THE QUESTION

Where did John Chrysostom teach that wealth is given to us to help the poor?

Asked by a THF member on April 11, 2026 · published November 9, 2026, updated November 11, 2026 · 5 numbered quotations · the 9 early Christian passages and 9 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/where-did-john-chrysostom-teach-that-wealth-is-given-to-us-to-help-the-poor

The short answer *From the text: says what the passages say*

John Chrysostom says it most plainly in his Homilies on Matthew: we have wealth for this purpose, to relieve poverty, not to profit from it. In another sermon he urges people to put their wealth into the hands of the poor, and elsewhere he sets Christ's command to spare the poor against the greed of money.

LIBRARY ONLY	This study was written only from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed at the back, with a link to read it.
HOW IT WAS MADE	Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.
SHARING WITH AN AI?	Every quotation here comes from The Historic Faith's library. If you paste this study into an AI, anything it adds beyond these pages comes from that AI, not from us.

IN THIS STUDY

1	Wealth is given to relieve poverty	**2**	**4**	Giving to the poor also helps the giver	**3**
2	Keep wealth by giving it to the poor	**2**		What these passages don't tell us	**4**
3	Christ commands sharing, but money commands greed	**3**		The Sources: 9 early Christian passages and 9 Bible verses, with links	**4**

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don't republish.

POINT 1 OF 4

Wealth is given to relieve poverty

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

In a sermon on Matthew, Chrysostom names the purpose of wealth outright: it is for relieving poverty, not for making a profit from it. He scolds those who seem to help the poor while making their trouble worse. He does not forbid seeking a reward, but he says the reward should be the heavenly kingdom, not money.

1

> “For this purpose you have wealth: to relieve poverty, not to make profit from poverty. But you, under a show of helping, make the trouble worse, and sell kindness for money. Sell it, I do not forbid you, but sell it for a heavenly kingdom.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **John Chrysostom,** *Homilies on Matthew* 56 (c. 386–407 AD) **Source 3, page 4** Read it in the library ›

THF's updated English

POINT 2 OF 4

Keep wealth by giving it to the poor

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

In a sermon on Eutropius, Chrysostom asks why people chase wealth that is theirs today and someone else's tomorrow. He tells them not to bury it but to put it into the hands of the poor. He compares wealth to a wild beast that runs off when gripped, and he quotes Scripture about the one who gives to the poor.

2

> “Why do you pay court to wealth which is yours today, and tomorrow another's? Why do you court wealth which can never be held fast? Do you desire to court it? Do you desire to hold it fast? Do not bury it, but give it into the hands of the poor. For wealth is a wild beast. If it is tightly held, it runs away. If it is let loose, it remains where it is. For it is said, "He has dispersed abroad and given to the poor; his righteousness remains forever." Disperse it then, so that it may remain with you.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **John Chrysostom,** *Second Homily on Eutropius* 1 (c. 386–407 AD) **Source 6, page 4** Read it in the library ›

THF's updated English

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

POINT 3 OF 4

Christ commands sharing, but money commands greed

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Chrysostom sets Christ's commands beside the commands of money, which he calls Mammon. Christ tells us to spare the poor and empty ourselves of what we have; greed tells us to take even more. In another sermon he says Mammon makes us enemies of all, while Christ tells us to welcome and love all.

3 “Christ says, "Spare the poor." Mammon says, "Strip even the naked of the things they have." Christ says, "Empty yourself of what you have." Mammon says, "Take even what you do not have."”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **John Chrysostom,** *Homilies on Philippians* (c. 386–407 AD) **Source 5, page 4** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

4 “Mammon commands us to be enemies to all men, but Christ, on the contrary, commands us to welcome and love all.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **John Chrysostom,** *Homilies on John* 8 (c. 386–407 AD) **Source 7, page 4** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 4 OF 4

Giving to the poor also helps the giver

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

In his sermons on Titus, Chrysostom explains that Paul cared about the good of those who give, not only those who receive. In strong speech he then urges people to give up their wealth so that they may escape punishment, reading mercy to the poor as a way the giver turns from sin. So he sees giving as good for the giver's soul as well as for the poor.

5 “What do you say, Paul? Do you discourage giving to the poor? No, he answers. But I consider not only their advantage, but also the good of those who give.”

later in the same passage

“Give up your wealth, not so that others may be fed, but so that you may escape punishment.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **John Chrysostom,** *Homilies on Titus* (c. 386–407 AD) **Source 1, page 4** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

THE LIMITS

What these passages don’t tell us

- These passages do not say how much of one's wealth a Christian must give.
- They do not say that owning wealth is wrong in itself; Chrysostom focuses on how it is used.
- Chrysostom also says giving helps the giver, so these passages do not treat wealth as given only for the sake of others.
- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

The Sources

The 9 early Christian passages and 9 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages (sources 1–9, grouped by writer, earliest first), then 9 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF’s updated English unless marked “1885 English” (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). “… [continues online]” marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At **thehistoricfaith.com**, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *9 passages from 1 writer*

John Chrysostom, *c. 386–407 AD · sources 1–9*

1. *Homilies on Titus* (1885 English) **Quote 5, page 3** “as riches are an impediment, therefore he commands them to be given to the poor, instructing the soul to be pitiful and merciful, to despise wealth, and to flee from… [continues online] **read ›**
2. *Homilies on John* 73 (on point 4) even after this He has given us various ways to be reconciled to Him. The first of all these is almsgiving. "By alms and acts of faith, sins are cleansed… [continues online] **read ›**
3. *Homilies on Matthew* 56 (1885 English) **Quote 1, page 2** “to this intent you have wealth, to relieve poverty, not to make a gain of poverty… [continues online] **read ›**
4. *Homilies on Ephesians* 18 (1885 English) “Christ indeed charged us to give to the poor with this object, to make us wise in our lifetime, to induce us to despise money, to teach us to look… [continues online] **read ›**
5. *Homilies on Philippians* **Quote 3, page 3** Christ Himself has declared that this is impossible. "You cannot," He says, "serve God and Mammon," and, "No man can serve two masters," Matthew 6:24, because they give us… [continues online] **read ›**
6. *Second Homily on Eutropius* 1 **Quote 2, page 2** you seen the insignificance of human affairs? Have you seen the frailty of power? Have you seen wealth, which I have always called a runaway, and not only a runaway… [continues online] **read ›**
7. *Homilies on John* 8 **Quote 4, page 3** But he who is earnest about the one must necessarily lose the other. "You cannot serve God and Mammon," He says in Matthew 6:24, "for you must hold to… [continues online] **read ›**

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

8 *Homilies on Second Corinthians* 13 not only in the things of this life, but also in the higher things. For what leads to a kingdom, riches or poverty? Let us hear the Lord of heaven… [continues online] **read ›**

9 *Homilies on Second Corinthians* 19 (1885 English) “has scattered abroad, he has given to the poor… [continues online] **read ›**

ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *9 verses, by reference*

Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.

Exodus 29:41

Joshua 3:14

Proverbs 3:3

Ecclesiastes 9:8

Isaiah 5:4

Ezekiel 16:8 · 16:61

Luke 2:7

2 Corinthians 2:15

Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

A THF member asked “Where did John Chrysostom teach that wealth is given to us to help the poor?” on April 11, 2026. The Historic Faith answered it as a public study on November 9, 2026.

Library only. This study was written only from The Historic Faith’s library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed above, with a link to read it.

How it was made. Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith’s library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.

How to cite this study. The Historic Faith, “Where did John Chrysostom teach that wealth is given to us to help the poor?” Early Church Questions, published November 9, 2026, https://thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/where-did-john-chrysostom-teach-that-wealth-is-given-to-us-to-help-the-poor. To cite one quotation, add its number and source, for example “quote 1, source 3.”

© 2026 The Historic Faith. Selection, arrangement and editing by THF; machine-compiled text and public-domain quotations are not claimed. For personal study; please don’t republish.

THEHISTORICFAITH.COM

THE END OF THIS STUDY