

The final Scriptural concept that we must teach our children about materialism is that no one can love both God and money. That is exactly what Jesus said to the crowds who came to hear him teach: “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.

Joseph, the son of Jacob, knew that he could not serve two masters. When Potiphar’s wife tempted him to commit adultery, he refused. By refusing, he knew that he was putting his job at risk. He still chose to be obedient to God’s laws. The result was that he was thrown into prison. In time, God’s plans for his life became apparent, and the end of the story was good. Genesis 39-45.

Judas, one of the twelve disciples, sold his Master for a few pieces of silver. He could not serve two masters and chose to serve money. That story ended in tragedy for Judas. Matthew 27:3-10.

Both men had to choose between money and God. The fact that they had to make that choice is an example of the truth in Matthew 6:24.

Use stories like these to spark discussions with your teens. Ask them to think of situations today when people must choose between God and money. Tell them stories from your own life and from that of acquaintances.

Teens at high school often told me about jobs where they were asked to break the law or lose their jobs. It was difficult to make that decision, especially if they had already committed their income to a car payment. In every situation that I knew about, when the teen made the right decision, God blessed them.

We must teach our teens this concept. The number of accounting scandals in big business indicates that many people have not learned this lesson. Let us raise up of a nation of godly men and women who are willing to take a stand just as Joseph did—even when it looks like the end of a job or a career. The results will be extraordinary: “You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.” Hebrews 10:36.