

What is the Difference between Self Interest and Greed?







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Connecting
Good Intentions
with
Sound Economics

She sees that her trading is profitable...

She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy.

-- Proverbs 31:18-20



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What is the difference between profitable self interest and greed?

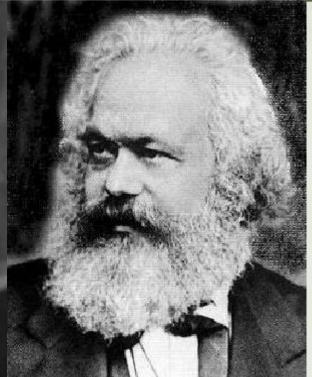
Smith, Rand and Marx



"It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest."



The Virtue of Selfishness:
I swear -by my life and my love of it- that I will never live for the sake of another man, nor ask another man to live for mine.



"From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs."



Wall Street, 1987



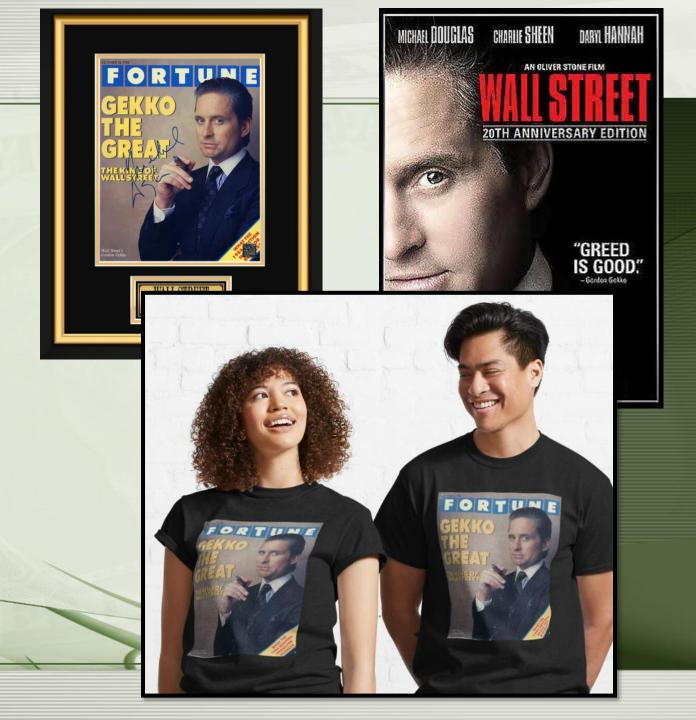
Greed, for lack of a better word, is good.

Greed is right.

Greed works.

Greed clarifies, cuts through, and captures the essence of the evolutionary spirit.

-- Gordon Gekko



Wall Street, 1987

Greed is Not Good



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Jesus said to them,

"Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions."

Luke 12:15

But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.

Ephesians 5:3

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

Colossians 3:5

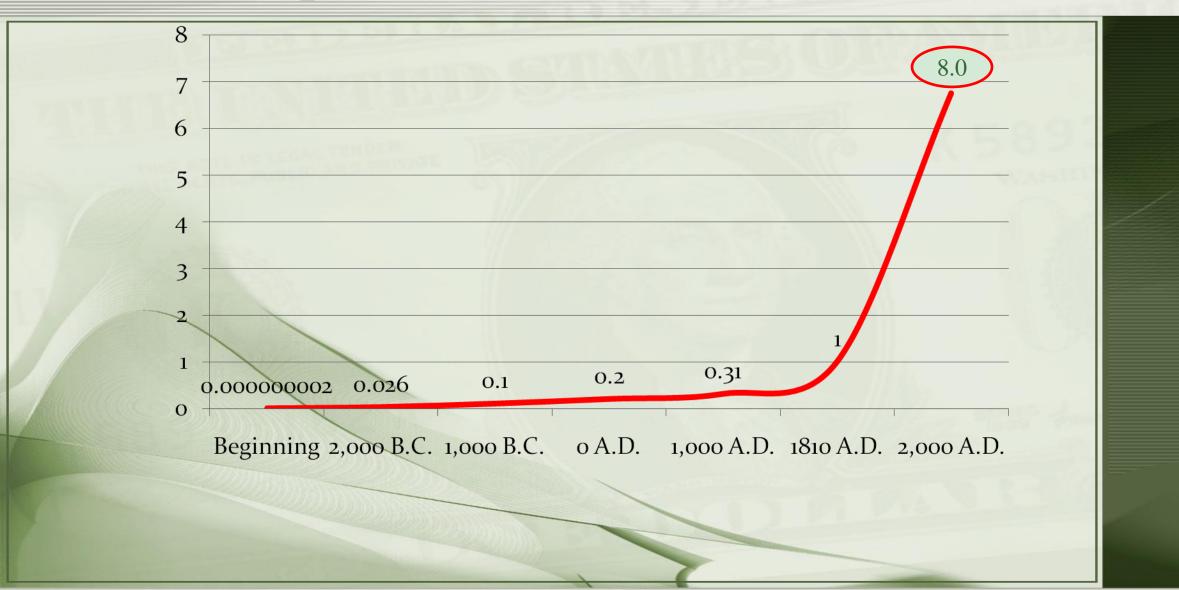
Summary of the Problem

Self Interest is the fuel driving the economic engine that has lifted billions of people out of poverty and improved the lives of people around the world.

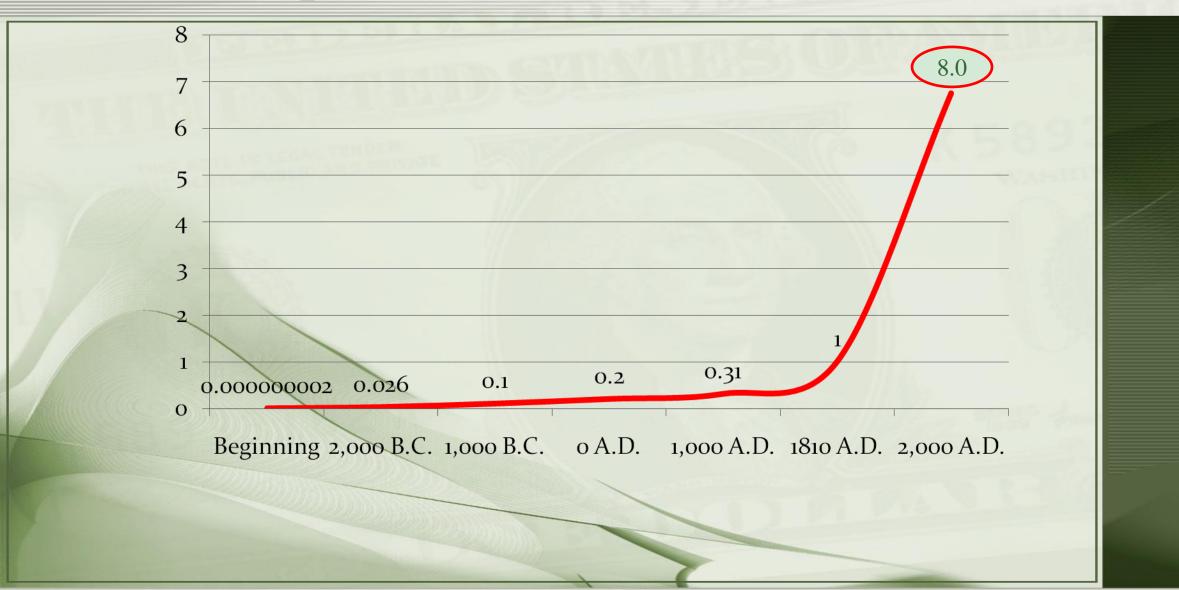
Greed is a deadly sin that will send your immortal soul to Hell.

Unfortunately, the distinction between Self Interest and Greed can be subtle and difficult to detect.

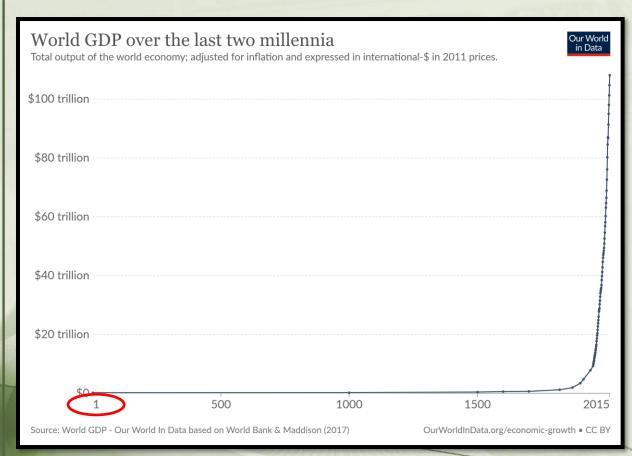
World Population (in billions)

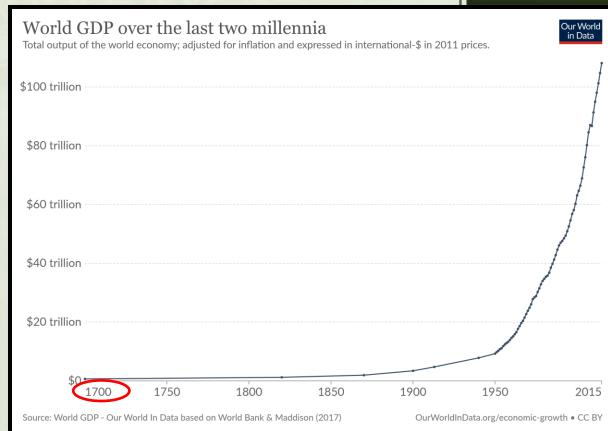


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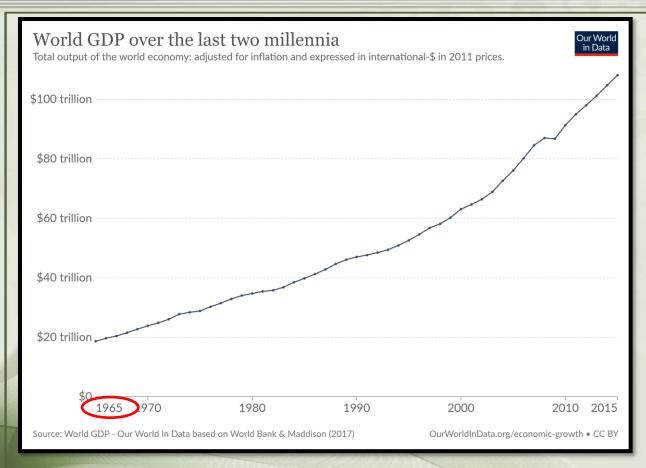


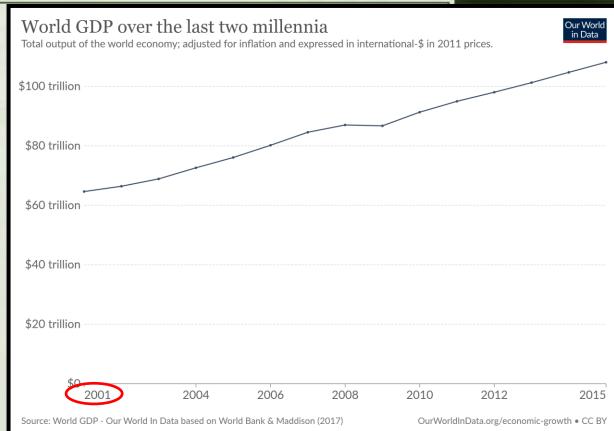
World GDP in Trillions over Two Millennia





World GDP in Trillions over Two Millennia







Greed is a Challenge to Define



Peanut M&M's 16 oz bag

Target \$7.19

Walmart \$6.79

Some things Never Change?

Murder

Adultery

Anger

Lust



Entry-Level Accounting Position

RubinBrown LLP \$61K/year

Idex Corporation \$55K/year



Used 2015 VW car

Dealer \$21,000

Grandma \$11,000

John the Baptist answered, "Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same." -- Luke 3:11

Self Interest

Flee sexual immorality, but money?

Greed is a Challenge to Define

"If avarice was the desire for more material wealth, the question still remains where 'more' began." Richard Neuhauser

Contemporary definitions of greed often rely on such terms as "excessive," "inordinate," "too much," and "more than enough" without addressing the practical question of exactly how much is too much in earning money or retaining possessions.

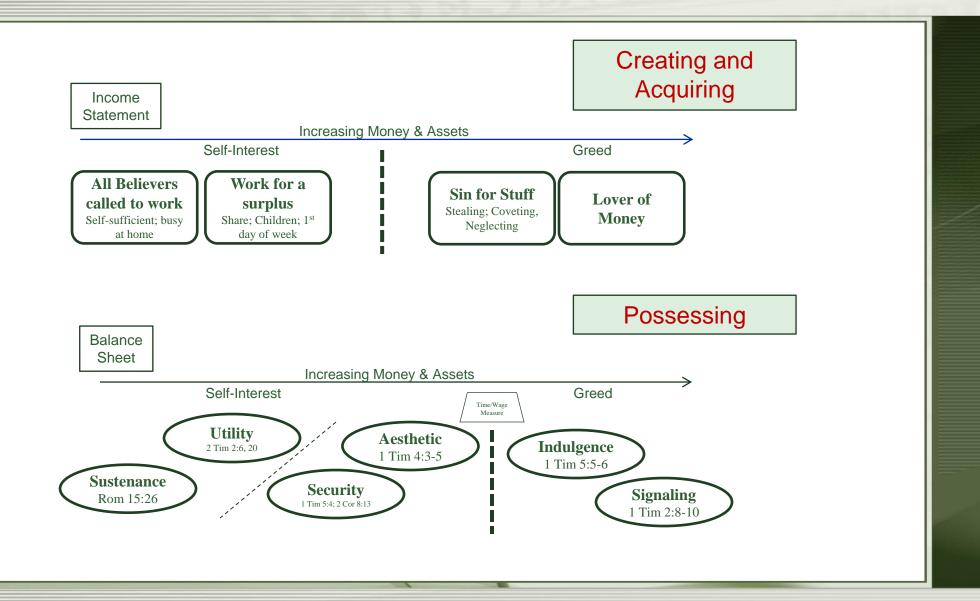


Two Goals:

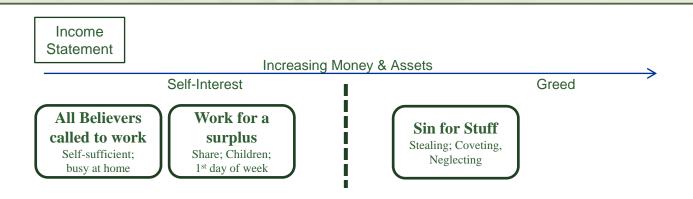
- 1. Show the practical distinction between Greed and Self Interest
- 2. Illustrate how to use the Bible with precision to make ethical decisions



Paul's Income Statement and Balance Sheet



Paul's Income Statement

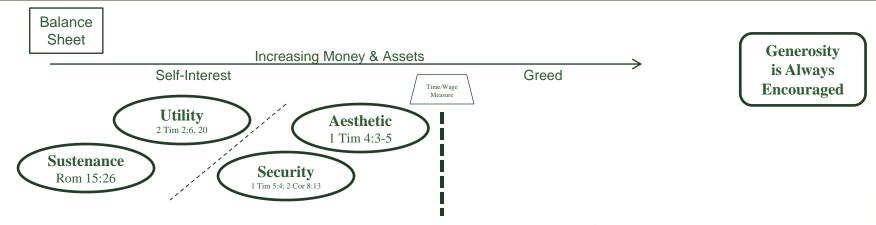


- 1 Thessalonians 4:10-12 But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more, and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one.
- Ephesians 4:28 Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.
- 2 Corinthians 12:14 For children are not obligated to save up for their parents, but parents for their children.
- •1 Corinthians 16:2 On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.
- Romans 2:21 You then who teach others, do you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal?
- Colossians 3:5-6 Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming.

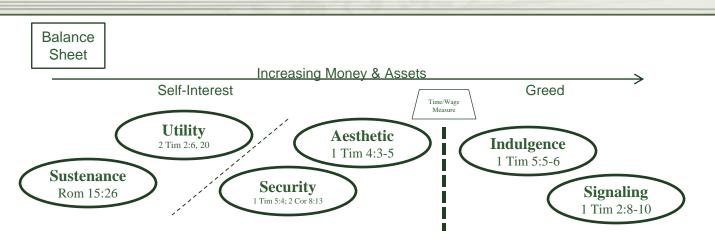
Paul's Income Statement



- 1 Timothy 3:2-3 Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.
- 1 Timothy 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.



- Romans 15:26-27 For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. For they were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings.
- 2 Timothy 2:20 Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable.
- 1 Timothy 5:4 But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show godliness to their own household and to make some return to their parents, for this is pleasing in the sight of God.
- 2 Corinthians 8:13-14 For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened, but that as a matter of fairness your abundance at the present time should supply their need, so that their abundance may supply your need, that there may be fairness.
- 1 Timothy 4:4-5 For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.



Generosity is Always Encouraged

• 1 Timothy 5:5-6

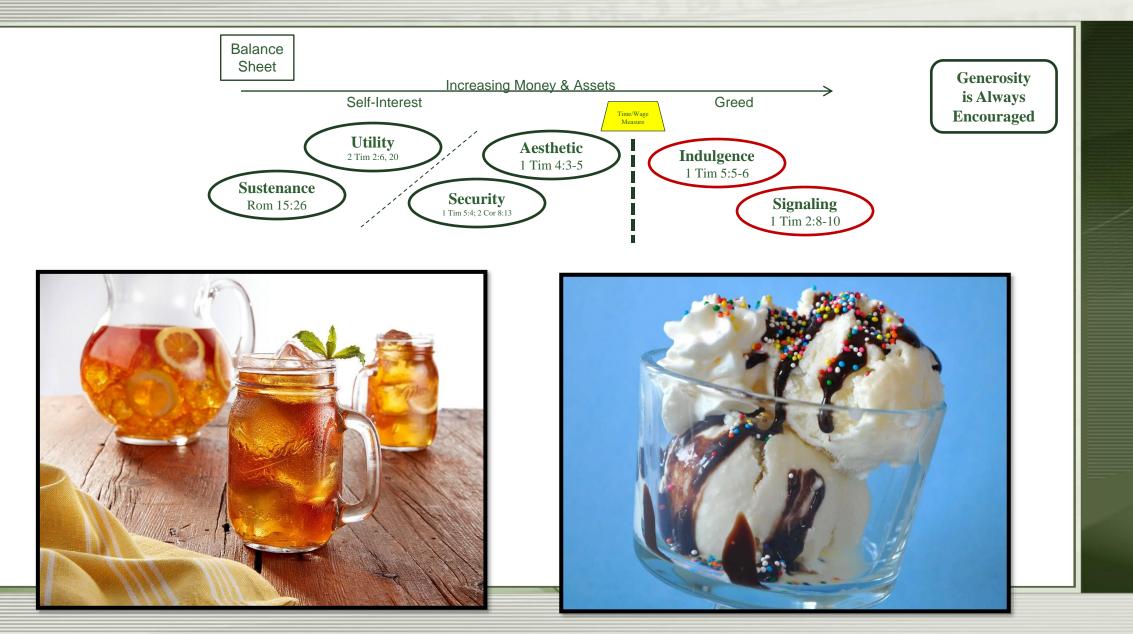
She who is truly a widow, left all alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day, but she who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives.

• 1 Timothy 2:8-10

I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women

who profess godliness--with good works.





Food Costs Less Than Ever Before

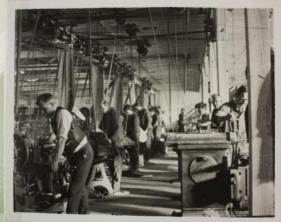
Measured by Time/Wages

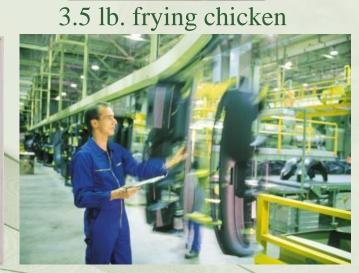
in the history of the world









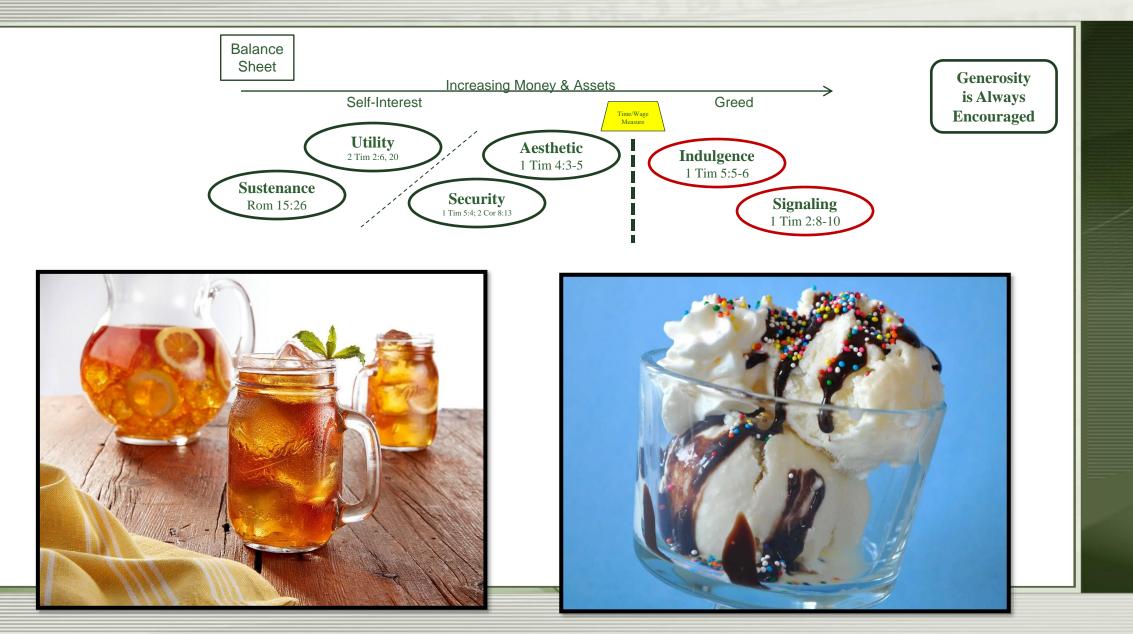




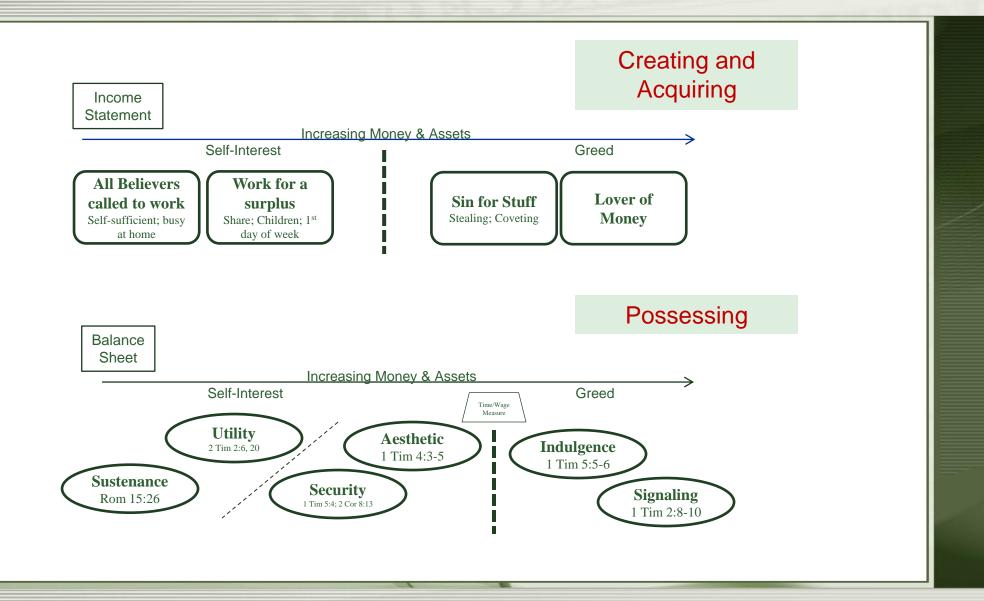
1920 – 2 hours

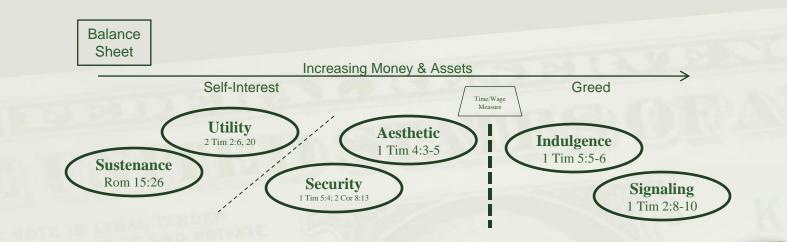
1970 – 12 minutes

2023 – 5 minutes



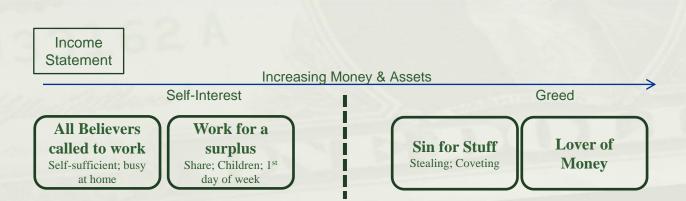
Paul's Income Statement and Balance Sheet





The Bottom Line...

What Difference Does This Make?



What Difference Does this Distinction Make?

- Turns the focus from guilt of possessing (when others are in need) to subduing the creation for the benefit of others.

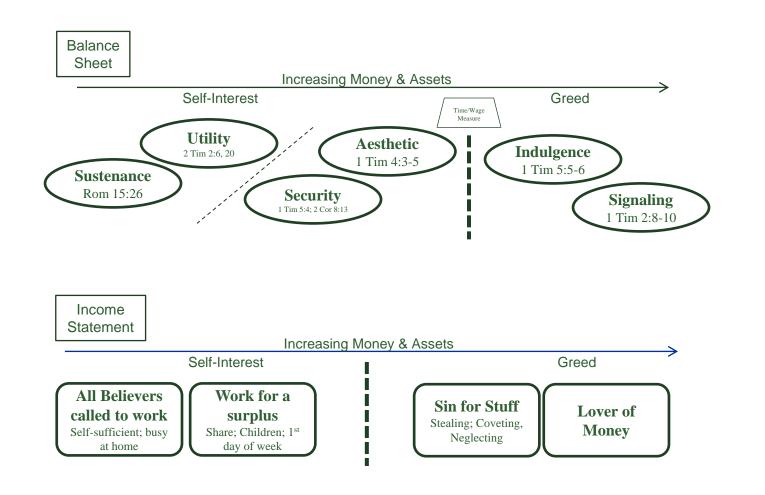
 (Markets lift people out of poverty efficiently.)
- Generosity is channeled to both gifts and development.
- The advance of the gospel breeds industriousness, fuels generosity, increases contentment, and mortifies covetousness.

If some have too little, then others must have too much.

If some have too little, then not enough has been created, and the gospel needs to advance more.

Creating wealth is as important as giving possessions away.

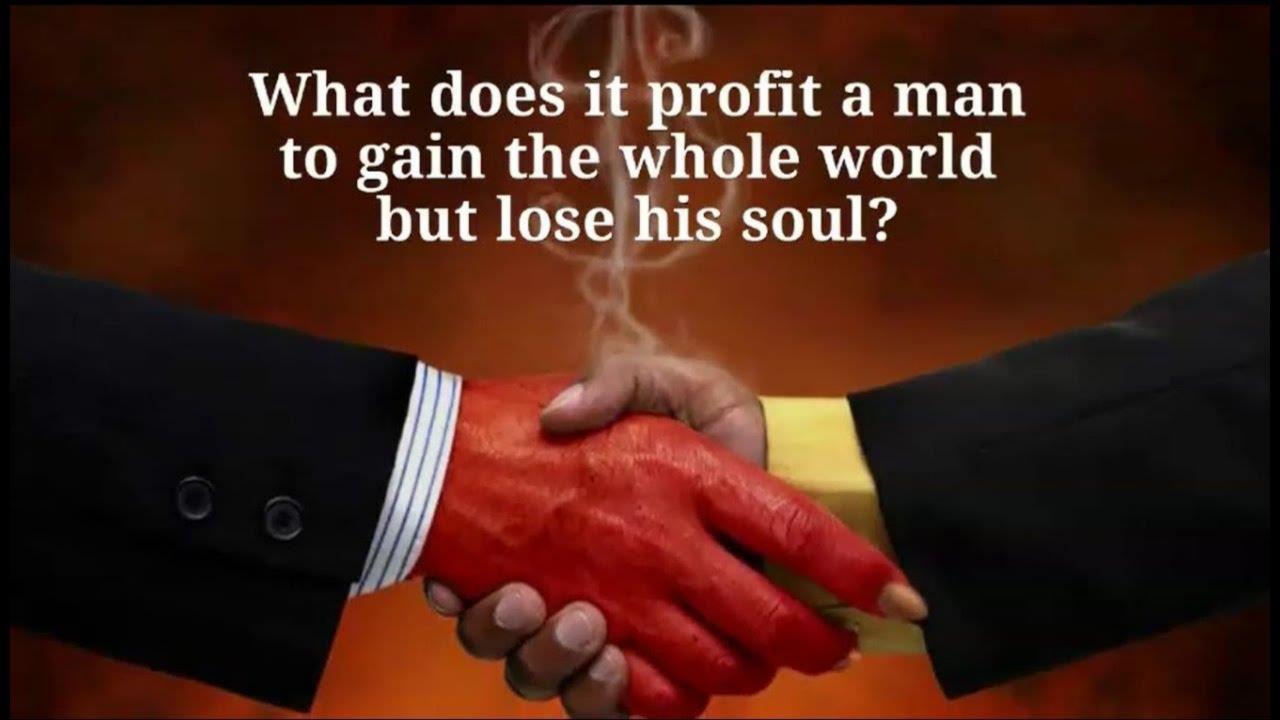
Questions and Answers





As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be arrogant, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. to do good, They are to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life. 1 Timothy 6:17-19





Learn to Serve

"A Certificate of Service"



For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it.

For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?

For what can a man give in return for his soul?

For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Mark 8:35-9:1

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And the devil took him up
       and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time,
       and said to him,
               "To you I will give all this authority and their glory,
                       for it has been delivered to me,
                       and I give it to whom I will.
                               If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours."
And Jesus answered him,
       "It is written,
               "You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.
                                                                     Luke 4:5-7
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And he said to them,

"Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist

in the abundance of his possessions."

And he told them a parable, saying,

"The land of a rich man produced plentifully,

and he thought to himself,

'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?'

And he said,

'I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones,

and there I will store all my grain and my goods.

And I will say to my soul,

"Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry."

But God said to him,

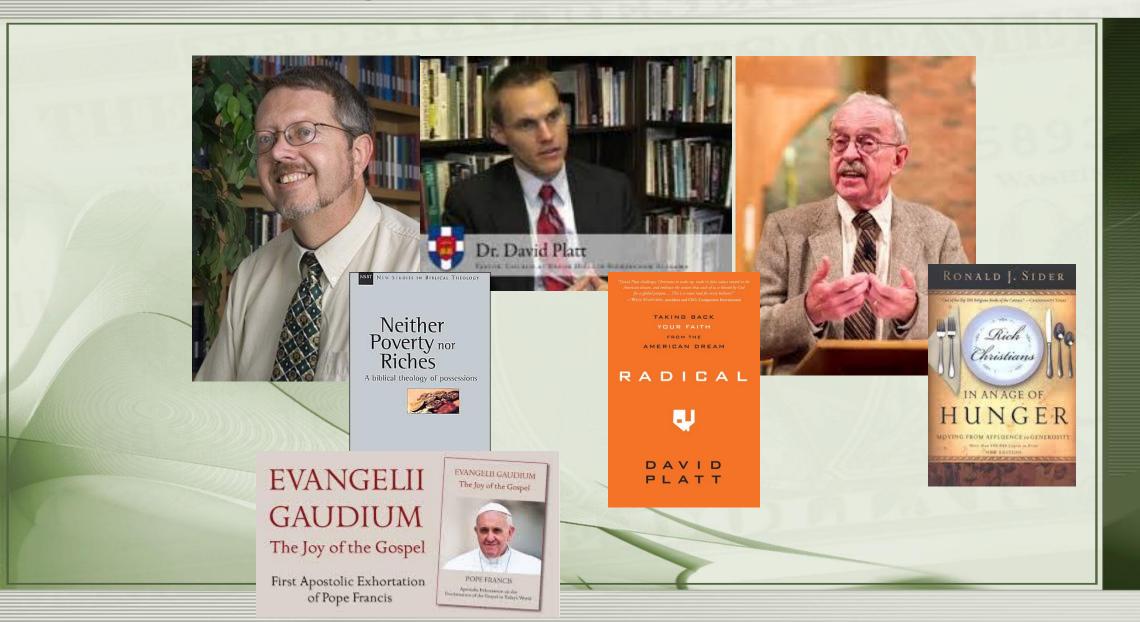
'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?'

So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

Luke 12:15-21 ESV



Blomberg, Platt, and Sider



The Church and Poverty

1. Material possessions are inherently good.

Yes

2. Spiritual and economic matters are inextricably intertwined.

Yes

3. Possessions can lead to temptation to great evil.

Some

4. Giving possessions away guards against temptation.

Some

5. If some have too little, then others must have too much

Rarely

If some have too little, then not enough has been created, and the gospel needs to advance more.

Neither Poverty nor Riches

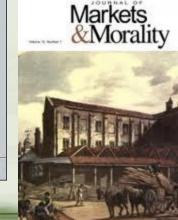


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Craig L. Blomberg

series Editor: D. A. Carson



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Blomberg's Five Biblical Themes of Material Possessions:

(Journal of Markets & Morality, Spring 2012)

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NIW STUDIES IN BIBLICAL THEOLOGY



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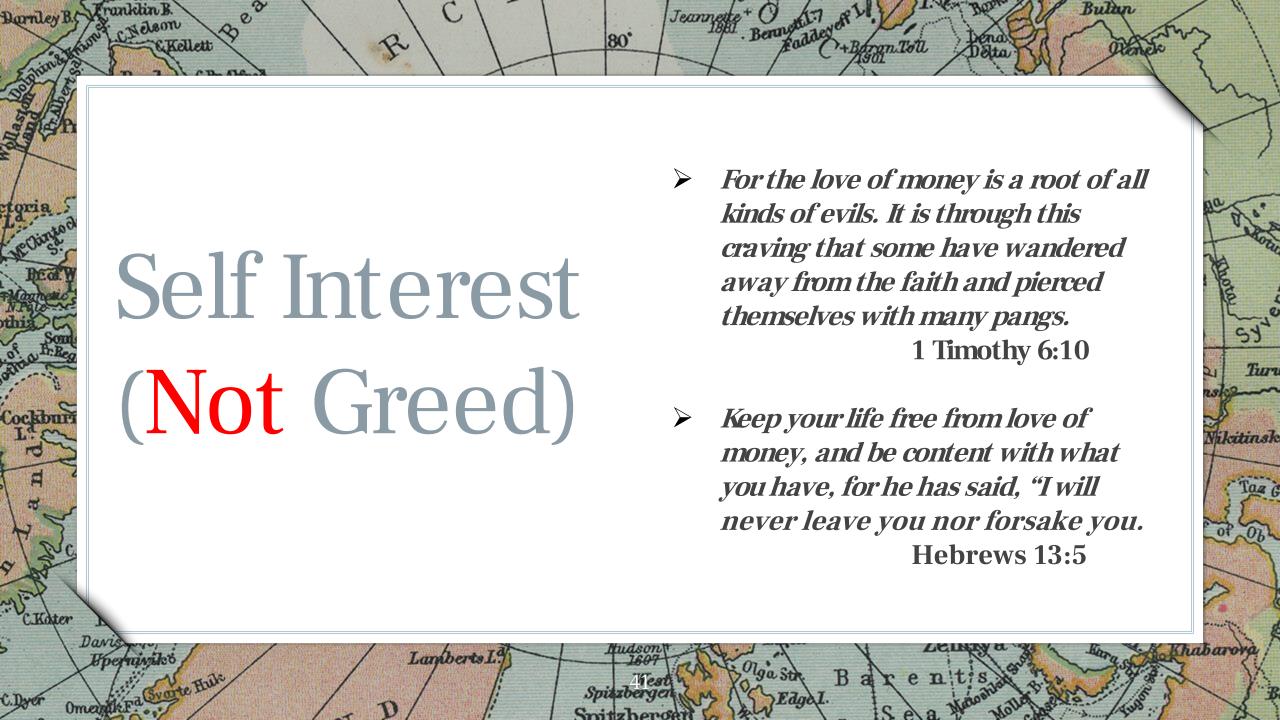
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Rarely

"There are certain extremes of wealth and poverty which are in and of themselves intolerable.

These extremes cannot be quantified, and they will vary widely under different economic systems and depend on personal attitudes.

But sooner or later every economic system leads to certain people accumulating material possessions above and beyond what they can possibly need or even use just for themselves." (p. 245)



Creation Mandate



And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." Genesis 1:28



Created for Work



Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. Exodus 20:9-10

We would give you this command:
If anyone is not willing to work,
let him not eat.

2 Thessalonians 3:10



The Highest Motivation and Good



So, whether you eat or drink,
or whatever you do,
do all for the glory of God.
1 Corinthians 10:31