader can see that greed is one of the motivations that rule the hearts of many, many people and which strongly influences many if not most. I hope you can also see that greed is the cause of Problem #1 identified in chapter two, “The State of Human Kind.” Here is a description of that problem again in case you forgot:

“Nearly 1/2 of the world's population — more than 3 billion people — live on less than \$2.50 a day. More than 1.3 billion live in extreme poverty — less

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<sup>58</sup> Merriam-Webster Dictionary, [www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com), April 2018



than \$1.25 a day. One billion children worldwide are living in poverty. According to UNICEF, about 22,000 children die each day due to poverty.”<sup>59</sup>

Thousands of children are dying from preventable disease and starvation, while the number of billionaires has risen to over 1,800 and the number of millionaires has risen to about 16 million. What does that mean from a wealth distribution standpoint?

- Half of the world's wealth belongs to the top 1% of the wealthiest people;
- The top 10% of adults hold 85% of the world's wealth, while the bottom 90% hold the remaining 15% of the world's total wealth;
- The top 30% of adults hold 97% of the total wealth.

“According to the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) in 2012 the top 0.6% of world population (consisting of adults with more than 1 million USD in assets) or the 42 million richest people in the world held 39.3% of world wealth. The next 4.4% (311 million people) held 32.3% of world wealth. The bottom 95% held 28.4% of world wealth.”<sup>60</sup>

So, let's get a simple fact straight. Tens of thousands of children are outright dying each day, and millions more are suffering, neglected and abused, and billions of people are scraping by to survive each day, while a few hundred million people who could easily help them, *don't, and instead ignore them and justify their lack of help.* Clear enough?

The simple truth is that there are more than enough resources on this planet for all human beings. Furthermore, with our improved technology, it would be a simple matter to develop, manage and distribute those resources fairly.

I would argue that greed is one level up from the root problem which is fear. For example, let's say you have three people who are in a situation where they believe they may not have enough food to “make it.” Due to the circumstances, one person must get and divide up the food into three equal rations for each person and then serve it to the other two people. They rotate who goes to get and divide up the food. If two people divide the food 33% for each, but the third gives herself 50% and the other two 25%, how would you describe that third person's behavior? I think greedy would be a fair description of the third person's motivation, although in this case, it is not “more of something than is needed” so much as it is more of something than is fair or right.

I would venture to say that most greed is motivated by wanting to somehow insulate or protect one's self from harm or death. The thinking goes, the more I have the less likely I am to die. As one looks around our

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<sup>59</sup> Source: <https://www.dosomething.org/us/facts/11-facts-about-global-poverty>

<sup>60</sup> The World Fact Book – Central Intelligence Agency. Distribution of Family Income – GINI Index. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2172.html>  
OECD DATA. Income Inequality. <https://data.oecd.org/inequality/income-inequality.htm>

communities or the world at large, I believe the evidence bears that out. How many problems does greed generate?

So, I would say that fear of death is a primary problem in the world. How many people harm or take from or kill other people to, from their perspective, save themselves from harm or death? How many take more resources to themselves than they need because of the fear of, "I may not have enough...?"

So, what if the fear of death could be removed? How much greed-generated injustice, abuse, neglect, and conflict would go away on the earth each day?

Well, the Creator provided a solution to that problem, but to receive the answer, you must have faith in the One who said it:

I am the resurrection and the life; he who has faith in me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and has faith in me will never die. Do you believe this? (John 11)

Why not leave your greed behind and become a generous one—one that genuinely shares with at least your friends?

In the next chapter, we will take a close look at The Primary manifestation of having The Light of the world as one's Master and thus what real love looks like lived out. For if we don't live out love the way The Light says, we are not his followers.

#### Chapter Summary:

- Living for money and the things it buys is evil and is a significant problem for all human beings of all times and all cultures;
- We cannot serve God and money/material things. If we are spending the majority of our time working for money or doing anything other than bringing Joshua and his Life to others, then we are not serving God and are likely serving money or material things;
- The average Christian works for money just like the agnostic or atheist or new age person or Jew or Muslim or whatever- label person they work with;
- Not sharing one's material things with other disciples is a manifestation of loving money and living for it instead of for people. It is effortless to deceive ourselves while we give some of our money away yet refuse actually to share daily Life with other followers;
- If disciples of Joshua are not living a truly shared Life with other disciples – meaning we are not treating each other like Family and thus sharing our money and other stuff with each other – then we are failing badly and have no witness to this dark world;
- Following Joshua has a beginning, and when we start following Joshua, we must give up the selfish life and walk away from holding onto material things and working for material things, and instead begin to work for Joshua;

- Greed is a tremendous problem for perhaps most people, but our Creator and Father provided a solution to greed and a primary underlying cause of greed, which is fear of death.

For more detail on how disciples of Joshua should forsake all and thus view the handling of money and material things, see *Appendix 12, Zealousness but not for Love*.