

**Cut \$100 Bill
(Money)
(Put God First)**

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

18 *Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.*

1 Timothy 6:17-18

The Basic Bible Truth

Jesus talked often about money. He explained that for us, the love of money is a harsh taskmaster. Greed and the pursuit of things over God is a sad existence. Our focus in life must be upon God and His plans. Anything we might want is secondary to the central issue that people are dying and heading for an eternity in Hell. And we have the answer. But our pursuits of the things we want too often take center stage.

The Object

A Photocopied \$100 Bill
(I Know Its Technically Illegal, But I Keep Track Of It Very Carefully)
Scissors



Generally, I pick out an adult in the group who I can trust to be in on the trick. I give them the \$100 bill and explain that I will be needing a “volunteered” large bill later.

The Lesson

Nearly everyone has heard of the Ten Commandments. It is worthy of note that the first four commandments are about putting God first in our lives. He demands that position and is rightfully worthy of it. As life comes at us, our selfishness will immediately rise to the surface if left unchecked for even a moment. Many things may try to take center stage. One of the most tenacious problems that we deal with is that of wealth. Our money, or maybe lack of it, is what many times drives us on. Jesus talked often about the deceitfulness of wealth. Let me say right up front that I do not believe it is wrong to be wealthy. Some of the greatest heroes in the Bible were fabulously wealthy. The issue with money is not the finances themselves, but rather it is our heart condition.

I can put it very simply. Could you, if God asked you to, walk away from everything you now own and not look back with any disappointment or hurt? If you honestly don't believe that you could, I would suggest a serious heart check. Our financial condition is of little importance in the grand scheme of things. We would do well to see money as simply a tool to use in God's kingdom. I am a woodworker by trade and I have a wide assortment of power tools that I use in my profession. A simple project may be accomplished with a small, fifty dollar, saw. But there are other times when it may take a tool worth hundreds of thousands of dollars to professionally execute the set task. Our money is actually God's money, and He allows us to use it. Use it as you would any other tool in your toolbox. Think of your money as a wrench, or a sabre saw, or a giant lathe. Size is not the issue, accomplishing the task at hand is.

At some point during the presentation, I suggest that we look closely at an illusion, a magic trick, as it were. Since we are talking about money, let's perform a trick using cash. Now this illusion will have a much more dramatic effect if I use a larger bill. I thought that I had one with me, but my wife must have grabbed it from my wallet when I wasn't looking. Is there anyone in the audience that might have a bigger bill that I could borrow? A one hundred dollar bill would be perfect! May I borrow yours please? Thank you. Now, the way this illusion works is quite simple. I will make the one hundred dollar bill vanish right before your eyes. I hold it up this way between my fingers, and, using this very sharp scissors, I begin cutting. Cutting it into very, very, very small pieces and letting them fall to the floor. There, it has completely vanished. Now where was I in the lesson.

People will become bewildered at your actions. They have grown accustomed to having the bill brought back, or reappeared. But it won't be. Gauge their reaction to your illusion, and simply pass it off as no big deal. It is only a piece of paper, isn't it? You can segue back into the lesson at your discretion, explaining that what happened here illustrates the importance we place upon money. I would cut up a real one hundred dollar bill if I knew it would get this point across to the people that I am teaching.

When we begin to see money as simply a tool to use for God's kingdom, we will have a healthier attitude towards it. There are those who have made a fortune from selling their "How to Handle Money God's Way" books and paraphernalia. I have never bought into those ideas. I understand that many people have been salvaged from financial ruin by the teachings passed through the curriculum. But what I have also seen in the lives of the people ordering their finances by the teachings in the workbook, is what I believe to be an unhealthy, ever present, decision making process that always, always, always, considers money and cost first and other issues second. Money is simply a tool for us to use. That's it. We make it important. God does not.