

## Beware of Covetousness!

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by Wayne Goff

### **From \$7.25/hr. to \$258.5 million in one day!**

Meet Chris Shaw, the most recent Missouri lottery winner to get his dream to come true: \$258.5 million dollars won on one lottery ticket. Now all of his problems are over, right? Wrong. He was interviewed on CBS' morning show Friday and was advised to hire a lawyer and an accountant. Mr. Shaw said that he had been given that advice repeatedly. He didn't say he would listen to that sound advice.

Chris Shaw did say that before he won all that money he knew exactly how to spend it. Now that he had actually won it, he wasn't so sure. My guess is that he now will have friends and relatives he never knew he had, and they will want the same thing -- some of his money! The wise thing to do with that much money is to hire people who know how to handle large amounts of money and invest most of it for the future. He could even just receive the 30-year payout and live well on that amount for the rest of his life.

Furthermore, if that money were honestly gained I would advise one to give the "firstfruits" to the Lord from whom all blessings come. But I don't think gambling people make good Christians until they repent. And how exactly does one repent of winning \$258.5 million?!

So what will Chris do with his money? Well, he said that he was going to pay all of his utility bills, repay his friend \$1,000 for a truck he bought, repay friends and people who have helped him out, give his girlfriend's children a few bikes, skateboards, etc. He is going to take his own children to Disneyland, and then finally buy himself a hot rod, visit the dentist, and maybe get himself a fishing boat. Great! He can do all of that for a lot less than half a million dollars. So now what will he do with the rest?

You can rest assured that Uncle Sam will get his cut of at least 50%. So now we're down to roughly \$129 million. How can anyone live on such a pittance? (Yes, I jest. You and I would love to have the problem, too, wouldn't we? But think seriously about how that would affect your life.)

### **Jesus' Warning**

In Luke 12:15 Jesus said, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses." Chris Shaw is now on the fast track to find out in real time what that means! He will soon learn that such a "blessing" (?) does not come from the Lord.

How many people will Chris be able to give money to without telling other friends or family no? How much money will he give to each of them? Will that money be considered a "gift," or a "loan," and how will such money be properly taxed? Will Chris be able to handle these worries himself, or will he solicit the advice of family or professionals?

While he is driving his hot rod, pulling his new bass boat, and smiling with his new front teeth -- will he have found true happiness? Or will he begin to realize what Jesus said: that's not what life is all about. What if he loses all of that money in five or ten years? What will he think of himself? What will others think of him?

Remember that old adage: "You'd better be careful what you ask for because you just might get it?" Well, I think it will apply here. My advice to Mr. Shaw is to buy plenty of aspirin because I see a few headaches down the road. He will close his eyes at night and see hands reaching out and voices saying "Give me, give me, give me! You promised!" He will realize the heavy responsibility that comes with that much money. I hope and pray he handles it better than most of us think he will. But more importantly, I hope and pray that he finds the real reason for living: Jesus Christ! That's worth more than all the money in the world

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