

Prospering God's Way: Breaking the Spirit of Mammon, 2.7.15

Introduction:

1. Message Series has its basis from Robert Morris' book, The Blessed Life.
2. Super Bowl Today? Best SB ads. SB ads entice you to believe that you aren't experiencing life to the fullest...there is something that you are missing...something available that will make your life better, more contented, prosperous, safe, productive, fun...that what you have is less than what you need.
3. This is the spirit of mammon or NLT says, "riches." The Babylonians worshipped the god of Mammon. He was the source of wealth and happiness.

Big Idea: To truly prosper God's way, you must break free from the spirit of "mammon" or riches.

What Is Mammon?

1. "Matt.6.24"
2. The word means riches and it's not money that it's against, but the spirit of money or riches that dominates our thinking, values and actions. Money isn't the problem. I believe God wants us to prosper, but he doesn't want us to be dominated/controlled by anything but him.
 - a. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs" ([1 Timothy 6: 6-10](#)).
 - b. Money isn't the problem; it's the love of money. It's being consumed with money...never satisfied with life...worrying about future...constantly looking for another angle to make a buck...It takes you further away from what is best in God's sight.
 - c. I don't believe God is against wealth but it's the spirit that rest on it. It's either the Spirit of God or spirit of mammon.
 - i. If the Spirit of God rest on your view of money, you'll be a giver, you will not be stingy, you'll naturally respond to opportunities, you don't get angry when the subject is talked about, you'll enjoy giving away,
3. One will serve the other. Either money will be our focus and God will serve our need for money – we'll use God to get our financial needs met – or we'll trust God to provide for our financial needs. One says, "I want more of God and he'll take care of me" and the other says, "I need money and I'll use God to get it."

4. Mammon finds its history in Babylon – Gen.11. This self styled independence from God. We can take on God and subject him to our needs.
5. Booklet “Leaving Babylon” – Man’s attempt to break away from the Lordship of Jesus while falling under the Satanically controlled economic system that controls the world both physically (mark of the beast – Rev. 13.16f) and spiritually (Rev.17-18). In Rev.13.10, it says we will be persecuted b/c we will not submit to this system and Rev.18.4 says to get out from under the control of riches or you will be destroyed when that system comes down.
6. Rev.18.24 - The #1 sources of Christian persecution come from those nations who have historically provided us with the cheapest goods. America is controlled by the spirit of riches. We support directly or indirectly nations that slaughter, marginalize and persecute Christians and we hesitate to put embargoes on them or stop trade because if we do it will effect our economy and way of life.
 - a. What would happen to our nation if we said to SA, “We aren’t purchasing your oil or selling your military hardware or providing you the technology for oil exploration and production until you stop persecuting Christians and allow for the free exercise of religion...or said the same to China...India...Iran with the nuclear production agreement...why do we continue to trade with countries that kill, persecute and incarcerate believers...B/c we bow the knee to the spirit of Mammon. That demi-god, owns this country.
 - b. Take out the coin. We proclaim “In God we Trust” but truthfully to Babylon we bow!
7. This devilish ploy came straight at Jesus – Matt.4.8-10. Jesus was tempted to put Mammon before God. Jesus essentially says, “You can’t serve both God and mammon.”

Mammon Indicators

1. You’re always thinking about money. Your focus is on either what you don’t have or what you want. You are seldom in a place of contentment.
2. You find yourself comparing your financial situation to others – siblings, friends, age group.
 - a. You look at your lack and grow envious and jealous of other’s plenty.
 - b. You look at what others have and then try to outdo them.
 - c. Your success or identity as a person is dependent upon how much money you make.
3. You want your riches to make a statement to others – look, possessions, job, house... . You are buying “whatever” to make a statement.
4. It’s difficult for you to give joyfully and completely. You think your finances are yours to give. It’s a reluctant, possessive spirit.
5. When giving, you focus on what you’re losing rather than gaining. You think, “Well, I guess I will not get to do that or go there or have that.”
6. Internal chatter - As I’m talking about this, you’re getting restless, angry, depressed, frustrated, fearful, trying to ignore...if you’re under conviction and you’re wanting to give but uncertain how, that’s different.
7. You find your security, identity, power/control, freedom, independence, significance in what you have. You know you’re under the spirit of mammon if you have to move to a smaller place

- or to a less than desirable neighborhood or get an older vehicle or buy clothes from Goodwill or take a lesser job, it would tear you apart b/c you're identity, security or significance is in money.
8. When you serve Mammon, you become fearful, stingy, greedy, hardhearted, angry, selfish, demanding, fretful/worry, with your money.
 - a. Worry is one of the clearest signs that the spirit of Mammon has you – worry about how you're going to pay bill, get needs met, retirement fully funded, etc. You are living by sight and not by faith. When Mammon has you, you aren't sure whether or not God will meet your needs. You're unsettled and nervous.
 - b. It undercuts your trust in God. You aren't sure if He will come through and it's reflected in the way you pray. It's a desperate, doubt filled prayer.
 - i. Here's how I pray when we're facing a financial pinch: Father, we have been faithful to tithe and give above it. Thank you for taking care of our needs...thank you providing a miracle or the means to take of this financial need in my life.
 - c. Greed is both wanting to accumulate and an unwillingness to let go. When God impresses upon you to bless another, you're natural response is to recoil and back away b/c of how it may impact you.
 9. You're never satisfied. There's always something else or a little bit more
 - a. Solomon writes of the futility of chasing after mammon: "Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income." (Ecclesiastes 5:10).
 10. Living beyond your means. Overextending yourself financially and unwilling to cut back.

Breaking Free of Mammon – Luke 16.1-13; Matt

1. You are a manager of someone else's wealth – Luke 16.1. Repeat: All that I have comes from God. He gave me life, a brain, the physical ability and relationships whereby my needs are met. It's like the parable of the money from Matt.25.
 - a. If you want to break free from the curse of mammon, STEP 1 is it all belongs to God & I'm just the manager who will give an account for it!
 - b. As long as you think you own it and have no accountability to anyone but yourself, you will be under the control of mammon!
2. There is a day of accountability for everyone – Luke 16.2; Matt.25.14-29; 1 Cor.3.12-17, 2 Cor.5.9-11. There is a day where every believer will be judged before Jesus with what we did or did not do with all God gave us.
 - a. Upcoming Capstone inspection at 147th RW in August. Inspectors of every sort are crawling around the base to make sure we know what we're doing and the operating instruction & procedures behind it. They have been preparing for this since last August. It's serious business!
 - i. Show them my workbook
 - b. We're all headed to an inspection before Jesus – my salvation has been taken care of, so I don't need to worry or doubt, but my rewards based upon how I lived this life, loved others, used the resources God gave me – body, abilities, mind, time and money.

- c. Your reward in the next life is directly related to how you managed all that God gave you in this life – 16.11
 - d.
- 3. Use your worldly wealth for eternal purposes – Luke 16.9
 - a. To gain friends for yourselves in eternity, to grow and strengthen the faith of others, to take the gospel around the world, to disciple and equip believers to make a difference for God. This is what your tithes and offerings do at Willow. These buildings are used for eternal purposes.
 - i. Wee Place children quoting Scripture, learning Biblical values, foundational truths that is building their young faith
 - b. Base Commander ranting about why the gov't spends money to support religious facilities on government property so that airman and their families can be taught their faith. The chaplain wisely said, "Sir, what we are doing is strengthening and growing the faith of airman and when the battle is enjoined they have a rock solid faith that will carry them through life's hardest moments and even their deaths. By instructing and training their spouses and children in accordance with the Bible, we are assuring that they are able to see God's hand at work on their behalf regardless of what happens. Through teaching the Christian faith, we are building resilient people who can stand in the sunshine or at the grave of a loved one."
 - c. There are only two things that are eternal – the Word of God and people. Both of those things at Willow and every other ministry that is founded on the Jesus of Scripture.
 - d. There are a lot of things we use our worldly wealth for that do nothing but wear us out having to maintain or worry
- 4. Start now, not when – 16.10.
 - a. Don't deceive yourself into thinking that once you get out of debt then you'll be faithful; once you start making a living at a certain level of money then you'll start giving; once you get a little more time then you'll start serving; once you get that job or promotion or degree... .
 - b. Begin tithing now, not when.
 - c. As a sophomore in HS, I won the Grand Champion Steer at the Somervell County Livestock Show. I also had another steer that placed. Between both of them, I think my tithe was \$350. It was the largest offering I had every given and it wasn't easy, but it was made easier b/c I had been tithing my allowance as a child. Students start now, not when.
 - d. Luke 21.1-4. Even if you're tithe is \$1, it counts!

Conclusion

1. You have to bow the knee to Jesus to break the spirit of mammon over your finances.
 - a. What will you do? 16.14 – Scoff?
 - b. Luke 18.18-30. You have to be willing to give it all up for Him and He'll repay you in this life and the one to come. He knows it's hard, but you can't serve God and riches. Do you

think that today that rich young man is glad he held on to his money? He missed abundance in this life and eternal life with God. Do you see what's at stake?

2. Look at the coin. "In God we Trust." Is your trust in God or money?
 - a. Luke 12.33f
 - b. Is your treasure in that money or the God who gave you the ability to make that money?
3. Prayer of Repentance, Renouncing, Authority & Receive the Father's Blessing.