

LIVE THE STORY

The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- Why might Jesus have spoken so much about money and possessions?
- Discuss: “There is no way to be a witness to the inbreaking reign of God, to be a living picture of God’s reign, unless and until we submit our understanding and use of money and possessions to God’s reign.”
- Can you explain each of the following concepts: manna economy, first-fruits economy, and jubilee economy? Why might it be important to understand the distinction between these?
- How does Paul in 1 Corinthians 9 transform the temple-system economy into a Gospel economy?
- In 1 Timothy 5:18, Paul cites something from Luke’s Gospel as Scripture. What does that tell us about how the early church understood what was being written about Christ?
- What evidence do we have in Luke’s Gospel that Jesus didn’t stop at merely proclaiming the year of God’s favor (Jubilee), but expected disciples to live in that new reality?
- How are you being challenged to change your economic practices?

I. Manna Economics (2 Cor. 8:13-15; 9:1-13)

- A. In 8:15, Paul quotes from the instructions for collecting manna in Exodus 16.

- B. This collection for the poor was very important to Paul.

- C. It is the idea of a manna economy upon which the Lord’s prayer instructs us to pray, “Give us today our bread for today.”

II. First-Fruits Economics (1 Cor. 9:4-14)

- A. The *first-fruits principle* stands behind much of the temple system to include the tithe or tenth.

- B. Paul transforms that first-fruits economy into a gospel economy.

- C. These ideas were not original with Paul (1 Tim 5:17-18).
 - i. Notice the priority given to preaching and teaching.

 - ii. Paul quotes two Scriptures. One is from the NT (Luke 10:7).

- D. Paul raises this issue with the Galatians as well (Gal. 6:6-10)
 - i. Sowing to the spirit means to take our “good things” and share them with those who feed us God’s word.

 - ii. This is not a hierarchy, but a division of labor.

III. Jubilee Economics (Luke 4:16-18; 6:27-38)

- A. Jesus doesn’t stop at proclaiming the fulfillment of the Year of Jubilee, he expects his people to live as if that is a new reality.
 - i. The year of Jubilee was a year of favor on the poor. It was a year when they were redeemed, released from, or forgiven their debts.

In Luke’s gospel, Jesus’ ministry, or reign as King, begins with the proclamation of the year of people being released from their debts, and then it calls disciples to live out that release by both being released from their sins, and releasing others from their debts.

- ii. The Sermon on the Plain is all about what it looks like to live in Jubilee; to live in God’s sabbath.

 - iii. Sabbath was for doing good and saving life. The *Sermon on the Plain* describes how!
- B. Jesus calls us to think in terms of what Jubilee calls us to do to others (6:27-38).
 - i. Jesus’ call to lend and not expect a return is because with His coming we are in perpetual Jubilee... Sabbath.

Bock notes, “As the year of release from debt approached, one was not to become more hesitant to lend because that year was approaching. One was not to be tightfisted or hardhearted, but openhanded to the needy. Failure to respond meant that the one needing the money could cry out to God against the lender.”

- ii. *What does living in the Year of the Lord’s favor look like?*
 - a) It looks like loving enemies: (27, 32, 35a)

 - b) Loving enemies looks like doing good to them: (27c, 33, 35b)
- C. Jubilee economics is about our posture toward our possessions in relation to others.