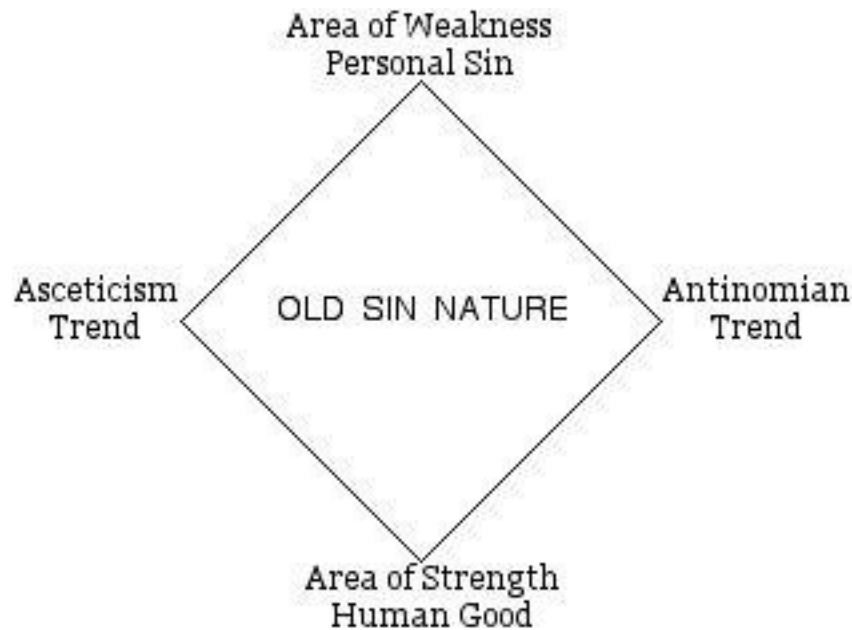


The Doctrine of Wealth

1. There is nothing wrong with having wealth.
2. This principle was established early in Scripture as we will see. Certainly Abraham was wealthy and he fought to maintain his wealth, David was wealthy and he destroyed those who stole from him.
3. Wealthy people are used as examples in the Bible as “godly folk” whom God blesses with wealth.
4. The Bible teaches capitalism and the value of accumulating personal wealth so long as we think properly about that wealth; particularly the source of that wealth.
5. The problem with wealth is not the wealth but the Old Sin Nature which resides in man.



6. God long ago in eternity past recognized mankind's penchant for lust and covetousness, ergo, He established the Decalogue of freedom.
7. The Ten Commandments are designed to protect the freedom of the individual in a nation. Private property rights were certainly established in this Decalogue.

Exo 20:15 Thou shalt not steal.

Exo 20:17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

8. First, a little background about what the Bible teaches about economic systems.

8.1 Maximum freedom for the individual is God's optimum and represents a manifestation of the first divine institution, volition.

9. The right of private property and protection of property rights is repeatedly established in Scripture.

Exo 22:2 "If a thief is caught breaking in and is struck so that he dies, the defender is not guilty of bloodshed;

Mat 12:29 "Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can rob his house."

2Th 3:11 We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies.
2Th 3:12 Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat.

10. Free enterprise then is God's plan for His client nations. A free enterprise system will produce excess and make for maximum resources for charity.

11. God has never sanctioned equality. Even in the perfect environment of the Millennium there is inequality; there is the greatest and the least.

12. Old Testament prophecy of inequality in the Millennium can be found in several places not the least of which is Jer 31:44.

Jer 31:44 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

12.1 This prophecy is repeated in the New Testament.

Heb 8:11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

13. In heaven there will also be relative rewards. Production will be evaluated and crowns presented; there will be winner and loser believers.

1Co 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1Co 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

1Co 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

1Co 3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

1Co 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

14. Class hatred, jealousy and guilt are the motivations behind equality movements. A free society will always out-perform its tyrannical counterpart. Time has proven this beyond a doubt.

15. The example of government best to provide stability and prosperity to all its citizens is that established by God in the Mosaic Law. Limited government with maximum freedom is God's way.

16. The problem with wealth is not "wealth" but the attitude of the believer towards wealth. We need from time to time to ask ourselves the following two questions.

16.1 Do you know the source of your wealth?

16.2 Do you recognize your responsibility to help the poor?

17. Happiness does not come from material possessions but from metabolized doctrine.

18. Peggy Noonan in her book *Simply Speaking* tells of Oprah Winfrey sadly telling of the many celebrities she knows who have no ability to enjoy life. Ms. Noonan went on to quote Ms. Winfrey "they seek happiness by purchasing more things, each becoming more bizarre."

19. We must remember that wealth is a gift of God.

Deu 8:17 And thou shalt say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.

Deu 8:18 But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is God that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

Mat 6:19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

Mat 6:20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

19.1 As the Lord taught repeatedly, you can store up treasure on earth but there is no assurance that there will be a tomorrow.

19.2 Wealth can be removed in a heart-beat and there you are standing amidst your once proud kingdom eating the grass of the field.

Dan 4:28 All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar . . .

Dan 4:33 The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.

Dan 4:34 And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation:

Dan 4:35 And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

20. Boaz, a man in the line of Christ, was a wealthy man.

Rth 2:1 And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz.

20.1 This does not mean that all good people are wealthy and all bad people are poor. Joseph and Mary were poor, therefore, so also was Christ.

Luk 2:22 And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord;

Luk 2:23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)

Luk 2:24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons.

21. God curses Eli for not controlling his boys and then prophecies that He (God) will prosper Israel and curse Eli and his family - their curse was in part-no wealth in a wealthy land.

1Sa 2:31 The time is coming when I will cut short your strength and the strength of your father's house, so that there will not be an old man in your family line

1Sa 2:32 and you will see distress in my dwelling. Although I give wealth and prosperity to Israel, in your family line there will never be an old man.

22. God gave Solomon the promise of affluence because he chose wisdom over wealth, fame and prosperity.

2Ch 1:11 And God said to Solomon, Because this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honor, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made thee king:

2Ch 1:12 Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honor, such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like.

23. Job had been blessed of the Lord with great wealth though it gave him pause.

Job 31:25 ... I rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because mine hand had gotten much;

24. Wealth and riches are promised to the righteous.

Psa 112:1 Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments.

Psa 112:2 His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

Psa 112:3 Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth forever.

25. Men are urged to avoid the temptations of a dalliance lest they see their wealth squandered.

Pro 5:3 For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil ...

Pro 5:10 Lest strangers be filled with thy wealth; and thy labors be in the house of a stranger;

26. To truly appreciate wealth you have to work for it.

Pro 13:11 Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labor shall increase.

27. Wealth is a gift of God, and so also is the power to enjoy it.

Ecc 5:19 Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God.

28. At the Second Advent Israel will acquire the wealth of the nations.

Zec 14:14 And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance.

29. In Scripture the idea of wealth or riches is used in various ways--of things material and things spiritual. One without the other however is of no value.

30. Though custody of material wealth may be temporarily given to man, it is God who by virtue of His sovereignty owns "the cattle upon a thousand hills."

Psa 50:10 for every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills.
Psa 50:11 I know every bird in the mountains, and the creatures of the field are mine.
Psa 50:12 If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is and mine, and all that is in it.
Psa 50:13 Do I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats?
Psa 50:14 Sacrifice thank offerings to God, fulfill your vows to the Most High,
Psa 50:15 and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me."

31. God is said to be rich in mercy.

Eph 2:4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,
Eph 2:5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved.
Eph 2:6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,
Eph 2:7 in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

32. David knew from where his prosperity came.

1Ch 29:12 Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all.
1Ch 29:13 Now, our God, we give you thanks, and praise your glorious name.

33. All promotion comes from the Lord.

Psa 75:6 For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south.
Psa 75:7 But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.

34. Solomon could see that God often caused it to rain on the just and the unjust. Christ also taught His disciples this same truth.

Ecc 7:14 In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.

Ecc 7:15 All things have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that longeth his life in his wickedness.

35. According to His riches in glory Christ Jesus has promised to supply all the needs of those who belong to Him.

Phi 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

36. As we have seen, the possession of wealth is not condemned in Scripture; in fact many great stalwarts of the Bible were wealthy; for example there was Abraham, Isaac, Barnabas, Joseph of Arimathea and Philemon.

36.1 Some like Job had wealth, lost wealth and regained wealth; Job's experience was used anecdotally to teach us.

36.2 No doubt Job liked prosperity more than poverty.

37. Thomas Merton in his book *Seeds of Contemplation* commented on the predicament of the one who has lost his wealth and become poor. "It is easy enough to tell the poor to accept their poverty as God's will ... but if you want them to believe you --try to share some of their poverty and see if you can accept it as God's will for yourself."

38. Matthew records an encounter our Lord had with a rich man.

Mat 19:16 And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

Mat 19:17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

Mat 19:18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

Mat 19:19 Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Mat 19:20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

Mat 19:21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

Mat 19:22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

Mat 19:23 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

38.1 C.I. Scofield has written of these verses: "The rich young ruler made four mistakes, each of which was met by the Lord with unerring wisdom:

- His mistake about the Person of Christ, thinking Him as only a good teacher, was answered by the inescapable dilemma--either he is God or He is not a good man.
- His mistake about the way of eternal life, supposing it could be earned by works, was met by confronting him with the high demands of a divine law.
- His mistake about himself, thinking he had kept the law, was answered by testing him as to works of righteousness and opening his eyes to his failure.
- And his most tragic mistake was not heeding the final words of Christ, 'Come and follow me' ..."

39. Jesus castigated avarice as illustrated by one who selfishly wished to build bigger barns to hoard his crops. Luk 12:15-20

Luk 12:15 Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

Luk 12:16 And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop.

Luk 12:17 He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'

Luk 12:18 "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.

Luk 12:19 And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."

Luk 12:20 "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'

40. Many who covet wealth have erred from the faith and the rich tend to become high minded.

1Ti 6:7 For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.

1Ti 6:8 But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.

1Ti 6:9 People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction.

1Ti 6:10 For the love of money is a root of these kinds of evils. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs ...

1Ti 6:17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

41. The deceitfulness of riches can stifle the Word and make it unfruitful.

Mat 13:18 "Listen then to what the parable of the sower means ...

Mat 13:22 The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful.

42. Scripture carefully outlines the dangers associated with affluence.

42.1 James issued a warning to the wealthy of his day.

Jam 5:1 Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming upon you.

Jam 5:2 Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes.

Jam 5:3 Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days.

Jam 5:4 Look! The wages you failed to pay the workmen who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty.

42.2 The wealthy of James' day were probably no more wealthy than the majority of believers in the United States of America today. These whom James addresses were not judged for being rich but rather they are rebuked because they had misused their wealth.

42.3 Evidently, those to whom James speaks in James 5:4 had exploited the worker to gain their wealth. **"Look! The wages you failed to pay the workmen who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty."**

