

acts

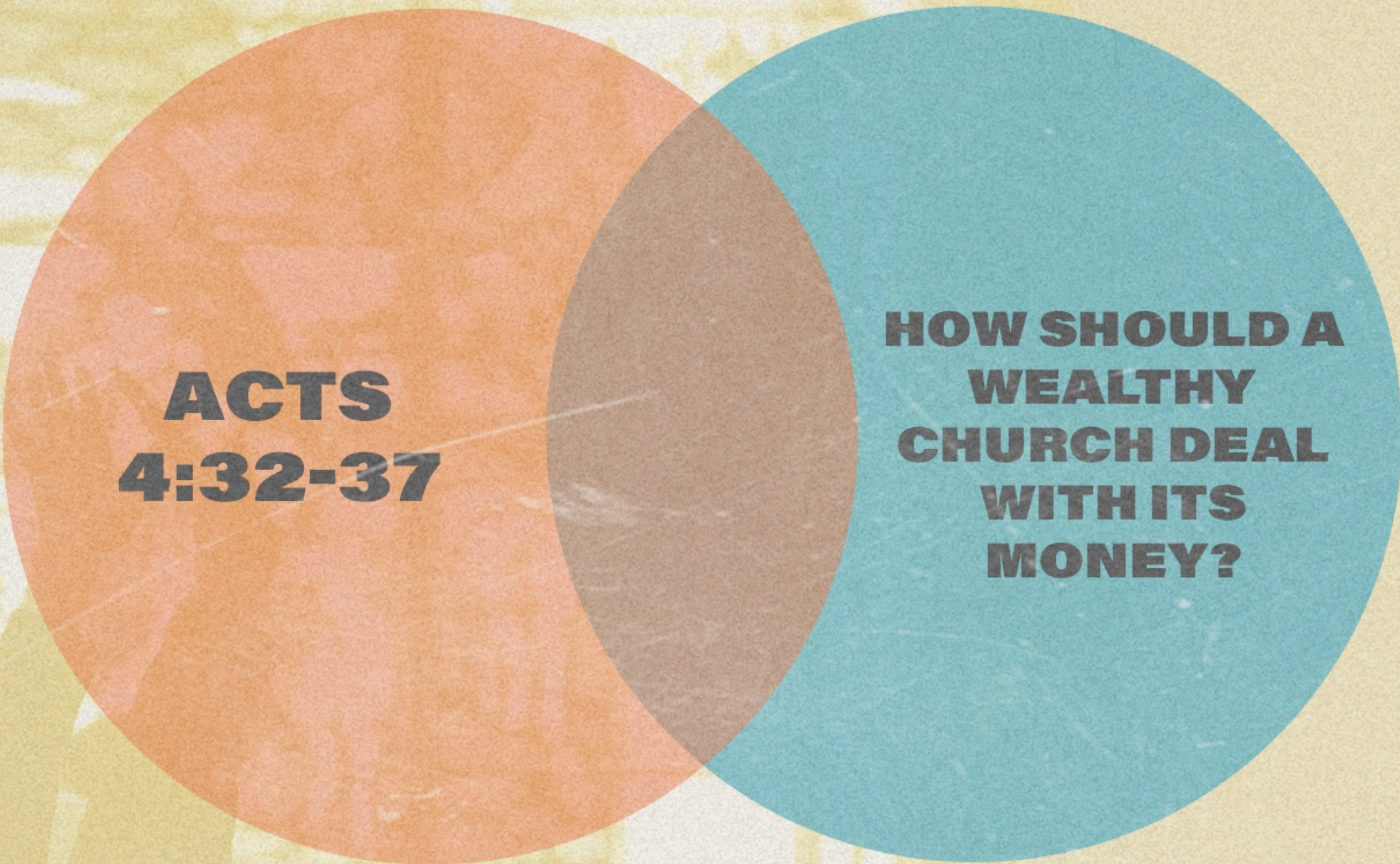
— **VERSE BY VERSE**





**ANCIENT
CHURCH**

**MODERN
ISSUES**



ACTS
4:32-37

**HOW SHOULD A
WEALTHY
CHURCH DEAL
WITH ITS
MONEY?**



Wealth is the #1 spiritual gift of the American Church.

Romans 12:6-8

In His grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you.

If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. **If it is giving, give generously.**

If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

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The Generosity of the Church in Acts

Acts 2 – All the believers shared everything, sold property, cared for needy.

Acts 4 – Same as Acts 2.

Acts 4 – Barnabas introduced as model of generosity.

Acts 5 – Ananias and Sapphira's greed serves as contrast.

Acts 6 – First official church ministry – Food program for widows.

Acts 8 – Peter tells Simon “To hell with you and your money” for trying to buy Holy Spirit.

Acts 9 – Dorcas praised for benevolence .

The Generosity of the Church in Acts

Acts 10 – Cornelius described as model almsgiver.

Acts 11 – Church collects relief offering for famine.

Acts 18 – Paul is bi-vocational to make more funds available for needy.

Acts 19 – Ephesian church burns idolatrous books equivalent to 50,000 days' wages.

Acts 20 – Jesus quote, “It is more blessed to give than receive.”

Acts 24 – Allusion to Gentile offering collected for Jerusalem church.

Acts 4:32~37

All the believers were united in heart and mind. And they felt that what they owned was not their own, so they shared everything they had. The apostles testified powerfully to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God's great blessing was upon them all. There were no needy people among them, because those who owned land or houses would sell them and bring the money to the apostles to give to those in need.

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Acts 4:32~37

For instance, there was Joseph, the one the apostles nicknamed Barnabas (which means “Son of Encouragement”). He was from the tribe of Levi and came from the island of Cyprus. He sold a field he owned and brought the money to the apostles.



They felt that what they owned was not their own.

They shared everything they had.

There were no needy people among them.

Those who owned land or houses would sell them and bring the money to the apostles to give to those in need.




1. It's all God's - 100%.



Myth of the Tithe
10% is God's. The rest is mine.

- **Average American Christian gives about 2.4%.**
- **47M US citizens identify as Christians, only 1.5M tithe.**
- **5% of churchgoers tithe.**
- **If all Christians tithed, there would be an additional \$165B available.**
- **\$25B could relieve global hunger and eliminate deaths from preventable diseases within 5 years.**

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- **\$15B could solve the world's water and sanitation issues.**
 - **\$12B could end illiteracy.**
 - **\$1B would fully fund overseas mission work.**
 - **\$100B would be left for....whatever.**

10% was not the OT expectation.

- Lev 27:30-33 mandates 10% of all the produce of one's land and flocks should be given to the Lord annually.

Num 18:8-32 explains these offerings were to be given to the Levites.

10% was not the OT expectation.

- Deut 14:22-29 mandates another tithe of one's produce and flocks to be eaten at the central sanctuary annually.

If transportation proved prohibitive, this gift was exchanged for currency which was then used to purchase foodstuffs for the dwelling of the Lord.

10% was not the OT expectation.

- Deut 14:29 commands every third year, an additional tithe would go to local storage/distribution centers to be given to the “the immigrants, orphans, and widows.”
- NT scholar Craig Blomberg – “Pro-rated annually, these added up to a 23.33% gift.”
- This doesn’t take into consideration Sabbath years, jubilee, gleaning, their culture of hospitality, etc...

Matthew 23:23

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!
For you tithe mint, dill, and cummin, and have neglected
the weightier matters of the law: JUSTICE and MERCY
and FAITH. It is these you ought to have practiced
without neglecting the others.”

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God is the owner.

We are the stewards.

**He wants us to invest His wealth
in justice, mercy, and faith.**



2. The church practiced "Communalism."

Voluntary generosity based on the cross-shaped love of Jesus.

Acts 4:32b

All the believers... **shared everything they had.**

Acts 2:44

And all the believers... **shared everything they had.**

hapanta koina à → “all things in common”

1. It's all God's - 100%.

2. The Church practiced
"Communalism."

3. The wealthy sacrificed big.

Acts 4:34~37

There were no needy people among them, because those who owned land or houses would sell them and bring the money to the apostles to give to those in need. For instance, there was Joseph, the one the apostles nicknamed Barnabas (which means “Son of Encouragement”). He was from the tribe of Levi and came from the island of Cyprus. He sold a field he owned and brought the money to the apostles.

Wealthy Christians in Acts

2:1 – Whoever's house 120 people met in

4:34 – Owners of lands and houses

4:36 – Barnabas

5:1 – Ananias and Sapphira (* not a good example)

6:7 – Jerusalem priests who were converted

8:27 – Ethiopian Treasurer

9:36 – Dorcas, known for kindness and charity

Wealthy Christians in Acts

10:2 – Cornelius, God-fearing Roman centurion who gave generously to poor

12:12 – the family of John Mark who hosted many Christians in home

13:7 – Sergius Paulus, Roman Governor of Cyprus

16:14 – Lydia, Philippian business woman and head of household

16:27 – The Philippian Jailer

17:5 – Jason of Thessalonica, who houses Paul and pays his bail.



Wealthy Christians in Acts

17:12 – Many prominent Greek women

17:34 – Members of the Areopagus

17:34 – Damaris, woman of status

18:2-3 – Priscilla & Aquila, tentmakers and travelers

18:7 – Titius Justus – Opened home for gatherings to Paul

21:16 – Mnasos, Caesarean who opened home to Paul
and many companions



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1. Go online.
 2. Set up a recurring gift.
 3. Make it risky, reckless, and costly.
 4. Live open-handed with the rest.