

Crystallization-Study Outlines
ZECHARIAH
 Message Eleven
The Evil and Wickedness of Commerce
 versus
a Divine Sense of Value
concerning Christ and the Church

Scripture Reading: Zech. 5:5-11; Luke 16:13; Phil. 3:7-8; Acts 20:28

- Zech 5:5 Then the angel who spoke with me went forth and said to me, Lift up now your eyes and see what this is that goes forth.
- Zech 5:6 And I said, What is it? And he said, This is the ephah vessel that goes forth; and he said, This is their appearance in all the land;
- Zech 5:7 (Then a lead cover was lifted up) and this is a woman sitting within the ephah vessel.
- Zech 5:8 Then he said, This is Wickedness. And he threw her down into the midst of the ephah vessel and threw the lead weight over its opening.
- Zech 5:9 Then I lifted up my eyes and I looked, and there were two women going forth, and the wind was in their wings; and they had wings like the wings of a stork. And they lifted up the ephah vessel between the earth and the heavens.
- Zech 5:10 And I said to the angel who spoke with me, Where are they taking the ephah vessel?
- Zech 5:11 And he said to me, To build a house for her in the land of Shinar; and when it is prepared, she will be set there in her own place.
- Luke 16:13 No household servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.
- Phil 3:7 But what things were gains to me, these I have counted as loss on account of Christ.
- Phil 3:8 But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ
- Acts 20:28 Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood.

I. The vision of the ephah vessel signifies the evil and wickedness of business, or commerce, on the earth—Zech. 5:5-11:

Zech 5-11 (be omitted).

A. Commerce seems to have a proper appearance; actually, commerce is evil, full of wickedness—vv. 6-8:

Zech 6-8 (be omitted).

1. The vision of the ephah vessel shows us that the most evil thing on earth is commerce—vv. 5-11.

Zech 5-11 (be omitted).

2. The woman sitting within the ephah vessel signifies the wickedness contained in commerce, such as covetousness, deceit, and the love of money—vv. 7-8a.

Zech 7-8a (be omitted).

3. This vision corresponds to that of Babylon the Great in Revelation 18; these two visions show that in the sight of God the wickedness contained in commerce is a form of idolatry and fornication:

Rev 18:1 After these things I saw another Angel coming down out of heaven, having great authority; and the earth was illumined with His glory.

Rev 18:2 And He cried with a strong voice, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the Great! And she has become a dwelling place of demons and a hold of every unclean spirit and a hold of every unclean and hateful bird;

Rev 18:3 For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the fury of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the power of her luxury.

- Rev 18:4 And I heard another voice out of heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that you do not participate in her sins and that you do not receive her plagues;
- Rev 18:5 For her sins have accumulated up to heaven, and God has remembered her unrighteousnesses.
- Rev 18:6 Pay her back even as she has paid, and double to her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix to her double.
- Rev 18:7 As much as she has glorified herself and lived luxuriously, as much torment and sorrow give to her; for she says in her heart, I sit a queen, and I am not a widow, and I shall by no means see sorrow.
- Rev 18:8 Therefore in one day her plagues will come, death and sorrow and famine, and she will be utterly burned with fire; for the Lord God who judges her is strong.
- Rev 18:9 And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her, will weep and lament over her when they see the smoke of her burning,
- Rev 18:10 Standing afar off because of fear of her torment, saying, Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city, for in one hour your judgment has come!
- Rev 18:11 And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her because no one buys their cargo anymore:
- Rev 18:12 Cargo of gold and silver and precious stone and pearls and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet, and every kind of thyine wood, and every vessel of ivory, and every vessel of most precious wood and brass and iron and marble,
- Rev 18:13 And cinnamon and amomum and incense and ointment and frankincense and wine and oil and fine flour and wheat and cattle and sheep, and cargo of horses and chariots and slaves and souls of men.
- Rev 18:14 And the ripe fruits of your soul's lust have gone away from you, and all the sumptuous and splendid things have perished from you; and men will find them no more at all.
- Rev 18:15 The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand afar off because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning,
- Rev 18:16 Saying, Woe, woe, the great city, which was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and gilded with gold and precious stone and pearl;
- Rev 18:17 For in one hour such great wealth has become desolate! And every ship captain and everyone sailing to a place and sailors and all who work on the sea stood afar off
- Rev 18:18 And cried out, seeing the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like the great city?
- Rev 18:19 And they cast dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and mourning, saying, Woe, woe, the great city, by which all those who have ships on the sea became rich from her wealth, for in one hour she has become desolate!
- Rev 18:20 Be glad over her, O heaven and saints and apostles and prophets, because God has judged judgment for you upon her.
- Rev 18:21 And a strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, Thus will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence and shall be found no more at all.
- Rev 18:22 And the sound of harp-singers and musicians and flutists and trumpeters shall be heard no more at all in you, and no craftsman of any craft shall be found anymore at all in you, and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in you,
- Rev 18:23 And the light of a lamp shall shine no more at all in you, and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall be heard no more at all in you; for your merchants were the great ones of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived.
- Rev 18:24 And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth.
- a. The beginning of commerce is connected with Satan, and its end, with Babylon—Ezek. 28; Rev. 18:
- Ezek 28:1 The word of Jehovah came again to me, saying,

Ezek 28:2 Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, Thus says the Lord Jehovah, Because your heart is lifted up, and you have said, I am a god-I sit in the seat of God in the midst of the seas; yet you are a man and not a god, although you set your heart as if it were the heart of God.

Ezek 28:3 Indeed you are wiser than Daniel; there is no secret hidden from you;

Ezek 28:4 By your wisdom and by your understanding you have made your wealth and accumulated gold and silver in your treasures.

Ezek 28:5 By your great wisdom and by your trading you have increased your wealth, but your heart has become lifted up because of your wealth.

Ezek 28:6 Therefore thus says the Lord Jehovah, Because you have set your heart as if it were the heart of God,

Ezek 28:7 Therefore I am about to bring strangers upon you, the most ruthless of the nations; and they will draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom, and they will defile your splendor.

Ezek 28:8 To the pit they will bring you down, and in the heart of the seas you will die the death of those who are slain.

Ezek 28:9 Will you indeed say in the presence of the one who slays you, I am God? But you are a man and not a god in the hand of the one who wounds you.

Ezek 28:10 You will die the death of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers, for I have spoken, declares the Lord Jehovah.

Ezek 28:11 Moreover the word of Jehovah came to me, saying,

Ezek 28:12 Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord Jehovah, O you who sealed up perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty,

Ezek 28:13 You were in Eden, the garden of God. Every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, diamond, chrysolite, onyx, jasper, sapphire, carbuncle, and emerald, with gold. The workmanship of your tambourines and your pipes was prepared with you on the day that you were created.

Ezek 28:14 You were the anointed cherub who covered the Ark; indeed I set you, so that you were upon the holy mountain of God; you walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.

Ezek 28:15 You were perfect in your ways from the day that you were created, until unrighteousness was found in you.

Ezek 28:16 By the abundance of your trading they filled your midst with violence, and you sinned. So I cast you out as profane from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

Ezek 28:17 Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom by reason of your brightness. I cast you to the ground; I presented you before kings that they may look at you.

Ezek 28:18 By the multitude of your iniquities in the unrighteousness of your trading you have profaned your sanctuaries. Therefore I sent forth fire from your midst; it consumed you, and I reduced you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all those who look at you.

Ezek 28:19 All who know you among the peoples are astonished at you. You have become a source of terror, and you will be no more forever.

Ezek 28:20 And the word of Jehovah came to me, saying,

Ezek 28:21 Son of man, set your face toward Sidon, and prophesy against it,

Ezek 28:22 And say, Thus says the Lord Jehovah, Indeed I am against you, O Sidon, and I will be glorified in your midst. And they will know that I am Jehovah when I have executed judgments in her, and I am sanctified in her.

Ezek 28:23 And I will send pestilence into her and blood into her streets, and the wounded will fall in her midst with the sword against her from all around, and they will know that I am Jehovah.

Ezek 28:24 And there will no longer be a pricking briar or a painful thorn for the house of Israel, inflicted by any of those around them who despised them. And they will know that I am the Lord Jehovah.

- Ezek 28:25 Thus says the Lord Jehovah, When I have gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered and have been sanctified in them in the sight of the nations, they will dwell in their own land which I gave to My servant Jacob.
- Ezek 28:26 And they will dwell securely in it, and they will build houses and plant vineyards. They will dwell securely when I have executed judgments on all those surrounding them who despise them, and they will know that I am Jehovah their God.
- Rev 18 (be omitted).
- 1) Ezekiel 28 is the beginning of world commerce, and Revelation 18 is the consummation, the peak development, of world commerce.
 Ezek 28 (be omitted).
 Rev 18 (be omitted).
 - 2) The most severe judgment from God will be brought against Babylon because it will be the consummation of aggrandizement by trade and the epitome of sin—vv. 2-3, 5, 15-17a, 20.
 Rev 18:2 And He cried with a strong voice, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the Great! And she has become a dwelling place of demons and a hold of every unclean spirit and a hold of every unclean and hateful bird;
 Rev 18:3 For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the fury of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the power of her luxury.
 Rev 18:5 For her sins have accumulated up to heaven, and God has remembered her unrighteousnesses.
 Rev 18:15 The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand afar off because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning,
 Rev 18:16 Saying, Woe, woe, the great city, which was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and gilded with gold and precious stone and pearl;
 Rev 18:17a For in one hour such great wealth has become desolate! ...
 Rev 18:20 Be glad over her, O heaven and saints and apostles and prophets, because God has judged judgment for you upon her.
- b. Commerce is the field in which, more than any other, “the corruption which is in the world by lust” (2 Pet. 1:4) relentlessly pursues even the most high-principled of Christians and can easily overtake them to their undoing—Neh. 5:1-13; 13:10-14.
- 2 Pet 1:4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.
- Neh 5:1 And there was a great cry of the people and their wives against their brothers the Jews,
- Neh 5:2 For there were some who said, With our sons and our daughters we are many; therefore we must get grain that we may eat and live.
- Neh 5:3 And there were some who said, We have pledged our fields and our vineyards and our houses that we might get grain in this famine.
- Neh 5:4 And there were some who said, We have borrowed money against our fields and our vineyards for the king's tribute.
- Neh 5:5 Yet now our flesh is like the flesh of our brothers, our children like their children; and now we are bringing our sons and daughters into bondage as slaves. And some of our daughters have already been brought into bondage; and it is not in our power to deliver them, for our fields and vineyards belong to others.
- Neh 5:6 And I was very angry when I heard their cry and these words.

- Neh 5:7 And when I had considered this matter in my heart, I rebuked the nobles and the rulers and said to them, You men are charging interest, each man against his brother! And I set a great assembly against them.
- Neh 5:8 And I said to them, We have bought back our brothers the Jews who have been sold to the nations according to the best of our ability. So would you even sell your brothers that they would have to be sold back to us? And they held their peace and could find not a word to answer.
- Neh 5:9 Then I said, The thing that you are doing is not good. Should you not walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the nations our enemies?
- Neh 5:10 And even I, my brothers, and my servants lend them money and grain. Let us now abandon such taking of interest.
- Neh 5:11 Restore now to them, as of today, their fields, their vineyards, their olive groves, and their houses, as well as the hundredth part of the money and of the grain, new wine, and fresh oil that you charge them as interest.
- Neh 5:12 And they said, We will restore it, and we will require nothing from them; so will we do, even as you say. Then I called for the priests and took an oath from them that they would do according to this promise.
- Neh 5:13 I also shook out the lap of my garment and said, May God shake out in the same way every man from his house and from his possessions who does not perform this promise; even so may he be shaken out and emptied. And all the assembly said, Amen; and they praised Jehovah. And the people acted according to this promise.
- Neh 13:10 I also found out that the portions of the Levites had not been given to them and thus the Levites and the singers, who performed the service, had gone back, each to his own fields.
- Neh 13:11 So I contended with the rulers and said, Why has the house of God been forsaken? Then I gathered them together and set them in their stations.
- Neh 13:12 And all Judah brought the tithe of the grain and the new wine and the fresh oil to the storehouses.
- Neh 13:13 And I appointed treasurers over the storehouses, Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe, and of the Levites, Pedaiah; and next to them was Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah; for they were counted faithful, and it was their charge to distribute to their brothers.
- Neh 13:14 Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not blot out my loyal deeds, which I have done for the house of my God and for its services.
4. Building a house for the woman in the land of Shinar signifies that God's sovereignty will cause the wickedness in business, which the people of Israel learned from the Babylonians in their captivity, to go back to Babylon—Zech. 5:9-11.
- Zech 5:9 Then I lifted up my eyes and I looked, and there were two women going forth, and the wind was in their wings; and they had wings like the wings of a stork. And they lifted up the ephah vessel between the earth and the heavens.
- Zech 5:10 And I said to the angel who spoke with me, Where are they taking the ephah vessel?
- Zech 5:11 And he said to me, To build a house for her in the land of Shinar; and when it is prepared, she will be set there in her own place.
- B. We need to be delivered from the commercial mind—Matt. 19:27—20:16:
- Matt 19:27 Then Peter answered and said to Him, Behold, we have left all and followed You. What then will there be for us?
- Matt 19:28 And Jesus said to them, Truly I say to you that you who have followed Me, in the restoration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you also shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Matt 19:29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for My name's sake shall receive a hundred times as much and shall inherit eternal life.
- Matt 19:30 But many first will be last, and many last first.
- Matt 20:1 For the kingdom of the heavens is like a man, who is a householder, who went out early in the morning to hire workmen for his vineyard.

Matt 20:2 And having agreed with the workmen for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

Matt 20:3 And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the market place,

Matt 20:4 And to those he said, You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you. And they went.

Matt 20:5 And again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour and did likewise.

Matt 20:6 And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing, and said to them, Why have you been standing here all the day idle?

Matt 20:7 They said to him, Because no one has hired us. He said to them, You also go into the vineyard.

Matt 20:8 And when evening fell, the master of the vineyard said to his steward, Call the workmen and pay them their wages, beginning from the last ones to the first.

Matt 20:9 And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, they received each a denarius.

Matt 20:10 And when the first ones came, they supposed that they would receive more. And they themselves also received each a denarius.

Matt 20:11 And when they received it, they murmured against the householder,

Matt 20:12 Saying, These last ones worked one hour, and you have made them equal to us who bore the burden of the day and the scorching heat.

Matt 20:13 But he answered one of them and said, Friend, I am doing nothing unrighteous to you. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?

Matt 20:14 Take what is yours and go. I want to give to this last one even as I have given to you.

Matt 20:15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with what is mine? Or is your eye evil because I am good?

Matt 20:16 Thus shall the last be first and the first last.

1. Satan is a businessman, a merchant, and his thought is according to his commercial principle—Job 1:9-11; Ezek. 28:16, 18; cf. Rev. 18:2-5, 9-19.

Job 1:9 Then Satan answered Jehovah and said, Does Job fear God without cause?

Job 1:10 Have You not set a hedge around him and his household and all that he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his possessions are spread throughout the land.

Job 1:11 But stretch forth Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face.

Ezek 28:16 By the abundance of your trading they filled your midst with violence, and you sinned. So I cast you out as profane from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

Ezek 28:18 By the multitude of your iniquities in the unrighteousness of your trading you have profaned your sanctuaries. Therefore I sent forth fire from your midst; it consumed you, and I reduced you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all those who look at you.

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- Rev 18:12 Cargo of gold and silver and precious stone and pearls and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet, and every kind of thyine wood, and every vessel of ivory, and every vessel of most precious wood and brass and iron and marble,
- Rev 18:13 And cinnamon and amomum and incense and ointment and frankincense and wine and oil and fine flour and wheat and cattle and sheep, and cargo of horses and chariots and slaves and souls of men.
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- Rev 18:15 The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand afar off because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning,
- Rev 18:16 Saying, Woe, woe, the great city, which was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and gilded with gold and precious stone and pearl;
- Rev 18:17 For in one hour such great wealth has become desolate! And every ship captain and everyone sailing to a place and sailors and all who work on the sea stood afar off
- Rev 18:18 And cried out, seeing the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like the great city?
- Rev 18:19 And they cast dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and mourning, saying, Woe, woe, the great city, by which all those who have ships on the sea became rich from her wealth, for in one hour she has become desolate!
2. Peter's concept in dealing with the Lord in Matthew 19:27 was commercial, according to the principle of work; in His answer to Peter the Lord strongly indicated that His reward is not commercial but according to His desire and grace—v. 28—20:16:
- Matt 19:27 Then Peter answered and said to Him, Behold, we have left all and followed You. What then will there be for us?
- Matt 19:28 And Jesus said to them, Truly I say to you that you who have followed Me, in the restoration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you also shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Matt 19:29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for My name's sake shall receive a hundred times as much and shall inherit eternal life.
- Matt 19:30 But many first will be last, and many last first.
- Matt 20:1 For the kingdom of the heavens is like a man, who is a householder, who went out early in the morning to hire workmen for his vineyard.
- Matt 20:2 And having agreed with the workmen for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard.
- Matt 20:3 And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the market place,
- Matt 20:4 And to those he said, You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you. And they went.
- Matt 20:5 And again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour and did likewise.
- Matt 20:6 And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing, and said to them, Why have you been standing here all the day idle?
- Matt 20:7 They said to him, Because no one has hired us. He said to them, You also go into the vineyard.
- Matt 20:8 And when evening fell, the master of the vineyard said to his steward, Call the workmen and pay them their wages, beginning from the last ones to the first.
- Matt 20:9 And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, they received each a denarius.
- Matt 20:10 And when the first ones came, they supposed that they would receive more. And they themselves also received each a denarius.
- Matt 20:11 And when they received it, they murmured against the householder,
- Matt 20:12 Saying, These last ones worked one hour, and you have made them equal to us who bore the burden of the day and the scorching heat.
- Matt 20:13 But he answered one of them and said, Friend, I am doing nothing unrighteous to you. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?

- Matt 20:14 Take what is yours and go. I want to give to this last one even as I have given to you.
- Matt 20:15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with what is mine? Or is your eye evil because I am good?
- Matt 20:16 Thus shall the last be first and the first last.
- a. Peter's natural concept, representing that of all believers, was commercial—vv. 11-12.

Matt 20:11 And when they received it, they murmured against the householder,

Matt 20:12 Saying, These last ones worked one hour, and you have made them equal to us who bore the burden of the day and the scorching heat.
 - b. The Lord's word in verse 14 shattered Peter's natural, commercial mind and destroyed his concept of commerce—16:23-26; 2 Cor. 10:4-5.

Matt 20:14 Take what is yours and go. I want to give to this last one even as I have given to you.

Matt 16:23 But He turned and said to Peter, Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me, for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of men.

Matt 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.

Matt 16:25 For whoever wants to save his soul-life shall lose it; but whoever loses his soul-life for My sake shall find it.

Matt 16:26 For what shall a man be profited if he gains the whole world, but forfeits his soul-life? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul-life?

2 Cor 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but powerful before God for the overthrowing of strongholds,

2 Cor 10:5 As we overthrow reasonings and every high thing rising up against the knowledge of God, and take captive every thought unto the obedience of Christ.

C. "No household servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon"—Luke 16:13:

1. Mammon stands in opposition to God, indicating that wealth, or riches, is the opponent of God, robbing God's people of their service to Him.
2. To serve the Lord requires us to love Him, giving our heart to Him, and requires us to cleave to Him, giving our entire being to Him—Matt. 6:19-21:

Matt 6:19 Do not store up for yourselves treasures on the earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves dig through and steal.

Matt 6:20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not dig through nor steal.

Matt 6:21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

 - a. In this way we are released from being occupied and usurped by mammon so that we may serve the Lord wholly and fully—4:10.

Matt 4:10 Then Jesus said to him, Go away, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve."
 - b. In order to serve the Lord, we must overcome the enticing, deceitful mammon of unrighteousness—Luke 16:9, 13; Matt. 13:22.

Luke 16:9 And I say to you, Make friends for yourselves by means of the mammon of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles.

Luke 16:13 No household servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Matt 13:22 And the one sown in the thorns, this is he who hears the word, and the anxiety of the age and the deceitfulness of riches utterly choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

3. Giving money and material things in resurrection is a strong indication that we are under God's administration in resurrection and have overcome the possession of material riches—1 Cor. 16:1-3; Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-35; 11:29.

1 Cor 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, just as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also do.

1 Cor 16:2 On the first day of the week each one of you should lay aside in store to himself whatever he may have been prospered, that no collections be made when I come.

1 Cor 16:3 And when I arrive, whomever you approve, I will send them with letters to carry your gift to Jerusalem;

Acts 2:44 And all those who believed were together and had all things common;

Acts 2:45 And they sold their properties and possessions and divided them to all, as anyone had need.

Acts 4:32 And the heart and soul of the multitude of those who had believed was one; and not even one said that any of his possessions was his own, but all things were common to them.

Acts 4:33 And with great power the apostles gave testimony of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

Acts 4:34 For neither was anyone among them in need; for as many as were owners of lands or of houses sold them and brought the proceeds of the things which were sold

Acts 4:35 And placed them at the feet of the apostles; and it was distributed to each, as anyone had need.

Acts 11:29 And the disciples, according to how one was prospered, determined, each one of them, to send things for dispensing to the brothers dwelling in Judea,

D. "Let your way of life be without the love of money"—Heb. 13:5a:

1. Whatever one loves, his whole heart, even his entire being, is set on and occupied and fully possessed by—cf. Mark 12:30; 2 Tim. 3:1-2a.

Mark 12:30 And you shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart and from your whole soul and from your whole mind and from your whole strength."

2 Tim 3:1 But know this, that in the last days difficult times will come.

2 Tim 3:2a For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, ...

2. "Those who intend to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge men into destruction and ruin"—1 Tim. 6:9.

3. Because of the love of money, some have been led away from the faith and have pierced themselves through with many pains—v. 10.

1 Tim 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all evils, because of which some, aspiring after money, have been led away from the faith and pierced themselves through with many pains.

II. We need to have a divine sense of value in order to appreciate the supreme preciousness of Christ and the exceeding worth of the church—Luke 16:15b; 1 Pet. 2:4, 7; Matt. 13:45-46; Acts 20:28:

Luke 16:15 And He said to them, You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

1 Pet 2:4 Coming to Him, a living stone, rejected by men but with God chosen and precious,

1 Pet 2:7 To you therefore who believe is the preciousness; but to the unbelieving, "The stone which the builders rejected, this has become the head of the corner,"

Matt 13:45 Again, the kingdom of the heavens is like a merchant seeking fine pearls;

Matt 13:46 And finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Acts 20:28 Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood.

- A. The Bible has much to say concerning a change in one's concept of value—Psa. 118:22; 1 Cor. 1:18; Matt. 6:32-33; 10:37-38; 16:26; 18:8-9; 20:25-27; Job 22:23-28; Heb. 11:24-26:

Psa 118:22 The stone which the builders rejected / Has become the head of the corner.

- 1 Cor 1:18 For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
- Matt 6:32 For all these things the Gentiles are anxiously seeking. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.
- Matt 6:33 But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.
- Matt 10:37 He who loves father or mother above Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter above Me is not worthy of Me;
- Matt 10:38 And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.
- Matt 16:26 For what shall a man be profited if he gains the whole world, but forfeits his soul-life? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul-life?
- Matt 18:8 If your hand or your foot stumbles you, cut it off and cast it from you; it is better for you to enter into life maimed or lame than to have two hands or two feet and be cast into the eternal fire.
- Matt 18:9 And if your eye stumbles you, pluck it out and cast it from you; it is better for you to enter into life with one eye than to have two eyes and be cast into the Gehenna of fire.
- Matt 20:25 But Jesus called them to Him and said, You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great exercise authority over them.
- Matt 20:26 It shall not be so among you; but whoever wants to become great among you shall be your servant,
- Matt 20:27 And whoever wants to be first among you shall be your slave;
- Job 22:23 If you return to the Almighty, you will be built up. / If you put injustice far away from your tents,
- Job 22:24 And place your gold nuggets in the dust / And your gold of Ophir in the stones of the brooks,
- Job 22:25 Then the Almighty will be your gold nuggets / And precious silver to you.
- Job 22:26 For then you will delight yourself in the Almighty, / And you will lift up your countenance to God.
- Job 22:27 You will pray to Him, and He will hear you; / And you will repay your vows.
- Job 22:28 You will also decree something, and it will be established for you; / And light will shine on your ways.
- Heb 11:24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,
- Heb 11:25 Choosing rather to be ill-treated with the people of God than to have the temporary enjoyment of sin,
- Heb 11:26 Considering the reproach of the Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he looked away to the reward.
1. Before a person believes in the Lord, his concept of value is perverted, but once a person is saved, his concept of value changes—Luke 19:2, 8-9.

Luke 19:2 And behold, there was a man whose name was called Zaccheus; and he was a chief tax collector, and he was rich.

Luke 19:8 And Zaccheus stood and said to the Lord, Behold, the half of my possessions, Lord, I give to the poor, and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore four times as much.

Luke 19:9 And Jesus said to him, Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham.
 2. If we have a thorough change in our concept of value, we will know to choose the most excellent portion—10:41-42; Matt. 26:6-13.

Luke 10:41 But the Lord answered and said to her, Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things;

Luke 10:42 But there is need of one thing, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Matt 26:6 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,

Matt 26:7 A woman came to Him, having an alabaster flask of ointment of great value, and she poured it on His head as He reclined at table.

Matt 26:8 But when the disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, Why this waste?

Matt 26:9 For this could have been sold for much and given to the poor.

Matt 26:10 But Jesus, knowing it, said to them, Why do you trouble the woman? She has done a noble deed to Me.
 Matt 26:11 For the poor you have with you always, but you do not always have Me.
 Matt 26:12 For in pouring out this ointment on My body, she has done it for My burial.
 Matt 26:13 Truly I say to you, Wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what this woman has done shall also be told as a memorial of her.

B. We need to appreciate the supreme preciousness of Christ—Mark 14:3-9:

Mark 14:3 And while He was in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as He reclined at table, a woman came, having an alabaster flask of ointment, of very costly pure nard, and she broke the alabaster flask and poured it over His head.
 Mark 14:4 But there were some who were indignantly commenting among themselves: Why has this waste of the ointment been made?
 Mark 14:5 For this ointment could have been sold for over three hundred denarii and given to the poor. And they were infuriated with her.
 Mark 14:6 But Jesus said, Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a noble deed on Me.
 Mark 14:7 For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you do not always have Me.
 Mark 14:8 She has done what she could; she has anointed My body beforehand for the burial.
 Mark 14:9 And truly I say to you, Wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what this woman has done shall also be told as a memorial of her.

1. “Coming to Him, a living stone, . . . with God chosen and precious”; “to you therefore who believe is the preciousness”—1 Pet. 2:4, 7a:

1 Pet 2:4 Coming to Him, a living stone, rejected by men but with God chosen and precious,
 1 Pet 2:7a To you therefore who believe is the preciousness; ...
 a. In verse 4 *precious* indicates preciousness that is recognized and held in honor.
 1 Pet 2:4 (be omitted).
 b. The Christ chosen by God as a stone, even a cornerstone that is precious to God, is the preciousness to the believers—v. 7a.
 1 Pet 2:7a (be omitted).
 c. We need to have a vision of the preciousness of Christ—vv. 4, 7a.
 1 Pet 2:4, 7a (be omitted).

2. “What things were gains to me, these I have counted as loss on account of Christ. But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ”—Phil. 3:7-8:

a. We need to know Christ in His excellency, in His supreme preciousness; no person, matter, or thing is more precious than the Lord Jesus as the treasure within us—2 Cor. 4:7; S. S. 5:10-16; Matt. 10:37.
 2 Cor 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not out of us.
 S.S. 5:10 My beloved is dazzling white yet ruddy, / Distinguished among ten thousand.
 S.S. 5:11 His head is the finest gold; / His locks are wavy, / As black as a raven.
 S.S. 5:12 His eyes are like doves / Beside the streams of water, / Bathed in milk, / Fitly set.
 S.S. 5:13 His cheeks are like a bed of spices, / Mounds of sweetly fragrant herbs; / His lips are lilies, / Dripping with liquid myrrh.
 S.S. 5:14 His hands are tubes of gold, / Set with beryl; / His belly is an ivory work, / Overlaid with sapphires.
 S.S. 5:15 His legs are pillars of white marble, / Set upon bases of gold; / His appearance is like Lebanon, / As excellent as the cedars.
 S.S. 5:16 His mouth is sweetness itself, / And he is altogether desirable. / This is my beloved, and this is my friend, / O daughters of Jerusalem.

- Matt 10:37 He who loves father or mother above Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter above Me is not worthy of Me;
- b. The excellency of Christ is derived from the excellency of His person—17:5; Col. 1:13.

Matt 17:5 While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight. Hear Him!

Col 1:13 Who delivered us out of the authority of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,
 - c. When Christ was revealed to Paul, he saw the excellency, the supereminence, the supreme preciousness, of Christ and suffered the loss of all things and counted them as refuse so that he might gain Christ—Gal. 1:15a, 16a; Phil. 3:7-8.

Gal 1:15a But when it pleased God, who set me apart from my mother's womb ...

Gal 1:16a To reveal His Son in me that I might announce Him as the gospel among the Gentiles, ...

Phil 3:7 But what things were gains to me, these I have counted as loss on account of Christ.

Phil 3:8 But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ
3. “As He reclined at table, a woman came, having an alabaster flask of ointment, of very costly pure nard, and she broke the alabaster flask and poured it over His head”—Mark 14:3:
 - a. The gospel causes genuine believers to treasure the Lord Jesus and to value His supreme preciousness—vv. 3-4.

Mark 14:3 And while He was in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as He reclined at table, a woman came, having an alabaster flask of ointment, of very costly pure nard, and she broke the alabaster flask and poured it over His head.

Mark 14:4 But there were some who were indignantly commenting among themselves: Why has this waste of the ointment been made?
 - b. The goal of the gospel is that we would pour out upon the Lord Jesus what is most precious to us, “wasting” ourselves upon Him—Matt. 26:6-8 and footnote on v. 8, Recovery Version.

Matt 26:6 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,

Matt 26:7 A woman came to Him, having an alabaster flask of ointment of great value, and she poured it on His head as He reclined at table.

Matt 26:8 But when the disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, Why this ¹waste?

Note 1 The disciples considered Mary's love offering to the Lord a waste. Throughout the past twenty centuries thousands of precious lives, heart treasures, high positions, and golden futures have been "wasted" upon the Lord Jesus. To those who love Him in such a way He is altogether lovely and worthy of their offering. What they have poured upon Him is not a waste but a fragrant testimony of His sweetness.
- C. We need to appreciate the exceeding worth of the church—13:45-46; Acts 20:28:
- Matt 13:45 Again, the kingdom of the heavens is like a merchant seeking fine pearls;
- Matt 13:46 And finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.
- Acts 20:28 Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood.
1. “The kingdom of the heavens is like a merchant seeking fine pearls; and finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it”—Matt. 13:45-46:
 - a. The merchant here is Christ, who was seeking the church for His kingdom.

- b. After finding the church in 16:18 and 18:17, He went to the cross and sold all that He had and bought it for the kingdom.
 - Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
 - Matt 18:17 And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to hear the church also, let him be to you just like the Gentile and the tax collector.
- 2. “Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood”—Acts 20:28:
 - a. *His own blood* indicates the precious love of God for the church and the preciousness, the exceeding worth, of the church as a treasure to God.
 - b. Paul’s emphasis here is the value of the church as a treasure to God, a treasure that He acquired with His own precious blood—1 John 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:18-19.
 - 1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from every sin.
 - 1 Pet 1:18 Knowing that it was not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, that you were redeemed from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers,
 - 1 Pet 1:19 But with precious blood, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot, the blood of Christ;
 - c. The church was precious to Paul because he realized that the desire of the Lord’s heart is to gain the church and that He obtained the church through His own blood; therefore, Paul was willing, most gladly, to spend and be utterly spent for the church—Eph. 1:5, 9; Matt. 16:18; Acts 20:28; 2 Cor. 12:15.
 - Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
 - Eph 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,
 - Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
 - Acts 20:28 Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood.
 - 2 Cor 12:15 But I, I will most gladly spend and be utterly spent on behalf of your souls. If I love you more abundantly, am I loved less?