

Contents

Series preface	9
Author's preface	11
Abbreviations	15
Introductory considerations	17
A sampling of statistics	17
Christian response	21
1. The Old Testament and material possessions: the historical books	33
From Eden to Sinai	33
From Sinai to Canaan: the Law of Moses	39
In the Promised Land: cycles of obedience and disobedience	50
Summary and conclusions	55
2. The Old Testament wisdom and prophetic literature	57
Poetry and wisdom literature	57
The Prophets	69
Summary and conclusions	82
Conclusions concerning the entire Old Testament and material possessions	82
3. Additional historical background: between the Testaments	87
Socio-political developments	87
The literature of the Jews	91
Other ideological developments prior to the New Testament	101
Information from the Gospels bearing on the socio-economic status of the main characters	105
Conclusions	109
4. The teaching of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels	111
The parables of Jesus	112

The remaining teachings of Jesus	127
Conclusions	145
5. Earliest Christianity	147
The epistle of James	148
The book of Acts	160
6. The life and teaching of Paul	177
Galatians	178
1 and 2 Thessalonians	179
1 Corinthians	182
2 Corinthians	190
Romans	199
The Prison Epistles	202
The Pastoral Epistles	206
Summary and conclusions	211
7. The rest of the New Testament	213
The synoptic evangelists	213
The rest of the New Testament	228
Summary and conclusions	239
8. Summary, conclusions and applications	241
Summary	241
Additional conclusions	243
Applications	247
Bibliography	255
Index of authors	293