

MEANINGLESS?

Unmasking the Myths that Make us Miserable

Have you ever gotten something you always wanted? Maybe you chased it for years, working, praying, and paying for it, and once you finally had it, you felt empty and unfulfilled. And so you kept going, chasing, and thinking, "If I only had a little bit more, then I'll be satisfied." But what if that's a lie? What if the things we're all chasing were never meant to satisfy us? For six weeks we'll learn some hard lessons from the book of *Ecclesiastes*. Written by King Solomon, *Ecclesiastes* is a cautionary tale about what happens when you get everything you ever wanted and it's still not enough. With this series, we'll expose life's darkest lies by holding them up to the light of God's truth.

April 26, 2026 - Myth #3: More Money Will Enrich Me

Review question: What makes *Ecclesiastes* such a challenge to understand compared to other books of the Bible?

The topic of **MONEY** was near to Solomon's heart, so that's the focus of this week's message. **When you consider the relationship between money and faith, what are the first thoughts or feelings that surface for you? Do you have a more positive, negative, or neutral attitude toward churches that talk about money? Why is that?**

3 BIG LIES WE TELL OURSELVES ABOUT MONEY

Lie #1: "More money will bring me _____"

Ecclesiastes 4:7-8 - There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother. There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth. "For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?" This too is meaningless - a miserable business!

What was the rich man missing in this "parable"?

Lie #2: "More money will give me _____"

Ecc. 5:8-17 - If you see the poor oppressed in a district, and justice and rights denied, do not be surprised at such things; for one official is eyed by a higher one, and over them both are others higher still. The increase from the land is taken by all; the king himself profits from the fields. Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income. This too is meaningless. As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owners except to feast their eyes on them? The sleep of a laborer is sweet, whether they eat little or much, but as for the rich, their abundance permits them no sleep. I have seen a grievous evil under the sun: wealth hoarded to the harm of its owners, or wealth lost through some misfortune, so that when they have children there is nothing left for them to inherit. Everyone comes naked from their mother's womb, and as everyone comes, so they depart. They take nothing from their toil that they can carry in their hands. This too is a grievous evil: As everyone comes, so they depart, and what do they gain, since they toil for the wind? All their days they eat in darkness, with great frustration, affliction and anger.

What is Solomon's point about wealth in this passage?

Lie #3: "More money will make me _____"

Ecclesiastes 6:1-7 - I have seen another evil under the sun, and it weighs heavily on mankind: God gives some people wealth, possessions and honor, so that they lack nothing their hearts desire, but God does not grant them the ability to enjoy them, and strangers enjoy them instead. This is meaningless, a grievous evil. A man may have a hundred children and live many years; yet no matter how long he lives, if he cannot enjoy his prosperity and does not receive proper burial, I say that a stillborn child is better off than he. It comes without meaning, it departs in darkness, and in darkness its name is shrouded. Though it never saw the sun or knew anything, it has more rest than does that man— even if he lives a thousand years twice over but fails to enjoy his prosperity. Do not all go to the same place? Everyone's toil is for their mouth, yet their appetite is never satisfied.

What does Solomon's darkest claim about money - that "*a stillborn child is better off than a wealthy man who cannot enjoy his prosperity*" - tell you about his outlook as he neared the end of his life? What could have led the richest man in all the land to have such hopeless despair?

In contrast to Solomon's despair about money, the Bible offers these important TRUTHS about wealth:

Truth #1: _____ will bring me _____

2 Cor. 8:7, 9:6-11 - But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving... Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your

heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work... You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

Have you ever experienced the joy that comes from sacrificial generosity?

Truth #2: Financial _____ will give you _____

Luke 3:7-14 - John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." **"What should we do then?" the crowd asked.** John answered, "Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same." **Even tax collectors came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?"** "Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them. **Then some soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?"** He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely—be content with your pay."

Three different groups asked John the Baptist how they can produce fruit in keeping with repentance. **How did he respond each time?**

Truth #3: _____ will make you _____

Proverbs 3:9-10, 11:25 - Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine. A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.

Deuteronomy 14:22-23 - Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year... so that you may learn to revere the Lord your God always.

How does this Truth differ from the false promises of the so-called "prosperity gospel"? (See Luke 12:16-21)

THE BIGGEST LIE: "My money belongs to _____"

THE GREATEST TRUTH: Everything belongs to _____

What are 2-3 things you can do to align your financial stewardship with your life as a follower of Jesus Christ?

Your Notes:



Register for Classes & Bible Studies in June & July

Registration is open for all of our Summer Core Classes happening in June & July! View the full list of available classes and register to attend on our website: thestory.church/groups
Direct registration link: thestory.church/summer



Save the Date: Graduation Sunday

Join us Sunday, May 17 as we celebrate all of our kids & students moving up to the next level of programming at The Story, and honor our graduating Senior Class of 2026! Learn more & share your info here: thestory.church/events



Mentors Needed for The Champion Project

Our Story mentoring team is looking for a few more mentors to join! Every 2nd & 4th Sunday, mentors attend the 11:05am worship with the foster home group, and host a lunch/mentoring event at the church for 1-2 hours after the service. Learn more & sign up: thestory.church/serve