

Old Testament Survey

Ecclesiastes

Does anything mean anything?

Main Point

If you work to be rich in Christ, you'll be rich in all of your life



**Whoever loves money never has enough;
whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with
their income. This too is meaningless. As goods
increase, so do those who consume them.
And what benefit are they to the owners except
to feast their eyes on them?**

Ecclesiastes 5: 9-10 NIV



The sleep of a laborer is sweet, whether they eat little or much, but as for the rich, their abundance permits them no sleep. I have seen a grievous evil under the sun: wealth hoarded to the harm of its owners,

Ecclesiastes 5: 12-13 NIV



Or wealth lost through some misfortune, so that when they have children there is nothing left for them to inherit. Everyone comes naked from their mother's womb, and as everyone comes, so they depart. They take nothing from their toil that they can carry in their hands.

Ecclesiastes 5: 14-15 NIV



This too is a grievous evil: As everyone comes, so they depart, and what do they gain, since they toil for the wind? All their days they eat in darkness, with great frustration, affliction and anger.

Ecclesiastes 5: 16-17 NIV



Craving Money

- ❑ Always desire it - never have enough
- ❑ You will never be satisfied
- ❑ The craving becomes an unhealthy obsession



Money Attracts Others

- ❑ The more that comes in, the more that goes out
 - ❑ Bills, taxes, investments, help
 - ❑ Money just slips through the fingers



Money Disturbs Peace

- ❑ Having a lot of money disrupts peace
- ❑ “What will happen with all of my money?”
- ❑ Creates frustration, affliction, and anguish



This is what I have observed to be good: that it is appropriate for a person to eat, to drink and to find satisfaction in their toilsome labor under the sun during the few days of life God has given them—for this is their lot. Moreover, when God gives someone wealth and possessions, and the ability to enjoy them, to accept their lot and be happy in their toil—this is a gift of God.

[Ecclesiastes 5: 18-19 NIV](#)



**They seldom reflect on the days of their life,
because God keeps them occupied with
gladness of heart.**

Ecclesiastes 5: 20 NIV



Perspective on Money

- ❑ Wealth is a gift from God
- ❑ But first, be rich in Christ



Crave More Christ

Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” (John 4:13-14)



Crave More Christ

- ❑ When we crave Christ, He fills us
- ❑ When needed, Christ jumps up within us
- ❑ Christ fill us with grace and forgiveness



Attract People With Christ

- ❑ Money falls through our fingers and is gone
- ❑ Christ falls through our fingers and spreads



Attract People With Christ

“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:14-16)



Attract People With Christ

- ❑ Light is a natural attraction
- ❑ We show the light of Christ when we live out our wealth in Him
- ❑ Show it in how we act and how we treat others



Christ Gives Peace

“All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” (John 14: 25-27)



Christ Gives Peace

- ❑ Christ gives REAL peace
- ❑ Peace in the midst of craziness
- ❑ Feeling like we have an anchor or something to rest on



Closing

- ❑ Money can be stressful
- ❑ Richness in Christ provides much more than money
- ❑ Be rich in Christ, be rich in life



Audio file

[Ecclesiastes Money and Riches Audio.mp3](#)

Transcript

All the money in the world, it's crazy. We'll never have it. But that's kind of what we're going to look at today in Ecclesiastes, as our writer is on his search for meaning. We're back after last week's one off took a week last week to kind of do a football themed one with the Super Bowl. We're back in Ecclesiastes with two weeks to go this week and next week. If you haven't been here and need a quick recap, we have a writer and he's been on. The search for meaning and he has been looking for meaning in a whole bunch of places. Happiness, work and today is money, and specifically he's looking at the accumulation of money. Like a lot of money, a lot of wealth. If you've been with us, or if you haven't, spoiler alert, he doesn't find meaning anywhere, which is why the kind of the title of our series is. Does anything mean anything? His answer would be no. What he's doing, we've used a filled doughnut as the example kind of every week where he's biting into this doughnut, looking for the filling, and he cannot find it. And today he's going to look at money. And wealth now money is a well can be a very difficult topic, can be stressful whether you have a lot of it or a little bit of it. And today's focus will be on having a lot of it and what it does and I would be remiss if I didn't go back to my childhood and think of the classic rap song, more money, more problems. Now if you don't. Know the song I'm going to give you a quick. Recap of it, it was the I'm not going to sing it and I'm not going to play it because it's not exactly church appropriate, but it is bad boy entertainment Puff Daddy before he changed his name six times. Notorious BIG and Mace and it's a song that has to do with the more money and the more stuff you accumulate, the more popularity creates more problems. And it actually did happen to the record label they took off. And all of a sudden they faced problems, violence lawsuit, financial issues. So that's kind of what the song was. Out and really, I think our writer in Ecclesiastes would have had a similar view. Now I am guessing that the guys from Bad Boy Entertainment did not read Ecclesiastes 5 prior to writing the song, but it would have fit because being rich is not all it's cracked up to be. That's kind of what our writer is going to get and kind of. The route we're going to take. So I propose this. Forget about. Being rich in money, but instead if you work to be rich in Christ, you'll be rich in all of your life. That's kind of we're going to look at. So being rich in Christ and how that will give us richness and fullness, what we're going to do first is look at what trying to be rich in money. Does and how that just doesn't pan out so well for a writer and then take all those topics and flip it to being rich in Christ and seeing what that does. So we're gonna look at Ecclesiastes 5. I'm going to read verses 10 through 17. It is there in your Bibles marked. It's also going to be up here on the screen behind me, so we're going to read 5 versus 10 through 17. Talk about it for a little bit. And then get into a little bit more positive part of it. So let's start with 5:10 through 17 and see what happens with money, it says. This whoever loves money never has enough. Whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income. This too is meaningless as goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefits are they to the owners except to feast their eyes on? The sleep of a laborer is sweet. Whether they eat little or much. But As for the rich, their abundance. Permits them no sleep. I have seen a grievous evil under the. Son wealth hoarded to the harm of its owners or wealth lost through some misfortune, so that when they have children there is nothing left for them to inherit. Everyone comes naked from their mother's womb, and as everyone

comes, so they depart. They take nothing from their toil that they can carry in their hands. This, too, is a grievous evil, as everyone. Some so they depart. And what do they gain? Since they toil for the wind all their days, they eat in darkness with great frustration, affliction and anger. That's cheery, isn't it? So let's kind of break this down. I'm going to reference three things, I think and how he kind of looks at money and why it's as he would say, means nothing or grievous evil or all these other great ways our writer. Ecclesiastes like to say it. The first one is the craving of money. We're going to call it kind of this design. Hiring and the issue is he would bring up with craving money and this desire is that you can never have enough because it's not a craving or a desire to have a lot of. Money for something, which is how many of you answered this question was you would do something with it, right? Is what I asked. This wouldn't be for that. This would be to just have it. You're not saving for the car, the house, the vacation. To pay off people's debts or to help orphanages or schools which are all fantastic, that's not what he's getting at, what he's getting at is just craving it to have it because there's no dollar amount that will be the goal. You can't satisfy it. It becomes like an addiction and it's unhealthy. Think about what it can do to you, because you're just going about attaining money to satisfy a craving from your own desire. This isn't a godly desire. This is out of our own and it just causes some stress like can I ever have enough? What's going to happen to it? Who has more than me? Is this enough? What will I do with it? How do I get more? It becomes this crazy, unhealthy obsession because you can't. I'll fill it. You can't satisfy it. I talked with a guy when I was in college. Once I worked at a coffee shop and pizza shop and I was all 2021 years old. I had very little experience with people that dealt with addiction, but I talked to this guy who was an alcoholic. He was older, he probably in his 40s. Name was Chris. Long haired dude, who's actually kind of fun to talk to you. But he kept saying people would try to help with his addiction, and he looked at me one day and said. People just don't understand addiction that are trying to help me and I'm like, OK and in my infinite 20 year old wisdom said. Explain it to me like I'm an idiot 20 year old. And he said what it is and his was drinking. He said I would drink to get to a feeling and then I would keep drinking because I wanted that feeling and he's like, but the problem is I'm chasing something I can't get to, so I just drink more and more and more until I couldn't anymore. He's like it was just this crazy craving and obsession. He's like, I could never satisfy it and I don't know where he is today, but I will always remember. That description of it, because this is unhealthy craving and it's kind of what our writers getting out with money keep driving after more and more and more. But you'll never satisfy it when money is the craving, and in the end, that money then means. Nothing, because you're not satisfied. You don't feel good about it. So craving money is the first issue and leads basically to nothing. The second part is going to be that money attracts others, so money tries to attract other people. So when you become wealthy, what he's saying is others are gonna start to show up. And this isn't just all the happy folks that you want to be around. This is the taxers, the creditors, the bill collectors, because the more you have, the more that tends to end up going out, right. Increased goods and luxuries because you have more money. I can afford it. So the costing now I can get this I can buy. This car. There it goes. I can pay for the subscription. There goes more money. You might have people coming out of the woodwork that needs something, needs something family, friends, acquaintances and these things aren't always bad. That's the thing helping somebody with a tough spot, somebody that asks you to donate to A cause, and these are totally fine. But I think what he's getting at is. You'll get hit up more for that money. The more you have this happens. There are many, many stories of professional athletes and musicians that have come into a lot of money and then it's been squandered and a lot of it is because they they will describe it as people coming from all over distant cousins or friends from back in the day. They're like, I need money for this, that or the. Thing and it just goes away or invest in my company or or do something and it's just

gone before they know it, it feels like it just slips through the fingers. I wanna show you like this. I think this is a good way to describe it. I have here a flower. So we're going to pretend like this is our money and we get a bunch of it. We're going to dump it here. So we have a bunch into this sieve. But all of a sudden it's like well. I want that new subscription. Yep, there it goes. Now I want to buy a car. My friend came to me man, they just they tell spot. They really gotta buy a new car and help them too. And now? Well, bills went up, taxes went up. And before you know. It it all just slips. Through the finger and there's nothing. Left, that's what our writers getting at it attracts people. It brings people to it and there's just nothing left. So the craving of money is a problem. The fact that it attracts people or things that require that money is a problem. The third one, it disturbs peace, having a lot of money can actually disturb peace. What he's saying here is he gets this. Let's see in in verse 12 or so, he says, like the sleep of a laborer is sweet, so something that works really hard physically and does a lot of work. They sleep just fine. They're tired, they work hard, but they sleep well. Those that are rich don't. They get in their heads about their money. We we talked about this in that first. Section a little bit. What am I gonna do with it? Is it? Is it safe? And we gotta think back to this day. This isn't like it is now, where a lot of our money is in banks or in investments in that type of stuff, a lot of money might have actually been kept in the home. A lot of these places had kind of a central room in the home now, maybe not so much for a king, but other people in the center of a home where it was actually safe. And it's just there, so worry about. Man, is my money even safe? So what it does, it creates this knot in the stomach that you just can't get rid of. Right. And it's also one of those things that it blows your mic. I can't take it with me is a thought. He's saying he's like, I get to mend my life. I accumulated all this, and now it's just gone. This is the whole, you know, you come from your mother's womb and you go in the same way. He talks about life and death a lot and we sing is you come with nothing. You leave the earth with nothing. So that disturbs peace as well. And he's saying it's so stressful. To the point where you can't even enjoy anything says you can't even sit and have a meal in peace. It feels like it's just darkness. He's saying all the days are filled with frustration that never have enough. What am I doing with it? There's just no answer, any frustrated. Affliction, physical and mental anguish and pain literally causes pain and anguish. The money doesn't relieve it. It causes that. And then anger. You just mad. It all goes for nothing in the end. What the heck do I do with it? I can't take it all with me. This is just nuts. So you're accumulating all this wealth, all this money being rich? And there's no meaning. There's no meaning in. Money or wealth? That's what he says. So what do we do? If money really doesn't mean anything or accumulating. All this wealth. We have to change. I think our perspective a little bit and try to have a healthier perspective on what being rich can actually be. I want to read Ecclesiastes 5:18 through 20, where a writer finally actually gets a little bit positive. He's been fairly negative as we talked about her glass. Of empty, but we're going to start to turn and see what he's got to say, he says in verse 18. This is what I observed to be good, he says it. I observe something to be good, that it is appropriate for a person to eat, to drink and to find satisfaction in their toilsome labor under the sun during the few days of life God's given them for this is their lot. Moreover, when God. Gives someone wealth and possessions and the ability to enjoy them, to accept their lot and be happy in their toil. This is a gift from God. They seldom reflect on the days of their life because God keeps them occupied with the gladness of heart. He's saying wealth is a gift from God. The money we have is a gift, and when we're focused on God, he keeps us occupied with gladness of heart and that the wealth comes from him. So the wealth. Our actual money doesn't have to be the stressor, and we I think we get to this by trying to be rich in Christ before rich in money, being rich in Christ. That sounds good. How do we do it? That's a tough perspective, because if we're being honest, money does matter. We all have bills to pay and expenses maybe work for their money

and have something to do. But I think what we want to do is still put that as this a later perspective, that it's all about our actual money and focus on being rich in Christ. Hold that perspective. So if we talked earlier about craving money and that means nothing, what about craving more Christ, let's look at that craving more. Christ, John. 4:13 through 14 says this Jesus answered everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again. Whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them. Will become in them a spring of water. Filling up to eternal life. This is in John 4, the story of the Samaritan woman who Jesus meets at the well. Jews and Samaritans did not get along, but Jesus meets her at the well and he says where there's water. And he tells her, hey, whoever drinks water from this. Well, we'll eventually get thirsty again, but I'm bringing a living water for people, and it will make them never thirsty again. And they have this conversation about what that means and how important that is. When we crave money, as we talked about earlier, we can never be full. We can never fully satisfied that craving. But when we crave Christ, he fills us now. There's always room for more Jesus in our lives, for sure, but we're satisfied. It's like a spring that just fills up or wells up in us. When we need it, think of it as if you ever needed money and literally you could just go into a room in your house and you had a money printer and it was legit. I'm not advocating for you to falsely print money. That's not what I'm doing. Bigger, but imagine that you need it and bam, it's there. That's what craving Christ is like. He's there and he fills us up. These words of welling up literally can mean like jumping up within us. It's his continual filling and we can't run out of it and he can always satisfy us. The satisfaction can come in the form of grace and forgiveness. Which I know I. Need every day, right? We always need to have grace and forgiveness from Christ. We need it frequently and it never runs out. He always has it there for us when we mess up, when we get it wrong, God's always there with grace and forgiveness so crave. Christ and we will be satisfied. Alright, imagine also being like when you actually get hungry. And you crave food. Imagine being instantly filled with the healthiest foods right then and there, with the right form of nutrition. Sounds pretty cool. That often doesn't happen that way, but that's what this is like. We're just filled with what we need, that is craving. Alright, now what about attracting people, right? We talked about how money attracts people. Well, it's attract people with our richness in Christ. Money can draw people to us for many reasons, and many times it ends up with money falling right through the sieve like we did or right through the fingers. It just slips away. But it's so different with. God, because our richness in Christ. Can go through our fingers and be spread to other people, but it doesn't leave us. And when it slips our fingers to other people, it spreads and that's. Actually a really good. Good thing Matthew 5:14 through 16 says you have the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand and it gives light to everyone in the house in the same way. Let your light. Shine before others that they may see your good deeds and glorify your father in heaven. They go out being in a very dark. And there's one little light somewhere. The natural tendency is to be drawn towards that light. This is a natural attraction. We can show the light of Christ when we live out. Our richness isn't live out our wealth in. It's in our attitude how we respond to things. It's in how we treat other people. Now, what that doesn't mean is that life is always rainbows and butterflies and white chocolate chips. I love white chocolate chips, so I throw that in there. Not a big rainbow and butterfly guy, but white chocolate chips are cool. It's about how we act and respond when life isn't rainbows and butterflies and white chocolate chips. It's this bigger picture when we show patience and we choose joy in these difficult situations and we let Christ flow through us. How we treat others which is in the same way that God. Would treat us. People see that and might get a little thrown off, like why? Why does Kyle treat that person so well when nobody? Else seems to like them. Or there's something different about Ashley cause the way she responds. To that person. It drives

us it it can inspire this curiosity, and that's letting our richness in Christ just fall through our fingers for others to see him pick up. That love of God, that presence. Goes through and it doesn't go to waste like it does with the money. It doesn't go to waste. It turns in to something beautiful and awesome because God's being spread. Think about this flower again. When it goes through the sieve, imagine it going into a bowl, and now we add a bunch of other ingredients. And now we turn it in to a cookie. There are cookies on your table and I made these are red velvet white chocolate because Jeff likes his white chocolate and I love red velvet. Two of my favorite things you can eat those if you'd like, go ahead or you don't. Have you never have to eat any of the things that I bring. You totally can. You don't have. To, but that's what this is like the. Flower went through little. Tip always sift your dry ingredients friends. It's a little. Unsolicited advice when you're baking. But it fell through there. It went into the bowl and it made a cookie. It didn't go to waste. You think? Cookie is terrible then I guess. It did, but it doesn't go to waste. It makes something. That is how we attract people with our richness in Christ. It falls through US and makes something better because he's being spread, so we crave Christ. We attract people with Christ. Third one, Christ gives peace. Christ gives the peace. We talk about how money disrupts it or disturbs it. Being rich in Christ actually brings peace. John 14:25 through 20. Even says all this I have spoken while still with you, but the advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all the things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Verse 27, one of my favorite verses in the Bible says peace. I leave with you my peace. I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. And not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. Jesus left us real. Peace real. Peace at times in the Old Testament there were false prophets that would claim, oh, there's peace here and there's peace. There and. There wasn't more in the New Testament Times the Roman army would take and maintain peace by force. Not the same thing. Jesus left a peace that was also more than a well wish. If you've ever seen or signed off a card or letter, peace and blessings, there's nothing wrong with that. It's all great, but it's a well wish. What Jesus left was bigger. Jesus left peace in the midst of crazy. It's helping a mindset and a heart when you you're going through trial or difficulty or pain or confusion or any of that stuff and it's it. It starts, I think a lot with your heart and with a mindset and mindset is difficult. I'm a guy. It's in my head all the time. It's hard and a lot of things can cause in my mind to spiral. We're talking about money today. Money is one of them. When you don't feel like you have enough money. That can also disturb peace. I'm thinking. We got bills to pay. Gotta fix something at home. Our car needs this. I just want to go and spoil my kids and buy them everything like I need a chaperone when I go by the toy aisle at Target. All that kind of stuff. It can be stressful and it can cause the spiral. It can be hard to find peace in general and then definitely with money or any other struggles we have. But in the midst of that chaos, Jesus has left us real peace. That what this passage and John is saying, it comes in the form of Jesus. It comes in the midst of the spiral now. It doesn't mean that it's not hard. It doesn't mean that it's instantly going to go away, but it can be grounded no matter what is going on around me or what's going on in my head. I have something. To kind of rest on who here? Back in the day, maybe when you went to recess at school. Who played? The game tetherball. OK, many of us. OK, good. This won't fall completely flat then. Alright, I almost had to send this out earlier, like my dating myself with tetherball too much. If you're unfamiliar with the game of tetherball, you.

Have a.

Pole that's anchored into the ground and you have a string or a rope and a ball. Kind of like a volleyball on the end of it. So the ball is tethered to the pole and the idea of the game is you want the ball to wind up going your direction and you're hitting it back and forth. You and whoever you're playing against, and

there are multiple ways to play this game, but that was the goal was to wind the whole thing. Now imagine being that tetherball, right. You're spun in One Direction and life's going super fast. You spin like this. Well, then all of a sudden you're smacked back the other direction, and now you're going this way and it's just back and forth, up and down, and you're trying to look around and everything is spinning like crazy. Well, then finally, thank goodness recess ends. And you slowly unravel. And the ball comes to rest on that pole. The Poles always anchored to the ground. That pole doesn't go anywhere, no matter how fast. You're spinning or which direction or how hard you're being hit. And then you can always, eventually the ball comes to rest on that pole at some point, but that pole is there in the midst of it. All that's how Jesus helps us keep our peace and gives us our peace in the midst of being smacked or spawned in every single direction. And sometimes it feels like you're going faster than others. Maybe you're slowing down, but that anchor that pole is always. There being rich in Christ gives us that peace. It's there. We can come to rest on that. Nothing else and nobody else can provide a peace like that. So this week, here's what you think about money will inevitably, probably come up at some point in your own minds. This week it feels like it does every day in some degree. It's a difficult thing, and it can be stressful. But let's try to think about. Richness or money or wealth in Christ before the actual money, when we're rich in Christ, we are filled up. Were satisfied by him. We can share him with others. It's OK if people are attracted to us because of how rich we are in Jesus. That's a good thing. And let that slip through your fingers and other people see that? And he gives us peace. I don't know what. The week's gonna bring for any of you. Weather supposed to be bad again. Maybe that stresses you out or anything is going on, but let Jesus be your peace. Be rich in Christ. Crave him. Let him attract people. Let him be your peace, but be rich in Christ and then be rich in every aspect of your life. Let's pray. Got to thank you again for today. And I thank you just for your presence that we that we can crave you and that when we do, you fill us up, that you'll always be there to satisfy us. And it's in a different way than we might be used to, but I thank you that that's there. And I thank you that. We can have other people see you through us. Then we just have a bunch of you. That we would just be the light for you, that your presence, your love, your, your, Your Grace. God would just drip off us for other people. To see. And to spread and the God, I would thank you that you are our peace in the midst of craziness and trial and chaos or whatever that you are that anchor God. You are the. Pole if we're like, that's how they all go. So I thank you that you provide that, that you give that that you give. It like nobody. Else can. So I pray that we would look. For richness in you this week that we would all try to just be rich and filled in you your name.