All churches and pastors need money to fund ministries and salaries. Yet most pastors also shy away from preaching on the subject, lest it cause offence.

Jesus spent a great deal of time talking about money, so Wellington author Wayne Kirkland thinks we should do the same. He takes up the challenge and does it very well in the best book I have read on how Christians should approach money, wealth and poverty.

He takes a logical path starting, as you would expect, with a discussion of what the Bible has to say about money (quite a lot) and whether this matches up with our previous assumptions. Then he looks at money in a cultural context, discussing topics that include the impact of capitalism, consumerism, the pursuit of happiness, credit and affluence.

The final part of his book looks at the alternative attitudes we as Christians should have. Along the way, Wayne is not afraid to tackle controversial topics such as tithing and prosperity doctrine.

Wayne challenges Christians to faithfully pursue the values of the Kingdom of God and, in so doing, create a counter culture that rejects consumerism and instead follows the dream of ‘shalom’ – a world living in harmony where there is enough for everyone.

The book comes with some questions at the end of each chapter that you can get stuck into around the dinner table or at your weekly church home group.

_*This review originally published in New Zealand Baptist (April, 2012)_

*JUST MONEY: The Vision of Shalom* (NavPress 2012), By Wayne Kirkland.