

Sharing Your Business Success Through Giving

Is having a lot of money the key to everything? Does money bring happiness? Does money bring solutions to life's problems?

If you had a limitless amount of money and could buy anything you wanted, what would you buy? When would you stop buying, gathering, grasping, and grabbing? Our wealth does not come from what we grab in life, but from what we give. Don't be a grabber (a taker); be a giver. Be generous!

Some of the wealthiest men in the world gathered in 1923 at the Edgewater Beach Hotel in Chicago. This group of seven was worth more than the entire U.S. Treasury at the time.

These were great financial men with records of success who had achieved great prosperity. But this was not the end of their story. Within twenty-five years the president of the largest steel company had died penniless. A millionaire wheat speculator had also become poor. Another, who was the president of the New York Stock Exchange, had already spent many years in prison. Yet another of the wealthy seven who was a

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member of the president's cabinet had spent time in prison but was pardoned so that he could die at home. The fifth of the seven committed suicide and the sixth man, who headed one of the world's largest companies, also had taken his life. And the

seventh, and last of the world's richest men, took his life.

Will your money become your blessing or your curse? Can money buy happiness? Contentment? How about peace of mind? Contrast the previous men of wealth with the founder of the Quaker Oats Company, who gave 70 percent of his income to God. Or contrast the Chicago Seven to the wealthy father of many nations. Abraham was a great man of faith, but also a very wealthy individual. Solomon was probably the richest man of his day. Barnabas, an early New Testament local church leader, was also very wealthy but used his affluence to extend the kingdom of God.

James 5:1-3 speaks to the wealthy who would use their money for personal gratification. It says they will weep and howl because of all the misery that is coming upon them. He boldly says that their gold and silver is plagued and their precious metals

will soon rust. James points out how foolish it is to value and esteem one's riches so highly and in doing so how corrupt one can become.

There is no harm in possessing riches, so long as the riches do not possess you.

Jesus recommended that we not stockpile our treasures in this life at the expense of accumulating our treasures for the hereafter. In other words, if one is a long-term planner and visionary, it makes much more sense to accumulate wealth for the long haul in eternity. Time here on earth is the short haul, the temporary vapor of life. Life in eternity—life in heaven—is the long-term commitment.