



As we continue our *Mad Money* series, I hope you have already signed up for the *ReThink Money* seminary on May 10. Even if your finances are in good shape, the seminar will be a great opportunity to expand your perspective. If you have already signed up, we encourage you to sponsor a friend or neighbor this is an opportunity to expose someone to great, practical wisdom without coming to “church.”

This week, we are discussing how we relate to money.

- **Do you think your financial decisions are generally driven more by emotions or rational thought? Why?**

- **Which of these statement best describes your current approach to finances? Why?**
 - I am pretty much in the same tax bracket as Bill Gates.
 - I have too many financial obligations to think about how God should be involved right now.
 - I’m in total control of my money, and I boss it around.
 - I came into this world naked and with nothing . . . and, yeah, I’m pretty much still naked with nothing.
 - Hello, my name is _____ and I am a spendaholic.
 - I need some help. My money bosses me around all the time!

- **READ Luke 16:10-13**
 - **According Jesus’ words in verse 13, what two options do we have?**

 - **Do you feel this pull in your life? Why or why not?**

 - **What does verse 11 teach us about the connection between financial and spiritual matters?**

 - **Do you currently see every financial decision as a spiritual decision? Why or why not?**

- On Sunday, Eric showed us that we can be motivated by two driving factors in our finances: Our EMOTIONS or by a RESPONSE to trusting God.
 - **Discuss the ways in which your emotions tend to run your financial decisions.**

 - **In the following areas, what are some initial steps you can take to respond in trust to God:**
 - **Debt:**

 - **Giving:**

 - **Spending:**

 - **Saving:**



Hey Growth Group Leaders!

It's hard to believe that the school year is coming to a close! We are not planning on having normal weekly Growth Group meetings through the summer. However, several groups have a lot of great momentum going, so we are going to offer some less-formal ways for you to work your groups this summer to be ready for the new year in August. I

will keep you informed of the calendar and options for you as we make those decisions.

In the mean-time, we have set some growth goals for Journey Church. If we meet these growth goals, we will need to be ready to launch **at least 3 new groups** in the Fall! We need to prepare new potential Growth Group Leaders now. *I strongly encourage you to specifically approach someone in your group and ask them to lead one discussion in the next couple weeks.* I have a person in my group picked out and will be asking him this week to lead during the week of May 11. I am planning on working extra hard to prepare the Leaders' Guide that week, so if you have a potential leader, that would be a great week to hand off your group, as well. I look forward to the feedback!

Finally, be sure to take some extra time to encourage your folks to attend the *ReThink Money* seminar on May 10. Even if they are not struggling financially, encourage them to come and bring/sponsor a friend. It will be a great opportunity to learn a few practical insights and to impact our community in a big way.

I look forward to your feedback!

Andrew

As we continue our *Mad Money* series, I hope you have already signed up for the *ReThink Money* seminary on May 10. Even if your finances are in good shape, the seminar will be a great opportunity to expand your perspective. If you have already signed up, we encourage you to sponsor a friend or neighbor this is an opportunity to expose someone to great, practical wisdom without coming to "church."

This week, we are discussing how we relate to money.

• **Do you think your financial decisions are generally driven more by emotions or rational thought? Why?**

This first question is to help focus your folks back on the message from Sunday morning. The "WHY?" of this question should focus more on "Why do you think that?" More than on "Why are your decisions driven that way?" By keeping the focus in this direction, it should keep the discussion a little lighter and should bring up some funny stories. Encourage some laughter and a great time. . .

• **Which of these statement best describes your current approach to finances? Why?**

- I am pretty much in the same tax bracket as Bill Gates.
- I have too many financial obligations to think about how God should be involved right now.
- I'm in total control of my money, and I boss it around.
- I came into this world naked and with nothing . . . and, yeah, I'm pretty much still naked with nothing.
- Hello, my name is _____ and I am a spendaholic.
- I need some help. My money bosses me around all the time!

This question is designed to continue to get your group laughing and talking about how they approach their current financial situation. These options are funny because we want people laughing and talking. Keep it light here. Make sure that you make people explain why they chose the one they did.

- READ *Luke 16:10-13*

The following discussion should help people take an honest look at what Jesus has to say about our relationship with our money and our stuff.

- **According to Jesus' words in verse 13, what two options do we have?**

In this verse, Jesus uses overstatement to get his point across. Although, words like "love," "hate," "devoted," and "despise," might seem a little extreme, Jesus' words are true. We can only be completely devoted to one thing at a time or else we wouldn't be COMPLETELY devoted to it, only partially. Since the call to follow Jesus is a call to surrender everything to Him, we are left with a dilemma: are we going to serve Jesus with our whole lives, or are we going to serve money?

- **Do you feel this pull in your life? Why or why not?**

Anyone who is truly following Jesus begins to feel this pull in their lives. In fact, the CLOSER I get to Jesus, the MORE I feel this pull because I am realizing more and more that EVERY financial decision is a spiritual decision. It's simple really; any decision that I make to spend frivolously is a decision NOT to give to someone in need or to further God's Kingdom. God has given me everything that I have, and I want to use it for things that honor him, things that matter and that will last for eternity. Now I believe God wants us to take care of our families and to enjoy life, that's for sure, but the overarching theme of our lives should be that we are playing a role in fueling and funding God's mission of reconciling a broken world back to Himself. (See 2 Corinthians 5:14-21)

- **What does verse 11 teach us about the connection between financial and spiritual matters?**

This question is designed to help you folks put all of life together in a "stewardship" perspective. We are all "Stewards" of whatever it is that God has given us . . . Money, time, jobs, family, friends, etc. Being good stewards of the "smaller" things like money and time demonstrate that we can be good stewards of more important, eternal matters. For me personally, this has really been hitting home a lot lately. While Emily and I have been fairly good stewards financially, several of these other "smaller" areas haven't been quite as good. As we look forward to greater spiritual responsibility, I know our stewardship in "smaller" areas is holding us back. As you discuss this question, you may want to flip over to *Luke 19:11-27* and talk a little about that parable, particularly verses 24-26.

- **Do you currently see every financial decision as a spiritual decision? Why or why not?**

This question is simply to help tie the truth from the previous question into a more personal challenge to be real.

- On Sunday, Eric showed us that we can be motivated by two driving factors in our finances: Our EMOTIONS or by a RESPONSE to trusting God.
 - **Discuss the ways in which your emotions tend to run your financial decisions.**

None of us are totally immune to the influence of our emotions. Sometimes we just get excited about a new style or a new technology. Sometimes we get excited about changes in our lives and want to spend to get ready for the changes (new jobs, marriage, homes, babies, etc.) Encouraging your folks to be open and honest here is a key to reaping a genuine reward for the discussion.

Which leads us to an opportunity for some practical challenges:

- **In the following areas, what are some initial steps you can take to respond in trust to God:**
 - **Debt:**
 - **Giving:**
 - **Spending:**
 - **Saving:**