

Guiding our children away from materialism requires that we give them a foundation of Scripture on which to base their decisions. The key Scripture for teaching our children not to be materialistic is I John 2:15: “Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” The lessons that we teach our children about materialism should include three concepts found in Scripture.

First, money and the things it buys never satisfy. A very rich King Solomon wrote, “Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless.” Ecclesiastes 5:10. And “There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother. There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth. ‘For whom am I toiling,’ he asked, ‘and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?’ This too is meaningless—a miserable business!” Ecclesiastes 4:8.

Second, earthly treasures do not have eternal value. Jesus taught the crowds on the mountain about earthly and heavenly treasures: “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Matthew 6:19-21.

Finally, a person cannot love both God and money. “No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.” Matthew 6:24. And “If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?” I John 3:17.

Those are the three foundational concepts and the Scriptures on which they are based. In the coming weeks, I will write about specific ways to teach those concepts to your children.