

Money and the New Life

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 31 January 2021

Preacher: Nate Longstaff

[0 : 00] Hello, my name's Nate. I worship at Christchurch and I'm also a trainee vicar at Trinity College in Bristol. As part of our teaching series on generosity, I'm going to be talking about life and money.

It's a topic that the Bible has a surprising amount to say about. This is a really important topic, both to us and to God too. But for those of us who might be listening today, you know, in light of all things COVID, money might be a big thing on your mind at the moment.

You know, for some of us, it might be a really easy thing to talk about, something comfortable. But for others, it may be a really difficult, quite terrifying thing.

And you might be thinking, you know, when on earth am I going to get the next paycheck or how am I going to pay for the next meal for my family? And if that is the case, please don't stay silent. Get in contact with someone at Christchurch. The church is here to help. And let me begin by speaking words of encouragement to say that God knows your situation and knows your circumstances and they are important to him.

[1 : 16] You are important to him. Your needs are important to him. So be assured that today, you know, I hope my words are encouraging and they are reassuring and life-giving as our God is life-giving.

In our passage, we heard the Apostle Paul in his letter to his dear friend Timothy and the church. He's writing out of great concern for people. His concerns are truth, life and love.

He is determined to see the church flourish. And so he gives specific warnings and teachings surrounding and regarding life.

The Christian message, the gospel, it's all about life. Jesus came, died and rose again that we might have life.

Life for and from heaven. And life is for living. Life is for living. Our Bible reading today concludes with the call to take hold of life that is truly life.

[2 : 36] You know, forget YOLO, you only live once. It's just not true. You think you're alive and then Jesus comes along and you're given new life.

And this new life changes everything. This new life is about what we do now. And it's about what happens in heaven.

They are intimately connected. Heavenly life, eternal life, life that is truly life. It doesn't begin when you die.

It begins at belief in Jesus. And this new life, it changes everything. Who you are, what you do.

It's a profound and complex thing to grasp. But it's an eternal perspective. What we do now echoes in eternity.

[3 : 37] I think that's from a film or something. I don't know. But it's true. Every action we take for Jesus in this life is an investment in heaven.

And this is partly what Paul is talking about here. This new, eternal, heavenly life is something we receive.

And it's also something we're aiming for. So, God gives us this gift of new life and says, Go! Embrace it. Be transformed by it.

Become who you've been made to be. Experience my love and my generosity. Take hold of life that is truly life that has been given through Jesus.

And Paul terms this living godliness. But what does this new life have to do with money? Well, as I mentioned at the beginning, money matters both to us and to God.

[4 : 41] There can be no separation between the new life Jesus gives us and our money. The new life becomes our world in which everything about us is contained.

This new life in Jesus defines who we are and what we do. New life was lived and demonstrated by Jesus.

So we can learn how this new life can be lived by looking at him and imitating him. So let me encourage you to go and read the gospel and be inspired, you know, by Jesus' concern for the poor and the needy and his heart for money being used to worship God.

I don't know if you've taken a COVID test at home recently, but this passage is a really good spiritual health test at home.

You know, does my attitude and handling of my money reflect godliness? Does how I use my money, more than that, does how I think about my money, point to that new life in Jesus?

[6 : 05] How a person treats and handles their money reveals a lot about a person's heart, you know, in the same way that my Amazon order lists reflect my heart.

But be encouraged. God's Holy Spirit is in us. So we should be expecting to see growth in godliness.

We are experiencing new life in God when our attitudes and handling of money are being transformed. And this isn't something we do alone either.

New life is about community, amongst other things. So if you need help making good decisions about your money, speak to someone, please.

You know, the church again is here to help. Now, I'm sure you've heard it before, that famously misquoted phrase, money is the root of all evil.

[7 : 04] Well, this passage is where it's from. There it is. 1 Timothy 6, verse 10. But hold on. What it actually says is, for the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.

And this is something altogether different. Money is not in itself evil, but it can be the vessel through which, you know, great hurt comes if we mishandle it or if we love it too much.

And this passage shows us the dangers of when our love is misplaced and when we do not allow that new life to dictate our money handling.

You know, verse 9 shows that it's when the thought of money consumes us, when we begin to love it more than we should, that we are at serious risk.

Our love for money becomes a problem when it overtakes our love for God and for others. And this is revealed in our living.

[8 : 20] You know, greed and corruption, they're big dirty words associated with money. And we don't like applying them to ourselves, but you don't have to be a dictator to suffer from them.

You know, they creep into our lives surprisingly easily. But what about things like self-sufficiency? When we say that our need for money is greater than our need for God.

Money won't give us life. Only God can do that. And this is really serious. And Paul is really clear in his warning here in this passage.

God wants to safeguard us to have life. So, brothers and sisters, protect yourselves. Be wary of the sins surrounding money.

And here's how. Embrace this new life that you've been given in Jesus. Let this new life dictate your hope, your joy, your deeds.

[9 : 26] Be faithful with your money as God is faithful in life. And be generous with your money as God has been generous with life.

God has proven himself throughout eternity to be faithful and generous to people. We're merely reflecting the character of God in our actions.

That's what protects us from the evils associated with money. In the same way that God is mindful of our needs and loves to meet them.

So, too, should we be mindful of the needs of those around us. Of our community, family and of our church. Let this new life that Jesus gives drive us forward into generosity that glorifies his name.

You know, wow. Imagine how blessed it would be to say to someone, God has been good to me, so I want to be good to you.

[10 : 33] This is living the new life we've been given in Jesus. The beautiful thing is, this is way bigger than the here and now.

For new life continues when we're dead and gone. Our legacy is here and now. But it's also in heaven.

Our new life is here and now. But it's also in heaven. The treasures we invest in others here and now are treasures we invest in heaven.

So start today. You know, enjoy it tomorrow. Protect yourselves. From money. From money. From money. And take hold of the life that is truly life.
Life in Jesus.