

But it's only a story

Why Jesus told stories about money
and why we should too

What to expect

People remember stories. Maybe that's why Jesus spoke often in story and why his followers wrote stories about Jesus and his conversations with people. Stories connect us regardless of our age, gender or culture. Even short stories are effective. In "the pearl of great value," (Matthew 13:44-46) it was all said in a sentence. Each word and phrase moved the story forward in time – efficiently and effectively.

One of Jesus' most popular themes in his story telling was money and possessions – 16 of 38 parables told by Jesus focus on this subject. Other stories written in the gospels covered this topic as well. The only subject spoken about in the Bible more than money is the kingdom of God. Over 2,300 passages in the Scriptures (Old and New Testament) address stewardship topics. Compare this to 50 passages about baptism, 200 passages about faith, and 700 passages about love. So when was the last time you heard a good story in church about money and faith, or participated in a Sunday school lesson about money – other than discussing the problems you may be having with meeting the congregation's giving plan? This study is intended to help us talk about a subject that is easy to avoid and yet is too important to ignore. If you participate in small group discussions, you will be encouraged to tell your own stories and listen to the stewardship adventures of others.

This concept of dwelling in the Word is based on revisiting a common text several times in succession. The following are four weeks of material with five short devotional lessons per week using the "dwelling in the Word" approach to Bible study. From the vast number of themes that could be highlighted we have selected the following topics: 1) My stewardship story; 2) Stories of wealth; 3) Stories of greed; and 4) Stories of giving. At the end of each set of devotionals is a discussion guide designed to be used in a small group or Sunday school class setting. We hope you find this experience of revisiting a common text enriching as you draw new meanings from the passages during each of the five days.

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For information on other stewardship education resources go to Everence.com.

– Beryl Jantzi, director of stewardship education



Everence

How we help

Everence is committed to helping you in all stages of your life. Everence representatives can help you make financial decisions that reflect your faith and values.

Save and invest

- Banking services
- Socially responsible investments
- Mutual funds
- Mortgage lending
- Annuities
- Financial consultations

Live responsibly

- Life insurance
- Health plans for all ages
- Long-term care insurance
- Disability insurance
- Trust services and administration
- Estate strategies
- Retirement strategies

Give generously

- Charitable giving plans
- Life income and estate gift plans
- Gifts of complex appreciated assets
- Volunteer time and talent

Grow and thrive

- Educational events
- Books and videos on stewardship issues
- Sharing Fund grants
- Debt and credit counseling

Build your business or organization

- Employee benefits
- Asset and gift management
- Business succession planning



Everence helps individuals, organizations and congregations integrate finances with faith through a national team of advisors and representatives. Everence offers banking, insurance and financial services with community benefits and stewardship education. Everence is a ministry of Mennonite Church USA and other churches.

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