

## Session Two Money—It's About Attitude



### A Quiz: Money and Me

Answer these questions with the idea that your answers are totally private, but taking an honest look at your feelings and attitudes about money. (Put a check on the line.)

1. If my high school yearbook had a section in which each class member was voted "Most Likely to . . ." and I was voted "Most Likely to Make Lots of Money," I would feel:

- a. Flattered. Making money is a significant talent.
- b. Offended. I'd like to be thought of in a more noble way than as a money-maker.
- c. Other—say it in your own words: \_\_\_\_\_

2. I think of money as:

- a. A way to fulfill dreams—my own and other people's.
- b. A double-edged sword. It can be great to have, or it can ruin you if you let it.
- c. Other—say it in your own words: \_\_\_\_\_

3. The scenario: I find a bag with \$20,000 in cash. I report it, and the police say that if nobody claims it, it will be mine. We wait, and as the days go by I start planning some ways I'll use this nice little stash. On the fifth day, however, it's not only claimed and given to its owner, but he turns out to be such a skinflint that he doesn't even give me a reward. I feel:

- a. OK, no big deal. After all, the old saying applies: easy come, easy go.
- b. Just my luck. Cheated by fate, cheated by a stingy guy who didn't give a reward.
- c. Other—say it in your own words: \_\_\_\_\_

4. I think the basic teaching of Christianity about money is:

- a. It's the root of all evil. Poverty is the main virtue for everybody.
- b. Money is not necessarily bad. Just be really, really careful how you look at it.
- c. Other—say it in your own words: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Complete this sentence—If I could teach younger kids one thing about money, it would be:

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### Risking Their Riches

The New Testament has three interesting stories (actually, more than that) about rich people who helped Jesus or his followers. Read about them and then answer the questions for each of them.



1. Lydia (*Acts 16:11-40*)
2. The women who traveled with Jesus (*Luke 8:1-3*). Note that these women are described as having "substance," which means a certain amount of wealth.
3. Joseph of Arimathea (*Matthew 27:57-60*). Note: This is not the same Joseph as the man who acted as a human father to Jesus.

Answer these questions for each of the three stories:

1. How did this person/these people serve Jesus or his followers?
2. How did they "break the mold" of the descriptions on the chalkboard?
3. What were the risks they took?



### PLEDGE CARD

My *tithe* to my church will be: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

"Set apart a *tithe* of all the yield of your seed that is brought in yearly from the field."

*Deuteronomy 14:22*

*Session Two*

# Money—It's About Attitude

## Key Concepts

1. Money can be an asset or a temptation for a Christian.
2. The Bible gives us examples of good and bad attitudes toward money.
3. Our attitude towards money will have an important impact on the choices we make in life.

## Objectives

*Students will:*

1. Examine their own attitudes toward money.
2. Read and discuss some biblical examples of various attitudes toward money.
3. Make a written pledge to carry out the Old Testament directive on giving to the church.

It would not be appropriate to give our students the idea that there is no possible way to have money and still be Christian. This session will have a focus that really is more authentically biblical. It says that money itself is not always a problem—our attitude determines what place money will have in our life. It can be a means by which we do God's work, and the Bible gives many examples of people in whose lives it was such a means. But it can be a powerful temptation too, and so we need to be watchful of our attitude toward it. We can't let the desire for money consume us; we can't let it become a god; we can't get greedy and selfish and arrogant because of it.

The Old Testament (the *Book of Deuteronomy*) gives guidelines for offering part of our wealth for God's service. The students will make a personal commitment based on this, and will also proceed with their service projects—planning and execution—in this session.

Pencils, Bibles, filled-out oaktag sheets from last week. Optional, but would be very helpful: Articles (from daily newspapers, Armenian weeklies, magazines—e.g. *People*) on today's wealthy and how they live (new lottery winners, moneyed socialites, etc.).

1. Open with a prayer. Let those who wish to do so report on the service they undertook at home, and how it went during the week. They may wish to continue this service, or choose another. Then, using the planning worksheet (in text), let students proceed from whatever point they reached last time on choosing and making plans to carry out their service to the community and the parish. If they are ready to begin, or have begun, make specific plans or let them report on what they have done. Consult the oaktag sheets if ideas are still needed.

(10 mins)

2. Discuss together the poem **I Was Hungry** (page 6) which students looked at last week. Ask: How does a poem like this affect our ideas of service? Is it helpful in determining what kinds of service we will choose?

(5 mins)

## Background for Teacher

## Materials Needed

## Procedure



**Procedure**

3. Tell the class that you would like them to take a private quiz—one to which nobody else will see the answers, unless they choose to share them. Let them take the **Money and Me** quiz in their student books. When they finish, say that you would like to look at some Bible stories about money and people's attitude toward it. The stories might present some ideas that reflect on the quiz questions. If they wish to comment on the quiz, they can do so at this time. But make the point that you are not going to give "correct" answers, since there are no answers that are absolutely correct for each person. (5 mins)

4. Read with the class *Luke 12:16-21*. Discuss with the class why God uses this strong word "fool" to describe the man. Is it because he is rich? (No. It is really because he thinks his security is in his riches, which can be wiped away in a moment, rather than in God. Also, he wants more and more, rather than being satisfied at some point with enough riches so he can go on to think about other things.) Next, read *Luke 21:1-4*. Ask: What are some of the differences between the rich man and the widow? (Obviously, his wealth and her poverty. But try to help the class see the difference in attitude toward money—she trusts in God and can give her last bit of money. The rich man trusts only his money to save him. Notice in the widow's story that in only four verses, the contrast between rich and poor is described three times.)

(10 mins)

5. Put these three phrases on the chalkboard: politically conservative; tend to stay with others like them; not too willing to risk their positions. Ask the class whether they think these phrases, in general, describe many of the rich. (Probably they will say these phrases are appropriate descriptions.) If you have brought in any news articles, share them now. Have students do the exercise in their books titled **Risking Their Riches**. Go over the exercise with them. Note that Lydia might have risked losing business and the good opinion of her neighbors at home by harboring a jailbird and publicly controversial figure like Paul. The women who followed and supported Jesus risked physical danger as his ministry and his very life were threatened more and more by his enemies. Joseph of Arimathea risked disgrace for taking care of a cru-

cified criminal, and also the danger of the wrath of Jesus' powerful enemies in the government. Ask the class to consider what it was that led all these people to take a risk as they did. Note, too, that they did not give up their riches and were not asked to. It was their attitude about their money and the ways they chose to use it that made them different from the rich fool in the story read earlier in the session. Read together *1 Timothy 6:17-19* as a summary of these ideas.

(20 mins)

6. Read together *Deuteronomy 14:22* in the student text (on the pledge card on page 11). The word *tithe* here means ten percent, and it has been used as a standard for Christian giving since the earliest days of the church. Have students think about their own financial situation and then calculate what they can give to the church. They can fill out the pledge card in their student books privately, and the responsibility to fulfill it will also be theirs privately. Take a few minutes when they have finished to review the next steps in their community and parish service for the coming week, and close with a prayer.

(10 mins)

## Procedure