

Prov. 19:4, 6-7, 17: Wealth brings many new friends, but a poor man is deserted by his friend . . .
⁶ Many seek the favor of a generous man, & everyone is a friend to a man who gives gifts. ⁷ All a poor man's brothers hate him; how much more do his friends go far from him! He pursues them with words, but does not have them . . . ¹⁷ Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, & he will repay him for his deed.

Intro: People love money. The world loves money. Sinners & saints will do some crazy things for money, even murder for it. God warns us about the love of money:

- **Matt. 6:24:** No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one & love the other, or he will be devoted to the one & despise the other. You cannot serve God & money.

- **1 Tim. 6:9-11:** But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless & harmful desires that plunge people into ruin & destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith & pierced themselves with many pangs. But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.

- **Heb. 13:5-6:** Keep your life free from love of money, & be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?" **GOSPEL!**

The Proverbs we are meditating on today warn us about the negative influence money can have on people & encourage us to be generous with God's money (everything belongs to God!).

As God's children, beware of the love of money, & be generous in light of all God's lavish generosity to you.

1. People Love Being Friends With The Rich

Prov. 19:4, 6: Wealth brings many new friends . . . ⁶ Many seek the favor of a generous man, & everyone is a friend to a man who gives gifts.

a. Wealth & generosity will earn you many friends: People who win the lottery or come into some huge inheritance or somehow come into lots of money (or everyone thinks you've come into lots of money!) – they start calling you & checking in on you & want to be your friend now, even though you've not heard from them in years! Or you meet a wealthy person & ask for favors.

b. People love money & stuff, not you: These people are leeches, gold-diggers, they are in it for the money. They are not true friends. True friends love you for you: **Sean DeMars:** My wife married me when I was dirt poor – she loves me for me. (American Gospel: Christ Alone)

How much are you motivated by money to do what you do? To be friends with who you are friends with? How does money influence you? Are your friendships based on what's in it for me?

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2. People Hate Being Friends With The Poor

Prov. 19:4, 7: but a poor man is deserted by his friend . . . ⁷ All a poor man's brothers hate him; how much more do his friends go far from him! He pursues them with words, but does not have them.

a. Poverty will not make you many friends: The poor man is deserted by his friend. Even his brother's hate him & want nothing to do with him. His friends forsake him too. He tried to speak to them & beg from them & to get help from them, but they will not listen or help or listen.

b. People love money & stuff, not you: Again, this Proverb shows us the true nature of people who love money. They are not true friends! Beware of who your friends are! Is Christ the center of your friendship? Do they care about honoring & pleasing God more than pleasing you? Do they fear God? Do they help you follow Christ more faithfully? Do they point you to God & His Word?

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3. The LORD Wants You To Be Generous

Prov. 19:17: Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, & he will repay him for his deed

a. God encourages giving to the poor: The book of Proverbs, over & over again, encourages generosity to the poor & warns against overlooking their needs.

Eric Lane: Here we have the opposite spirit to the [one in Prov. 19:4, 6-7]: one who cleaves to the poor because he is poor . . . how can we suppress that selfishness that spoils relationships & become generous? By seeing how the Lord identifies himself with the poor.

b. God commands giving to the poor: Deut. 15:7-11: If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of your towns within your land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, ⁸ but you shall open your hand to him & lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be. ⁹ Take care lest there be an unworthy thought in your heart & you say, "The seventh year, the year of release is near," & your eye look grudgingly on your poor brother, & you give him nothing, & he cry to the LORD against you, & you be guilty of sin. ¹⁰ You shall give to him freely, & your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him, because for this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work & in all that you undertake. ¹¹ For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, "You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy & to the poor, in your land."

c. When you give to the poor, you are lending to the LORD: Bruce Waltke: Their just & gracious Creator takes it on himself to assume their indebtedness, & so he will repay the lender in full.

- **Charles Bridges:** But what we give is only a loan, to be paid again, & that with such security, as can never fail. The Lord of heaven condescends to be the Surety for the poor. He takes the debt upon himself, & gives us the bond of his word in promise of payment. Though he has a right to all, & is beholden to none, he becomes a debtor to his own . . . here is a safe deposit in the very heart of God.

- God identifies Himself here with the poor! When you give to the poor, you lend to the LORD!
- This is one of the motivations in this verse for being generous. Someone else gave this motivation as well: **Matt. 25:34-40:** Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry & you gave me food, I was thirsty & you gave me drink, I was a stranger & you welcomed me, I was naked & you clothed me, I was sick & you visited me, I was in prison & you came to me." Then the righteous will answer him, saying, "Lord, when did we see you hungry & feed you, or thirsty & give you drink? & when did we see you a stranger & welcome you, or naked & clothe you? & when did we see you sick or in prison & visit you?" & the King will answer them, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me." **[Jesus is God!]**

The opposite is also true: when you mock the poor, you mock God: Prov. 17:5: Whoever mocks the poor insults his Maker; he who is glad at calamity will not go unpunished.

d. When you give to the poor, the LORD will repay you for your generosity: Prov. 19:17: Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, & he will repay him for his deed.

- **John MacArthur:** Generosity in giving results in a greater reward from God. You want blessing from God, you want it poured out, you want it overflowing, pressed down, shaken together, packed in full, then give.

We hate the prosperity gospel. But for those of us who hate this wicked & evil false teaching, we must be careful that we don't fail to embrace, love, & teach the truth of God's Word that God does bless His people when they give generously & sacrificially. Consider these Word's of God:

- **Prov. 3:9-10:** Honor the LORD with your wealth & with the firstfruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, & your vats will be bursting with wine.

- **Luke 6:38:** Give, & it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.

- **R. C. Sproul:** Jesus said, "I want you to be generous. I want you to give in great measure, and the more you give the more you'll get because our God is a generous God & not a stingy God."

- **Acts 20:35:** remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

- **John MacArthur:** In other words, what you give away brings you a greater blessing than what you receive. That should be enough. That should be enough to make us line up to give. Do you want to be most blessed? Then give. Do you want to receive pressed down, shaken together, & running over so that your lap is filled? Then give. Those two monumental promises of blessing & generosity from God, who is the source of everything, who is the giver of every good & perfect gift, who has the power to get you wealth, who gives you all that you have, those promises from God should make us sacrificially generous. Now, apparently, & we have to say this sadly. But truly, apparently many Christians don't believe those promises. They carry around the idea that they have to protect everything they have & hang on to it. They become hoarders & they become stingy & they become self-indulgent & protective. & it's really a matter of faith. They don't

believe the promise of the Word of God or they would give. It's a question of faith. It's a question of trust. It's a question of belief. You either believe it or you don't. If you do, you give because giving is more blessed & giving causes God to give back in greater abundance.

Randy Alcorn: Peter became what he & others have described a “reverse tither,” with the goal to live off 10% of his income & give the rest away. I love the enthusiasm & joy in his words: “To earn money so I can give it away, is just fun!” “It’s a blessing that God has used me in this small fashion.” Peter’s right – what a privilege to give God’s money back to Him! R. G. LeTourneau, inventor of the world’s largest earth moving machines, gave away 90% of his income. He often quoted a friend who said, “God shovels it out, & I shovel it back; but God has a bigger shovel.” You may feel that living on 10% of your income would be impossible. But why not ask God, “Do You want me to set a basic level of income & assets to live on, then immediately give away whatever You provide beyond that?” (Regardless of whether that’s 30%, 50%, 90%, or more?) I believe the Christian community should be filled with people who set caps on their lifestyles, giving away everything above that amount. Some call this “setting a finish line.” That means if we make a predetermined amount of money or save a certain amount, that’s it. We won’t accumulate any more. We’ll give away everything else. That isn’t sacrificial giving, it’s giving according to our ability. Yet, by most of our standards, it’s so radical we may not know anyone who lives that way. John Wesley preached that Christians should not merely tithe but give away all extra income once the family & creditors are taken care of. He believed that with increasing income, a Christian’s giving, not his lifestyle, should increase. He began this practice at Oxford & continued it throughout his life. Even when his income rose to thousands of pounds, he lived simply & quickly gave away his surplus. He was afraid of laying up treasures on Earth, so the money went out to charity as quickly as it came in. Wesley’s practice is in keeping with Scripture (2 Cor. 8:14; 9:11). I urge you to embrace Christ’s invitation: “Give, & it will be given to you” (Luke 6:38). Then, when He gives you more, contrary to prosperity theology, remind yourself of the biblical reason why: “So that you can be generous on every occasion” (2 Cor. 9:11). When you give more & more, as Peter Manning has discovered, you’ll experience God’s joy. When you give, you’ll feel His pleasure! & God may choose to increase your income, not to raise your standard of living, but to raise your standard of giving. What a privilege that is! **Give strategically!**

Consider Jesus: 2 Cor. 8:9: For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.

- **Prov. 19:4:** Wealth brings many new friends, but a poor man is deserted by his friend.

- **Rom. 8:35:** Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

- As God’s children, beware of the love of money, & be generous in light of all God’s lavish generosity to you.

Christ Jesus Is Generous – A Lavish Big Brother
He Gives & He Gives & He Loves Like No Other
He Gave Everything & Took All God’s Curse
He Died & He Rose The Curse To Reverse
By Faith Alone We Get Justification
His Spirit Now Works For Our Sanctification

We Listen & Learn In Humble Submission
Confess Our All Our Sins In Holy Contrition
& Now We Are Generous & Give To The Needy
We Die To Ourselves & All That Is Greedy
For Christ Is Our All & Our Joy & Our King
We Give & We Give For He Makes Us Sing!