



Sermon – May 27, 2018

Verses Covered

Proverbs 6:1 – 11

Genesis 2:15

1 Timothy 5:9 – 10

1 Timothy 6:17

So what book are we working through? Proverbs. What's the subject I hate to preach on? Money. Turn to Proverbs 6. We're going to deal with what the text says. It's not my fault. It's in there. We're walking through. We're caught. We're stuck. Here we go. So those of you that are new here, I do not preach on money every week. It's really every other week. But that's pretty much the way we go.

Proverbs 6. He's going to say two things to you about money. It's interesting how they juxtapose two different things, but boy they have such an impact. Listen.

¹My son, if you have put up security for your neighbor, you've given your pledge for a stranger, ²if you are snared in the words of your mouth, caught in the words of your mouth, ³then do this, my son, and save yourself; for you have come into the hand of your neighbor, go, hasten, and plead urgently with your neighbor. ⁴Give your eyes no sleep, your eyelids no slumber; ⁵save yourself like a gazelle from the hand of the hunter like a bird from the hand of the fowler.

There's the first thing. Here's the second thing.

⁶Go to the ant, O sluggard, consider her ways and be wise, ⁷without having any chief, officer, or ruler, ⁸she prepares her bread in summer and gathers her food in harvest. ⁹How long will you lie there, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? ¹⁰"A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest" – ¹¹and poverty will come upon you like a robber and want like an armed man.

So it touched two things. OK. One. It's interesting what he says. You have to read it precisely. But if you're in Hebron and a guy comes up to you and he says, "Listen I'm going to open up a used camel lot and I don't have the money to buy several used camels and I need some good used camels but you have the money, bank knows you, listen would you go down and cosign for me?"

So you look at this guy and you're trying to be a nice guy and you say, "You know, absolutely, man. We need some more used camels in town. We need better quality used camels. You're the man. I will cosign for you." It's interesting what he says. He says, "Don't go to the banker." It says, "You run down to your neighbor that you made this deal with. So apparently he wants you to run down before this guy even has a chance to go the next day to the banker and cut the deal with your neighbor before he even has the opportunity. Then it says, "I want you to run, grab your neighbor, pull him aside, and say, "Dude, I was wrong. We do need some new used camels, but it's on you. If God wants you in this business, He'll take care of it. I can't do that. I can't cosign, in case you fail, so that my money is used to benefit you and nothing comes of it. I simply cannot do that. You're going to have to let me out of the deal."

So here's the first thing he says. Real simple. You're not to put yourself in a position where somebody other than you is in control of your money. Now hold that. So we go to the second thing and we're going to put them together. So here's the first thing he says. You're not to put yourself in any position where someone other than you is in control of what you have from God. So there's the first thing. Second thing he says, "Go to the ant, look at her, how long will you lie there?" In other words, get up and go to work. Second thing he says is I want you to work. Do something. Get up. Now when we went to Uganda, Tim Skaggs and Coleman Philley, and I we were, it took us 24 hours on the plane which is like being married to your mother-in-law. It's just not a good thing. So you're 24 hours on the plane. We have a three hour ride in a van over the mountains, all these hills. And we're getting there about 9 or 9:30 at night, driving over these mountains. And there are all these people walking in the dark up this mountain and then going down the other side of it. I mean like at 9:00 o'clock at night. So the pastor's riding with us and I asked him. I said, "What's going on here?" He said, "It's a daily occurrence. They have to walk back and forth from work." So they get off at a certain hour, they walk home, he said, "They'll get up at 5:30 in the morning and they'll walk two hours back to where they work." I mean it is a laborious trek just to obey the second part of Proverbs. But it was interesting to me because it's the same thing I've seen almost everywhere I've gone. From Mexico to here, almost anywhere I've gone. Their labor was laborious. But they were some of the happiest people I've ever seen. I mean I can't even imagine walking two hours to work, working all day, walking two hours home, getting up in the next day, two hours, home. I mean it's incredible. These people were incredibly happy. You come to America, none of us walk two hours to work, we get paid way more than they get paid. I watched little guys, 5 and 6 years old, they came to where we were staying, and they would have a bucket about this size, and they would fill it with water and these little guys would carry it a mile home. I mean they have, even after they labor they don't have money left over; and yet extremely happy. We live in America, we don't labor near like they do, we have a whole lot of money left over, and we're the most unhappy people on the planet. We do that. And after we're done doing that, we spend billions in this country on two things: entertainment and pills. We spend that money on two things because if the entertainment doesn't work, the pills do. And here's the crazy thing. I see Christians going to a movie whose language is against everything you speak, the actions in that movie are vile, not wholesome, not holy, but we're so desperate that we'll go to try to get some relief from what we think is the bondage of how we live.

Why is there a difference? Because I want you to understand something. Work is a Biblical, holy directive calling from God the Father. I want you to listen real quickly. You stay in Proverbs, but I want you to listen. Second chapter of Genesis. When does the fall occur in Genesis? When do

we start sinning in Genesis? What chapter? Ok, this is not a trick question. What chapter? Three. So two is before the fall, right. Listen to this.

¹⁵The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

Why did He put us in the Garden? To work it. He didn't put Adam and Eve in the garden and they're sitting there hanging around with two little angels that look they belong on a toilet paper deal. They're not sitting there with them and they've got a little harp and they're singing all day and everything's wonderful, kumbaya, and you're wonderful Jesus. They're not doing that. They're working. They're naming the animals, they're planting crops, they're working. So work was instituted before the fall. Listen when you and I do go to heaven and God comes back and He makes this whole thing right, I mean He fixes heaven, he fixes earth. He makes everything right. What do you think we're going to do? Sit on a cloud? There are no clouds. We're OK. You're not going to float. You're not going to have a harp. Thank God! You're not going to have any of that. You know what the Bible does say? That we sit on a throne with Him in His throne under His authority. So what does that mean? We manage heaven with Him. I mean what we have is so vast, our telescope cannot see to the end of it, even the ones that are in outer space, cannot see to the end of this universe. They have no idea where it starts and ends because our God's that big.

So what He does is He puts us on the throne and under Him so that we manage the universe. You're going to work when you go to heaven. Let me tell you, work is a holy calling from Almighty God. Now I understand our culture hates it. I get that. But those of us in this room should not hate it. We've got an entire restaurant dedicated to our hatred. Thank God It's Friday; TGIF. We have an entire restaurant they dedicated to our hatred of work. Oh I can't wait until Friday. It's over. We can go back; we don't have to go back until Monday. We're going to change that because we're born again believers in Jesus Christ. So we're going to change that to TGIM; Thank God It's Monday so I can go live out the calling God has graciously blessed me with. That's what we're going to do. We're going to alter that because the Bible honors you when you work. I think part of the reason these people are happy and content in countries when they have absolutely nothing is they do work and there is a divine dignity that is blessed on the people that obey the Father and His commands in the scripture. There's nothing wrong with working. You say, "Well it's laborious. It's hard." Do you walk two hours to work? Then don't call me. Are all jobs hard at times? Absolutely. Is it always fun being pastor here? We're going to move on. Do I still love what I do? Absolutely. Because I'm in the middle of exactly where Christ called me.

Work is Biblical. You ask anybody that owns a small business in this church. What's the number one problem they have? Getting people to work with any sense of pride in what they ask them to do. You, as a Christian, are not going to be like the rest of our culture. You operate off a different mandate. You operate because you're living under a heavenly Father who's given you giftings and talents and callings to place you exactly where He wants you to be. And you're going to honor Him and bless Him and thank God and work hard because that is your calling from Him.

So two things, we're going to work hard and earn our money, and we're going to make sure that nobody is in control of the money that we earn except us. Why is that? Because there are three things that you're going to do with your money. I want you to listen, 1 Timothy chapter 5. I want you to listen to the first thing. Here's what it says, 5:9, listen to this.

⁹Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than 60 years of age, having been the wife of one husband, ¹⁰a reputation for good works; she has brought up children, shown hospitality, washed the feet of the saints, cared for the afflicted, and devoted herself to every good work.

They actually, in the first church, basically every church had a widow's list. They didn't have welfare back then. They didn't have governmental, of any kind, support. So if you're a widow and all your family is gone and you're older, you can't work, you can't physically do what you used to do, you could be homeless and die. So the church set up a unique system. Now it's pretty tough. You can't get on the widow's list until you're 60. Number two, if you have every family alive, you can't get on the widow's list. They have to take care of you. The church does not. Number three, you had to be holy to get on the list. You couldn't ignore Christ and then at 60 come in and say, "I love Jesus today and I want to be on the list." No if you didn't demonstrate prior hospitality, washing feet of the saints, caring for people, you didn't get on the list. So the list was hard to get on. But here's the deal. Once you got on the list, you were taken care of for the rest of your life. So if you were in the church, the first thing you had to do with some of your income is give it to the church every single Sunday so that these widows and the ministry to them out of the church could be taken care of. So the first reason you don't let anybody else control your money that you work for under Christ is because part of it is going to go ongoing to the ministry that God has placed you in the middle of. That's number one.

Number two, there are going to be things that God will at times call you to do beyond the ongoing service. 2 Corinthians 8 & 9, there was a drought in Jerusalem. Paul writes to them and he says, "Listen, I've sent Titus around as a fundraiser. He's coming to you for money and I want you to take an offering and I want you to send it, we're going to take the offering. He's going to gather it. I'm going to go with him. And we're going to go to Jerusalem and give it to the Jewish Christians who are starving because they have no food." So once in a while you have to give to something beyond what you do ongoing. And again the only way for that to happen is the Holy Spirit to speak to you and say, "I need your money over here." But if it's tied up with the used camel lot and you can't get it, then you can't do what the Holy Spirit's asking you to do. So there are two things. You say, "OK, preacher, well what about this?" I work hard. I do what I'm to do. I give ongoing to the church. I have been the kind of person that responds to the Holy Spirit. I've done things like that. But I've got some money left over. What do I do? Number one, pastor deer lease, that's number one. Thought I'd try and sneak that in there. So you've got money left over. What do you do? Well, now, you're going to have a lot of people tell you that if you have money left over that you need to give it away. That's the mantra of the Democratic party today. You give all your money away because you have it and you shouldn't have it. I want you to listen to what the Bible says. Now listen to this carefully. OK. You've worked hard. Given money ongoing to the church. You're open the Holy Spirit directing you episodically in different things. And now you have money left over. Listen to this. Last part of 1 Timothy, listen.

¹⁷As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty

So I have this money left over, it doesn't make me better than anybody else. You can afford to buy a Rolls Royce. When I was in Midland, we first went to Midland in '81. They had a Rolls

Royce dealership. If you can afford to buy a Rolls Royce, that's fine. You should have bought the pastor a deer lease, but that's OK. You have the ability. That's fine. But what you don't do, is look at the money and whatever you do with it, and think, "I'm better than somebody else because I have a Rolls Royce and they don't." You never get haughty over the extra income God's given you. That's number one. Listen to this.

nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.

Now listen. Listen to what he just said. I love this. I don't get haughty about it and I don't look at this, I don't look at this extra money and think, "OK. I can buy a Ranger Bass Boat now and now that I have a Ranger Bass Boat, I'll be happy." I don't be arrogant over what I have left. I don't think that whatever I do with it will make me happy. I believe Jesus Christ alone supplies my joy. This is icing on the cake. But His walk in my life is the cake.

Now there are going to be people that say to you, well-meaning Christians that will read you the passage with the rich young ruler and say, "Hey, Jesus told him to give up all his money and so that's what you have to do." And there are well-meaning Christians, there are well-meaning organizations, sojourners, socially actively Christians that will tell you that. Boy this extra money you've got, you've got to give it away or you're really not walking well with Christ because that's what He told the rich, young ruler to do. No, no, no, no. Let me explain something about him. He told the rich, young ruler the same thing He told Nicodemus and the same thing He told the woman in John 4. Let me clear about something today. Jesus Christ is not fire insurance; He is life insurance. What He said to the rich, young ruler was, "Look, buddy, if you're going to follow me, you have to come to the place where you think I can do more for you than your money can. And if you're not there, you're going to have to give it all up." He's the only in the New Testament He told to give up. He's got the woman at the well, John 4, right. She says, "Oh, yeah." This and that. And He said, "Look you've had five husbands and you're living with the guy that's not your husband anymore. You need to drink from my well because I can cure the thirst." What He said to her is, "Look you've got to quit thinking that a man can make you happy and believe I can do for you what no man can." And then He said to Nicodemus in John 3, "You've got to be born again." What He said to Nicodemus was, "Look you've got to come to a point, buddy, where you trust Me enough that you don't think all the junk the Pharisees have taught you growing up will work." The real issue isn't that we take one little thing and apply it to all of us. No, no, no, no, no. Whatever you think is the ultimate blessing in your life, and you think that's going to bless you more than Jesus Christ, you cannot come to Him as Lord and Savior. That's the point. You work hard, you give ongoing, you give episodically, you come to this place, it's your money, he says to enjoy. You say, "Well shouldn't I give it up?" No. Because it's interesting. 2 Corinthians, Corinth was the city in a Achaia, a Roman province down here. The province right above it was Macedonia where we have, right, Berea, Philippi, and Thessalonica. They're up here. It's interesting. He did not send Titus into Macedonia because they don't have any money. He didn't even send him up there, they're so poor. They text him and said, "Hey! We want to give." Paul, being a good, this is how we know he's a Baptist preacher, Paul used it to guilt the Corinthians. He said, "They're giving and we didn't even ask them for it." So it's what he did. But he never told the Achaian Christians, "You've got some money left over. Send it north." You work. You don't let anybody control your money so that you can give continually and you can give

episodically and then you can enjoy what's left. And that is not an unholy proposition. I will tell you this, and I'm saying this with all my heart today, the reason Ugandan people are happier than Americans is they work hard and they take what they have left over, oddly enough, and they do the best they can with it under Christ. And they are grateful for the job they have to walk two hours to get to. I think we've lost joy in our churches because we've lost a Biblical understanding of both money and work. And Proverbs puts it all in perspective.

Let me tell you one story that I can multiply literally by a thousand. When Peg and I were in seminary, if you, when you're in seminary you have no money. I mean you have nothing. I've got three years of school left. I graduated college on Friday, got married on Saturday, started seminary on Thursday. She has two years of school left. So we have no money. Living in a one-bedroom apartment sort of with a bathroom. I mean it's bad. But it's OK because nobody else had any money either, except for one guy. I used to walk from the house we were renting to seminary and there was some big, black Cadillac. And on the back of it, it said, "Oil pays my taxes and feeds my family." I'm just being ungodly here, I understand that. But I just wanted one day to take the key out and just. If you've got the money to drive the car, you've got the money to fix it. But I didn't. I'm just saying I maintained a modicum of holiness, but we were all poor. Every seminary student was poor. So we went to this small church with a guy in the class and several other seminary couples; a young couples class. The guy that taught the class was a guy named Bill DeHay. Bill was a blue collar roofer. Owned his own company. He got up with the crews and he roofed with them. Now if you roof in Texas in the summer, you are a man. That's all I know. Bill was one of the most gracious men I ever knew. He made really good money. I mean they roofed, he had a great reputation in town. Somebody needed roofing; they called him. He had a really established business. He worked hard. Blue collar guy. But there were two things we knew. He always talked about and did, according to everybody we know, substantially support his church. But the other thing he did was this. Once in a while he would take us all out to dinner. He'd have the entire Sunday school class out to dinner. And it's no big deal, but the entire Sunday school class would go out. We never in three years being in that church, we never paid for a single meal when we went out with that guy. 10 or 12 couples; he always took care of the bill. Because he had the money and he wanted to do that and in three years he worked hard, he got on roofs, he worked with his crews, he made good money, he lived that out, he was proud of what he did, and in three years, I never once saw him not gregariously happy. There was an infectious joy in his heart that I think God gave him because he lived the Bible out even to the point of work and money. We have a God who really does want to bless us if we do what He asks us to do.

Let's pray.

Father, Your word is so clear. Really so understandable. Bring us to two places where we live the business you've given us with praise and honor and joy. And that whatever you bless us with, we do exactly with it what you want done. And Father that we do that because we believe Jesus Christ will get us through this life. Not anything else in this world. Thank You for Your Son and all that He does in our life every day. It is in His name I pray this morning.