

Why Do We Have Extra?

August 29, 2010

How many of you have extra? How many of you have extra money? Praise God! I'm going to preach today on what we are to do with our extra. I know that some of you will say no, no, not me; but I'm going to convince you that you have extra.

When the world makes us aware of something, the world tries to convince us that we have to have it. It's called marketing. So, awareness causes us to become discontent. It shows us something we don't have, and without it we can't be happy. So, thus, we think we're poor because we don't have it; but I'm going to show you that you have lots of extra.

If we could take a trip this morning to a third-world country, like Haiti, we would walk away from that experience feeling rich. We would come away from there feeling like we had lots of extra.

Have you eaten out recently? If you have, that means you have extra. It's a proven fact that it is cheaper and more economical to buy groceries and cook them at home than it is to eat out. So, if you ate out recently, you had extra.

How many of you have money in your wallet or purse? If you have gone to a movie or rented a movie recently, you have extra. If you have cable tv, you have extra, because you don't have to have cable tv. I remember when television was free. If you have Internet service, you have extra. If you buy a \$4 cup of coffee, you have extra.

If you own one of the following, you have extra: an iPhone, a BlackBerry, an iPod, iPad, Xbox, PlayStation, Wii, HD flat-screen television, a camcorder, an electronic photo frame, GPS, or a computer. If you own any one of those items, you have extra. If you upgrade things before they break down or wear out, you have extra. If you have a seasonal wardrobe, you have extra.

The average American has work clothes. Then they come home and put on leisure clothes. At bedtime, the average American puts on bed clothes. That is three changes of clothes right there, and some people also have work-out clothes and dress clothes.

There are people in this world that wear the same outfit all the time, because that is all they have. You have extra and don't even know it! Jesus said, "If you have two coats, give one of them away." In your rational thinking, who do you suppose you're to give the second coat to? Someone in need!

Let me tell you how rich you are. If you have money in the ash tray or console in your car, you have extra. If you store money in your ash tray, you're rich. Why? Because only Americans put money in a trash can!

Money is personal. Money is emotional. Money itself isn't, but our interconnection to money, as Americans, makes it emotional and personal. When preachers start talking about money, people clam up, and people fight over money. Families have split over money.

In **Luke 12**, a multitude of people have gathered around Jesus as He is walking, and in **Verse 13** someone from the crowd yells out to Jesus and says, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritances with me."

In Bible times, the first-born received double, but this man wanted Jesus to make his brother divide their inheritance. It doesn't say how much the inheritance was, but Jesus knew. He knew all about it, but in **Verse 14** He says, "Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?"

Then look at what He says in **Verse 15**. "Be on guard against all kinds of greed, because a man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses." Most people would say they are not greedy, but this is the definition of greed in America.

Greed is the assumption that extra belongs to me for my consumption. It is a materialistic view or perspective that says,

"I earned it! It's mine! I deserve it! I can do with it as I please, and you preachers stay out of my business!" That's cool, but how about God? We are blessed with extra, but we have been brainwashed regarding what we are to do with our extra.

Jesus tells us that our life does not consist of the things we possess, but we have been convinced of what success is. In our materialistic culture, success is measured by how much **power** we have, how much **pleasure** we can get out of something, how many **possessions** we have, and how much **prestige** we have.

Do you realize that there are people that occupy our news day after day who don't do anything? For weeks, sometimes months, every news agency will talk about what some celebrity has done, that basically is full of sin, and we can't get enough of it because that is the American dream. Our dream is to have their cars, their houses, their clothes, and their fame, because we have been convinced in this materialistic world we live in that it is all about the things that bring us pleasure.

We think we own everything. We don't own anything. We are just stewards of what we have. Look at what **Psalm 24:1** says. "The earth is the Lord's and all its fullness; the world and those who dwell therein (are His)." You may not believe that, but just wait until God makes a requirement of you to give an accounting of all that was given to you when you face Him in judgment.

One day we will all give an account of what we did with all that God gave us, and if you read the Gospels clearly, you will see that it says, "To whom much is given, much is required."

In **Verse 16**, Jesus speaks a parable. A parable is a story that teaches truth. "Then He spoke a parable to them saying, 'The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully.'" It doesn't tell us how rich the man was, but if he was rich, he had extra. Everyone's idea of rich is different, but this man had extra.

It is a proven fact that those who have had billions of dollars, when asked when enough was enough, this was their response. It is never enough! So, what you rank as rich, someone else may not rank as rich. The Bible says this man is rich, and basically he has extra. He is a farmer, and he has been blessed.

Verse 17: "And he thought within himself (he is talking to himself) saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?'" His barns are already full, so he has extra extra. What is he going to do with it? He is going to do what Americans do. He is going to hoard it and consume it himself!

The Bible does not say, "Blessed are they that receive." The Bible says, "Blessed are they that give," but I don't see any giving. What I see is I, Me, and Mine! Jesus talked more about money than He did faith. He just used words that you don't understand. He talked more about money than He did Heaven or hell.

In **Verse 18**, the rich man said, "I will pull down my barns and build greater (ones), and there I will store all my crops and my goods (and my extra extra)." **Verse 19:** "And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years.'" That was a big mistake, because his time is going to run out before his stuff runs out; but we are scared to death that our stuff will run out before our time runs out!

This is what the rich man is going to do. "I'm going to take it easy, eat, drink, and have a party!" **Verse 20:** "But God said to him, 'Fool!'" If you will read the Bible, calling someone a fool is dangerous, but God didn't call him a fool because he was rich. God called him a fool because this farmer did not understand what he was to do with his extra extra. He had the assumption that his extra extra was for his personal consumption. That is why God called him a fool.

This man did not understand what he was to do with his extra extra. The church doesn't understand what they are to do with their extra extra. Only 2.2% of all Americans, not just church folk, give to non-profit, charitable organizations.

"But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you.'" He was totally prepared for retirement, but he was totally unprepared for God, death, and eternity.

Now, if you go out of here thinking all rich people are going to hell, you're crazy. Jesus said, "It is harder for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God," but Jesus went on to say, "That which is impossible for man is possible for God." So, God is not condemning this rich man because of his wealth. He was condemning him because he didn't know what to do with it. He thought only of himself.

Then Jesus said, "Then whose will those things be which you have provided?" What Jesus said to him was, "Who is going to get all your stuff?" If you go scripturally, your inheritance should go to your grandchildren. That is what it says in Proverbs.

Ecclesiastes 5:10 [NIV] says, "Whoever loves wealth never has enough." Whether you know this or not, for some in this room that is what your life is all about. It's all about buying and getting in order to be satisfied, but you are never going to be satisfied if you think it's all about getting.

Look at **Verse 21**. This is the moral of the entire parable. This is how it is going to be for anyone who stores up things (stuff) for himself/herself. This is for anyone that thinks everything they have is for their consumption only. "So is he who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

Did you know that you could be rich toward God? Jesus said that we can store up riches in Heaven that thieves can't steal or moths can't eat. It's amazing that we can be rich toward God.

From **Verses 21 to 33**, Jesus begins to tell them that they are worried about what they are going to eat, but He sees to it that the birds eat. Jesus said, "You are worried about all these things, but trust Me!" Then look at what Jesus says in **Verse 33**. "Sell and give." I can't tell you of the number of people I counsel who say they have nothing to give. Verse 33 is the key. Sell something and give it away. Become a giver.

I have 10 \$1 bills in my hand. Everybody here should have a **saving plan**, and everybody in this building should have a **spending plan**. That is called a "budget." But the problem is that people don't have a **giving plan**.

If God paid us in \$1 bills, what we would need to learn is **priority percentage giving**. We should not compare what we give to what others give. It's all about percentage giving. When Christ was at the Temple, He was watching the giving. Even the Pharisees were giving. So, He watches our giving.

Getting back to the 10 \$1 bills. This is how **priority percentage giving** works. The first \$1 goes to God. That is all He requires: ONE of the 10 \$1 bills. Then the second \$1 bill goes to savings. Guess how many I have left? I have 8 of them!

I would venture to say that 90% of those in this building would give \$1 if they had \$10. But now if you have 10 \$100 bills, you have \$1,000. So the first \$100 bill goes to God. The second \$100 bill goes to me (savings), and I get to keep \$800. Several of you would do that if you had \$1,000.

Now let's say that you have 10 \$1,000 bills. That is \$10,000. Now it gets tougher to give. The \$1 bill was easy to give. The \$100 bill was even easy to give; but what we do now is we give \$100 instead of \$1,000, and we think we have done well.

In the Temple, Jesus watched them give, and the Pharisees didn't impress Him with their giving. Then this widow comes and drops all she had in the offering. When Jesus saw her give all she had, he was moved, because she gave everything she had.

It's easy to give when it's just \$1 bills, but when the amount gets into the thousands, we don't give priority percentage giving. We have the assumption that when we get into extra that it is ours to consume.

Let's look at one last verse. **Verse 34**: "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Some of you might wonder where Pastor and Virginia's hearts are. You might ask, how much do you pray? How much do you study? But if you really want to know where our hearts are, check our checkbook.

Jesus said, "Where your treasure is (where you spend your money), that is where your heart is." He knew that the

attachment, the emotion, and the passion of money would grip us; and sometimes people with more money think they can give less than someone with less money.

Why do you think well-known people do what they do? They think they can do anything they want to and not get caught. People become attached to money. You may think you're not, but you are. Jesus knew that attachment to money would grip us. Don't allow your possessions to possess you. Don't allow your money to manage YOU. YOU need to manage your money!

God gives us possessions, but sometimes He requires them of us. Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, that is where your heart is." I don't want to know how much you **gave**. I want to know how much you **kept**!

This church tithes 10% of everything that comes in, and you have no idea how many people come to us asking for rent, mortgage payments, food, and do you know how we are able to do it? Someone gave! **Matthew 10:8** says, "Freely you have received, freely give." So when you find out what you spend your money on, that is where your heart is going to be.

When I was saved at 18, I started tithing and have never stopped. When Virginia and I got married, we tithed. You would be shocked at the number of pastors in America that don't tithe. You would be shocked at how many deacons and choir members across America don't tithe.

One question, and I close. Five minutes after you die, will you be rich toward God or will you be a fool? You still have time to make a change. If you think I'm trying to get a larger offering so that I can get a bigger raise, you're crazy. From this day forward, as Pastor of this church, I will not take a raise. I'm not looking for a raise. I'm looking after your welfare.

As a Christian, look at your heart. You know where you are. If you have so much stuff that it consumes you and burdens you, then maybe the Lord wants you to get rid of some of your stuff. Give it to somebody that doesn't have anything. Put God first and foremost, and watch what He will do for you.