
The Story of Jesus

Published By Evangelist Van Billingsley

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All Thy Substance

“Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:”

— Proverbs 3:9

We often emphasize the tithe that belongs to the Lord, and many times we feel we’ve sufficiently honoured God when we tithe. Those are the firstfruits of our increase referred to in this passage, but before that

phrase, this verse commands us to “Honour the LORD with thy substance.” This includes all that God has allowed us to possess! In this so-called “economic crisis” we should realize as Christians the importance of honouring God with all we have. In the Sermon/Article for this issue, we’ll look at the Biblical perspective of money and how this relates to the present economy.

“Money”

by Evangelist Van Billingsley

It seems the prominent issue in the minds of Americans, and no doubt around the world, over the past several months has been the economy. I probably would never write about the economy except were it for the Biblical relevance. Our English Bible uses the word “money” 125 times, and other passages dealing with financial issues are virtually countless.

We can only discuss a few of these passages in this text. The first passage, I Kings 5:26, is the first occurrence listed in the concordance of my Scofield Bible. In this passage Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, seeks to gain profit after Naaman is healed of leprosy. When Elisha confronted Gehazi with his deeds, he said, “Went not

mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money?” The answer to this question is obvious when Gehazi is judged with the leprosy of Naaman for the rest of his days.

Gehazi’s sin involved his attempt to obtain money, but the attempt to use money for power can be an evil as well. We see an example of this in Acts chapter eight when a sorcerer named Simon had professed salvation and began to follow the apostles. “And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles’ hands the

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Our Ministry News...

From the Desk of the Editor



Due to our different schedule throughout the winter months, we are once again combining our Winter and Spring Editions. Our schedule has been busy around our mission church over the past several months and we have faced many challenges.

Many of you know that the transmission went out on our 65 passenger International bus last fall, on the trip home from our 7th Anniversary Sunday. The cost to have a shop rebuild this transmission in a timely manner would have cost more than we paid for this bus. The Lord provided the funds for the parts and a member of our home church who has the ability to do the work. There have been a few setbacks in getting the job complete, but we are trusting that God will have this bus back in service very soon. During this time, our home church has provided a bus or van, whichever is needed each week, to meet our transportation needs.

We've begun our "Camp Countdown" in which we promote our trip to Living Waters Baptist Youth Camp in June. During this time we raise money to pay for the camp fees of our children who would not be able to attend without this financial help. To be fair to our donors and all our children, we base the help provided according to each child's attendance during this "Camp Countdown." More information on this can be found at our website.

Two years ago we made some significant changes to our website lay-

out and added many new pages and features. Last year we added some more features and spun off a totally new site, IFBsermons.com. I've been wanting to freshen up the look of our ministry page for a while now. The main eye sore to me was the main logo at the top of the page. It was created using my earlier graphic skills and I just wanted to make something that looked better. When I made a logo that I liked, it did not match the parchment background on the old page, but it looked nice on the wooden desk-top beneath that, which led to my total redesign. I knew I wanted to keep the "Old School" antique look, so I revamped some of the old graphics and added what was needed to better organize our content. The content is the same with the exception of the new announcement panel which appears in the yellow note with the red pushpin found between the weekly verse and news headlines. This note will appear with any message, announcement or information we need to present temporarily. If there is none, the note will not be pinned there.

We've also been busy working on sites for other ministries as part of our growing internet ministry. In some cases this provides some financial support to our ministry, but more often, it provides the opportunity for us to provide needed services to other missionaries and ministries.

Please pray for us as we endeavor to do all our Lord places before us.

A Servant of Christ,
Evangelist Van Billingsley

“Money”

(continued from cover) --

Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money (Acts 8:18-20).” Simon, who shows all the signs of one seeking religion without repentance, thought his money could give him undue power.

The final verse in scripture using the word “money” gives a summation of these Biblical truths as it says “For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows (1 Timothy 6:10).” The context of this passage is instruction and guidelines to the man of God. Five other passages command that the man of God not serve for the sake of “filthy lucre.” We must be careful in the ministry that we follow the will of God and not just seek a “position” with a salary package to climb the “ministry ladder.” It brought great peace when God gave me understanding that sometimes His will for one may be solid financial standing in their ministry while another wonders from whence God will meet their next need. Often the one with the solid financial situation may face other difficulties unknown to the other. The importance is that we each follow God and honour His Word in all things.

I have very little understanding of economics, but there are a few things I know to be true. The situation with the world economy is the direct result of a world operating contrary to the Word of God. At the climax of the US election process, when the “economic meltdown” became the center focus, one scenario played out over and over. One party would blame the other party and the blame would be thrown back leading to someone saying, “There’s plenty of blame to go around.” The media and especially the opposition of the outgoing administration blames it all on the failed economic policies of that administration. We should not forget that just one year earlier, almost to the date, the stock market hit the all time record high and kept climbing into uncharted territory.

I believe there is one factor that was the one cause for the collapse. Yes, there were loans that should not have been made, and there were government socialist programs that fueled that situation. There were issues of regulation, whether too much or too little. There was a lot going on, so much that the most exalted economists can come to no consensus as to what went wrong. The fact is, I believe many unpaid loans were given to people who believed they could pay them, and so did the banks who issued the loans. Most all of these cases were those trying to live above their means, and many would have failed, but never all at one time so everyone thought! What was the “straw that broke the camel’s back?”

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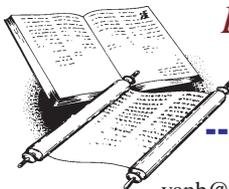
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To rephrase a quote from another past president, "It's the oil, stupid!" I remember about two years ago repeatedly saying, "If something is not done about oil and gas prices, the US and even the world economy was eventually going to collapse!" Masses of working people began putting money budgeted for loan payments into their fuel tanks to get to work and back. Then prices began rising on necessary products because the price to ship everything soared. Then masses began cutting expenses causing a decline in sales across the board. This meant even less money and more layoffs or closings for more businesses and people who were spending more to drive and heat homes, and the cycle goes on. Nothing else could possibly happen but a financial meltdown, and why? Because a lot of people who do not like us at all said they would limit the oil supplies and raise their profit to their countries, and they did so with the cooperation of a lot of greedy Americans!

The underlying problem with all this

goes back to the Word of God. "The love of money is the root of all evil." This is greed. It applies to those who had to have homes above their means and to those who had to get more for their oil. Our entire society from the socialist liberals and secular humanists to many in the gospel ministry are far from Biblical principles about material things. Something is wrong when the wealthiest citizens are those in the entertainment industry, whether that be music, movies, sports or electronics. We think we have to have more and more and that we deserve better and better. This is greed, this is the love of money, and this is evil! This evil has not only led to this economic meltdown, but may very well lead to complete Socialism in our own country.

We should also remember that the great tribulation will be ushered in by economic doom. This could very well be what is in play. For the child of God, this means rapture and resurrection to eternal life in glory, but it also means a final deadline to winning the lost and our loved ones.



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proclaiming

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