



Bible Discussion Groups - Autumn 2021

Life Lessons from Luke

Session 2: Poverty and wealth

Group discussion: what do you know about money?

- Which of these countries does NOT use the euro as its currency?
a. Denmark b. Malta c. Slovakia d. Slovenia
- What is the basic rate of income tax in the UK for the tax year 2021-22?
a. 10% b. 20% c. 24% d. 25%
- The ringgit is the currency of which country?
a. China b. Fiji c. Guyana d. Malaysia
- What is the National Minimum Wage in the UK (not the Living Wage) for an individual aged 21 or over?
a. £6.36ph b. £7.36ph c. £8.36ph d. £9.36ph
- Roughly how many Chilean pesos can you buy for £1 sterling?
a. 100 b. 1000 c. 100,000 d. 1,000,000
- Which pair of countries uses currencies with the same name?
a. Bangladesh and Pakistan b. Argentina and Brazil
c. South Africa and Namibia d. Syria and the Falkland Islands
- What is the personal tax allowance in the UK for the tax year 2021-22?
a. £10,750 b. £11,850 c. £12,570 d. £13,950
- In which year was the seven-sided 20p coin introduced in the UK?
a. 1977 b. 1982 c. 1987 d. 1992

Passages for small group study

Luke 6:17-26 NIV

¹⁷ Jesus went down with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coastal region around Tyre and Sidon, ¹⁸ who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. Those troubled by impure spirits were cured, ¹⁹ and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all.

²⁰ Looking at his disciples, he said:

‘Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹ Blessed are you who hunger now,
for you will be satisfied.

Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

²² Blessed are you when people hate you,
when they exclude you and insult you
and reject your name as evil,
because of the Son of Man.

²³ ‘Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets.

²⁴ ‘But woe to you who are rich,
for you have already received your comfort.

²⁵ Woe to you who are well fed now,
for you will go hungry.

Woe to you who laugh now,
for you will mourn and weep.

²⁶ Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you,
for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.

1. How do Jesus' sayings about poverty and wealth compare with the views of our prevailing culture, or with the quotations on the back page?
2. Do you think of yourself as rich, poor, or somewhere in between? How do you think these sayings of Jesus relate to you?

Luke 16:1-13 NIV

¹ Jesus told his disciples: ‘There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. ² So he called him in and asked him, “What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.”

³ ‘The manager said to himself, “What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I’m not strong enough to dig, and I’m ashamed to beg – ⁴ I know what I’ll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.”

⁵ ‘So he called in each one of his master’s debtors. He asked the first, “How much do you owe my master?” ⁶ “Three thousand litres of olive oil,” he replied. ‘The manager told him, “Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifteen hundred.”

⁷ ‘Then he asked the second, “And how much do you owe?” “Thirty tons of wheat,” he replied. ‘He told him, “Take your bill and make it twenty-four.”

⁸ ‘The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light. ⁹ I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.

¹⁰ ‘Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. ¹¹ So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? ¹² And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else’s property, who will give you property of your own?

¹³ ‘No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.’

3. Many people find this parable very surprising and even uncomfortable, because it seems as though Jesus is applauding dishonest practice. He isn’t but we need to look closely to be sure of that! Who did commend the dishonest manager, and for what exactly?

4. It's not always easy to understand what the word *shrewdly* means (verse 8), but here's a clue: What had the dishonest manager done? What was the result for his master? What was the result for him?
5. Now go back to verse 1 and see why the master had been planning to sack his manager. Note that it was not for dishonesty! But for what? What does this mean, and how did his actions in verses 5 to 7 show that he had learned a valuable lesson?
6. If we are meant to understand the parable in terms of our daily lives, then who in real life corresponds to the master? And who is the manager? And what are the possessions which the manager did or didn't put to good use? How would you explain to a child (or your nice non-Christian friend!) the point of the parable?

Poverty and wealth – some quotations (not from the Bible!)

1. He is a self-made man and worships his creator.
— Attributed to William Cowper, Benjamin Disraeli and others
2. Money is a terrible master but an excellent servant.
— P T Barnum
3. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen pounds nineteen and six, result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds ought and six, result misery.
— Wilkins Micawber in *David Copperfield*, Charles Dickens
4. Money never made a man happy yet, nor will it. The more a man has, the more he wants. Instead of filling a vacuum, it makes one.
— Benjamin Franklin
5. He who loses money, loses much; he who loses a friend, loses much more; he who loses faith, loses all.
— Eleanor Roosevelt
6. Buy when everyone else is selling and hold until everyone else is buying. That's not just a catchy slogan. It's the very essence of successful investing.
— J Paul Getty
7. I made my money the old-fashioned way. I was very nice to a wealthy relative right before he died.
— Malcolm Forbes