

MONEY

FRIEND OR FOE?



BY RICHARD ELWELL



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ULTIMATE OUTCOMES

WHY IDEAS MATTER.

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Ultimate Outcomes is a non-profit organization founded on the fruit of the 30 plus years Pastor Richard Elwell and his wife Marty spent in church ministry, developing studies that would help their congregants discern and apply God's truth. Richard was a firm believer that the outcomes in our lives are a result of what ideas we choose to believe and follow.

After Richard died of a rare liver disease in 2018, Ultimate Outcomes has taken on the mission of sharing the Elwells' insights with all who desire to live a better life and are willing to look to God for understanding of the way they are to go. To that end, it makes available for free download on its website: Bible studies, Sunday school curriculum, and sermon podcasts.

Richard earned a Master of Divinity degree from the International School of Theology and was the founding and senior pastor at University Park Church, San Bernardino, CA for over 30 years. His passion was always to make God's truth understandable and applicable to all who hunger for it. Marty holds a Master's Degree in Teaching Processes from Claremont Graduate University. Her passion has been to train women and provide curriculum for parents who want to raise their children up in the ways of the Lord.



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WHAT IS MONEY?

INTRODUCTION



THE HISTORY OF MONEY

The use of money began about 1600 BC. For the first 1,000 years money was exclusively in the form of precious metals (gold and silver). The Babylonians developed exchange rates, i.e. 15 silver shekels = one ox = two tons of barley. The precious metals were used as a medium of exchange; the ox and the barley were a straight barter (the exchange of goods).

The first coins are thought to have developed 600 years before Christ in Lydia which is located on the coast of the Aegean Sea and is now part of Western Turkey. Lydia was conquered by the Persians who developed the use of coins as currency.

Paper money was developed in China during the 600's AD. Marco Polo wrote about it in his book about his travels, but most Europeans couldn't understand how a piece of paper could be valuable. In the 1600's, European banks began to issue paper bills (bank notes) that could be exchanged for gold or silver coins on deposit in the bank.

What is the advantage that was gained in the use of precious metals as a medium of exchange over a straight barter?

Easily transportable, non-perishable (non-degradable), standard value, flexibility in buying (don't have to have what the other person wants).

Money is a means to transfer value more efficiently; it is an abstract representation of value.

Paper money works abstractly on the same principle as precious metal; its value is designated by its denomination. Under the gold standard it could be redeemed for precious metal of the same value. Once the United States went off the gold standard, money lost its inherent value. Now its value is assigned by government fiat, which means the government assigns its value because it says that it must be accepted for trade.

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES



THE USES OF MONEY

Ezekial 27:12,18

¹²Tarshish did business with you because of your great wealth of goods; they exchanged silver, iron, tin and lead for your merchandise.

¹⁸Damascus, because of your many products and great wealth of goods, did business with you in wine from Helbon and wool from Zahar.

1. Why did Tarshish and Damascus do business with the Israelites?

They had a wealth of goods to exchange that the others wanted. An expectation of getting money must be based on having something of value to exchange.

2. The Uses of Money
 - a. **Medium of exchange:** Money is accepted for goods and services and makes trading things of value easier.
 - b. **Unit of account:** Money is used to state the price (value) of goods and services.
 - c. **Storage of wealth:** Money is a means of saving for future purchases.

3. If money is just a medium of exchange, how is wealth increased?
You make what you have to trade more valuable. Increase the value of what others want to buy in terms of quality of goods and/or services (labor).



MYTHS ABOUT MONEY

Below each passage summarize how the Scripture counters the stated myth about money.

1. Money is the root of all evil.

1 Timothy 6:10

¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

The love of money is the problem, not the money itself. The pursuit of money gives rise to a myriad of problems. Money is just a medium of exchange.

2. Poverty is spiritual.

Deuteronomy 28:47-48a

⁴⁷Because you did not serve the LORD your God joyfully and gladly in the time of prosperity, ⁴⁸therefore in hunger and thirst, in nakedness and dire poverty, you will serve the enemies the LORD sends against you.

Proverbs 28:21

²¹To show partiality is not good-- yet a man will do wrong for a piece of bread.

There is no spiritual merit to poverty; it can even be a sign of God's discipline. (The verse from Deuteronomy was God's discipline for a lack of gratitude and an acknowledgement of where things come from. There is the threat in poverty that you will do something that dishonors God.

3. Riches are evidence of God's blessing.

Ecclesiastes 5:12

¹²The sleep of a laborer is sweet, whether he eats little or much, but the abundance of a rich man permits him no sleep.

A person who can't sleep isn't blessed. A rich man worries about his money, thinking it is the source of his security.

4. Rich people are better than poor people.

Revelation 2:9 (Warning to the church at Smyrna) – *⁹I know your afflictions and your poverty--yet you are rich! I know the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.*

Revelation 3:17 (Warning to the church at Pergamum) – *¹⁷You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.*

God sees some poor people as rich and some rich people as poor. He looks at the person's heart (character).

5. Money problems are the evidence of sin or a lack of faith.

The Apostle Paul said the following about his financial condition:

1 Corinthians 4:11

¹¹To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are in rags, we are brutally treated, we are homeless.

2 Corinthians 11:27-27

²⁷I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked.

Paul was a man of great faith but he lived in poverty much of the time. His money problems weren't evidence of sin or a lack of faith. He was dedicated to doing God's work; he wasn't looking for material profit.

6. Money solves all problems.

Psalm 49:16-20

¹⁶Do not be overawed when a man grows rich, when the splendor of his house increases; ¹⁷for he will take nothing with him when he dies, his splendor will not descend with him. ¹⁸Though while he lived he counted himself blessed-- and men praise you when you prosper-- ¹⁹he will join the generation of his fathers, who will never see the light of life. ²⁰A man who has riches without understanding is like the beasts that perish.

Money doesn't solve our spiritual problems. Riches without true wisdom isn't worth anything. You end up with nothing.

7. Everything has a price.

Acts 8:18 -23

¹⁸When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money ¹⁹and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

²⁰Peter answered: "May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! ²¹You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. ²²Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. ²³For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin."

The gifts from God are priceless. Money has nothing to do with the things that have eternal value. You can't buy the things of God.

THINKING IT THROUGH


1. What is a correct view of money?

It is a medium of exchange, abstract system of barter. It is nothing more than a symbolic representation of value. It is temporal. It doesn't have eternal value.

2. How does a correct view of money help us avoid poor money decisions and make good decisions instead?

Money doesn't control us; we control it and use it for our purposes. We weigh the real value or cost of something. You would see gambling for what it is (not producing) and wouldn't buy hope (advertising gimmicks).

3. How does the correct view of money contrast with the way most people view money?
Most people think that money itself has life or inherent value, that it will make them happy.
With that view people seek after the money, not the change of self.

 **Remember:** If an opportunity isn't a fair exchange, avoid it. Questions to ask to make good money decisions are: How much would I pay someone else to do this work? How many hours would I have to work to buy this?

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE ARE FREE

Isaiah 55:1-2

"Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. ²Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare."


1. What does money have value for?
Trading for material goods, exchange of services, maintaining physical life.
2. What doesn't money have value for?
The eternal things, what really matters, the things of and for the soul which truly satisfy. Having money can actually take our eyes off of what has true value.

HAVING MONEY DOESN'T ENSURE CONTENTMENT

Ecclesiastes 6:1-6

¹I have seen another evil under the sun, and it weighs heavily on men: ²God gives a man wealth, possessions and honor, so that he lacks nothing his heart desires, but God does not enable him to enjoy them, and a stranger enjoys them instead. This is meaningless, a grievous evil. ³A man may have a hundred children and live many years; yet no matter how long he lives, if he cannot enjoy his prosperity and does not receive proper burial, I say that a stillborn child is better off than he. ⁴It comes without meaning, it departs in darkness, and in darkness its name is shrouded. ⁵Though it never saw the sun or knew anything, it has more rest than does that man-- ⁶even if he lives a thousand years twice over but fails to enjoy his prosperity. Do not all go to the same place?

What enables a person to enjoy prosperity?
Being in right relationship to God.

 **Note:** If prosperity ensured contentment, then Americans would be the most content people on earth. Gratitude is what ensures contentment, not money or possessions.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

PERSONAL EVALUATION

1. If you want to increase your income, which question are you most likely to ask?
 - a. How can I get paid more?
 - b. How can I make what I am offering worth more?

2. My evaluation of my view of money is:



PRAYER

Thank God for his provision and all that he has done for you. Pray that he would help you uncover wrong ideas that you hold about money and see how those ideas adversely affect your life.

THE BENEFITS & DANGERS OF MONEY

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

1. What is money?

A medium of exchange, it makes the exchange of goods easier. It is a representation of the value of what you have to trade.

2. What is the outcome of having a correct understanding of money?

We make better choices on how to spend our money.

LESSON FOCUS

Money could be likened to the power of energy. As with all forms of power it can be helpful or harmful depending on how it is used.

Example: Natural gas can either heat your house or cause it to burn down.

There can be both a danger in wealth and in poverty.

Proverbs 30:8-9

⁸Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. ⁹Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, 'Who is the LORD?' Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God.

1. What is the danger in wealth?

You might disown God and put your trust in your riches instead of God.

2. What is the danger in poverty?

You might dishonor God and do something against God's will.

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

THE BENEFITS OF MONEY

Under each Scripture, write what the stated benefit of money is.

1. **Proverbs 3:9-10**

⁹Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; ¹⁰then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

You can give to God and honor him, gift of service to God.

2. **Proverbs 10:15**

¹⁵The wealth of the rich is their fortified city, but poverty is the ruin of the poor.

It provides a certain degree of physical security. It protects against disaster like the wall of a city.

3. **Proverbs 22:7**

⁷The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.

It lends authority, gives the power to buy, an ability to purchase labor.

4. **Deuteronomy 28:12**

¹²The LORD will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none.

It is a provision from God. He gives us the capacity to work and make money and then make our money work for us. We are able to lend to others.

5. **Luke 16:10-12**

¹⁰Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. ¹¹So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? ¹²And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?

It is a test of faithfulness, a demonstration of trustworthy character.

6. **2 Corinthians 9:10-11**

¹⁰Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

You can be generous which leads to blessing. You have to have money in order to give it.

7. **1 Timothy 6:17-19**

¹⁷Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. ¹⁸Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. ¹⁹In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

You can use it to lay up eternal reward through being generous and willing to share.



THE DANGERS OF MONEY

Under each Scripture, write what the stated danger of money is.

1. **Ezekiel 28:4-8**

⁴By your wisdom and understanding you have gained wealth for yourself and amassed gold and silver in your treasuries. ⁵By your great skill in trading you have increased your wealth, and because of your wealth your heart has grown proud.

⁶"Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: "Because you think you are wise, as wise as a god, ⁷I am going to bring foreigners against you, the most ruthless of nations; they will draw their swords against your beauty and wisdom and pierce your shining splendor. ⁸They will bring you down to the pit, and you will die a violent death in the heart of the seas.

It can develop human arrogance that leads to destruction.

2. **Proverbs 11:4**

⁴Wealth is worthless in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.

Psalm 49:5-9

⁵Why should I fear when evil days come, when wicked deceivers surround me-- ⁶those who trust in their wealth and boast of their great riches? ⁷No man can redeem the life of another or give to God a ransom for him-- ⁸the ransom for a life is costly, no payment is ever enough-- ⁹that he should live on forever and not see decay.

It is false security. It can't save you. You can't buy your way into heaven.

3. **Ecclesiastes 5:10**

Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless.

The love of money can cause addiction, slavery, gaining control over you.

4. **Matthew 13:22**

²²The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful.

Worrying about it can keep you from true blessing and increase.

5. **Matthew 28:11-15a**

¹¹While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. ¹²When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, ¹³telling them, "You are to say, "His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep." ¹⁴If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." ¹⁵So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed.

It can corrupt character. It can be the cause of dishonesty and a lack of integrity.

6. **Proverbs 28:22**

²²A stingy man is eager to get rich and is unaware that poverty awaits him.

It can cause greed that leads to poverty.

7. James 5:1-5

¹Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming upon you. ²Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. ³Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days. ⁴Look! The wages you failed to pay the workmen who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. ⁵You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter.

It can bring condemnation, eternal judgement because of exploitation and lack of concern for welfare of others.

THINKING IT THROUGH



CONTRASTING THE BENEFITS AND DANGERS OF MONEY

In the boxes write in each benefit of money as well as its corresponding danger.

	THE BENEFITS OF MONEY	THE CORRESPONDING DANGERS OF MONEY
1.	Can use it to honor God.	It can cause human arrogance.
2.	It can provide physical security.	It can cause false security that keeps you out of heaven.
3.	It lends authority, gives power to purchase labor.	It can cause slavery, addiction.
4.	It's God's provision to us that we might be generous to others.	It can block true provision.
5.	It can be used to demonstrate trustworthy character.	It can corrupt character..
6.	It enables generosity that leads to blessing.	It can cause greed that leads to poverty.
7.	It can be used to gain eternal reward.	It can bring eternal judgment.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS



GAINING A RIGHT PERSPECTIVE

1 Timothy 6:6-10

⁶But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. ⁸But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. ⁹People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

1. What is the equation for great gain? (What plus what = great gain?) (vs. 6)
Godliness + contentment = great gain
(character + gratitude)
2. What is the consequence of wanting to get rich? (vs. 9)
You fall into temptation and a trap. It can cause you to leave the faith.
3. What is your faith in if you are eager to get rich?
Money.
4. What will be the result if you put your faith in money? (vs. 9)
Ruin and destruction. The love of money doesn't take us where we want to go.



HAVING MONEY DOESN'T ENSURE CONTENTMENT

Based on the Scriptures and principles from the lesson, how can we make sure that our use of money is beneficial and not harmful?

We need to have a right view of money. Money is just a medium of exchange; it is not something to worship or pursue. Provision comes from God and is to be used God's way.



ELWELL'S AXIOMS OF POWER AND DESIGN

Axiom 1 – The release of power is never neutral; it is either productive or destructive.

Example: You can't have a release of nuclear power and have nothing happen. The nuclear power of a power plant is productive power; the nuclear power of a bomb is destructive.

How does this axiom apply to money?

A right view and use of money is productive. A wrong view and use of money can be destructive.

Axiom 2 – Power that is submitted to design is productive; power that is not submitted to design is unproductive.

Example: If gas is poured over the engine and ignited rather than put into the gas tank, it would be unproductive rather than productive.

How does this axiom apply to money?

Money submitted to God's design is a blessing, otherwise it is harmful.

Axiom 3 – The degree of the productivity of power is proportionate to the efficiency of the design to which it is submitted.

Example: The use of pulleys makes the same amount of energy more productive.

How does this axiom apply to money?

Money submitted to right design will be more productive.

Axiom 4 – The exercise of power is only good when it is submitted to a good design.

Example: Hitler had power but he did not use his power for good; it was destructive rather than productive.

How does this axiom apply to money?

Money only benefits a person when it is used in a way that pleases God. There's a lot of money in pornography but it is not good.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

PERSONAL EVALUATION

1. Is the way you manage money honoring to God and beneficial to your family? In what ways?
2. What is evidence that you are submitting your money to God's design?
3. What is evidence that you are not submitting your money to God's design?

PRAYER

Pray that you would see clearly the benefits and dangers of money and that your heart and your management of your income would be submitted to God and his design.

PRINCIPLES OF INCREASE & DECREASE

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

1. What is money?
A medium of exchange, a representation of value. It makes the trading of goods and labor easier.
2. How is money likened to energy in the Axioms of Power and Design?
Money functions under the same principle as power. If it is functioning under a good design, it is productive, if not, it is destructive.

LESSON FOCUS

This lesson will look at biblical principles of increasing and decreasing wealth.

1. What is the common promise of infomercials on making money?
You will get a return on your money that is disproportionate to what you put in.
2. How does the false promise of infomercials violate the definition of money just being a medium of exchange?
It's not an equal exchange. Someone will give you something of greater value in exchange for something of lesser value.

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

PRINCIPLES OF INCREASE AND DECREASE

Summarize the principles of increase and decrease below the Scriptures.

PRINCIPLE ONE

Proverbs 10:4a

Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth.

Proverbs 14:23

All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty.

Proverbs 18:9

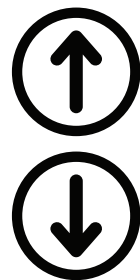
One who is slack in his work is brother to one who destroys.

Principle of Increase: **Hard work brings increase.**

Principle of Decrease: **Laziness leads to decrease.**

How do the moneymaking infomercials contradict biblical principles of increase?

With little or no effort you can make lots of money.



PRINCIPLE TWO

Proverbs 13:11

Dishonest money dwindles away, but he who gathers money little by little makes it grow.

Proverbs 20:21

An inheritance quickly gained at the beginning will not be blessed at the end.

Principle of Increase: Money increases little by little.

Principle of Decrease: Quick gain can lead to loss. Easy come, easy go.

How do the moneymaking infomercials contradict biblical principles of increase?

They are based on quick gain, fast fortune.

PRINCIPLE THREE

Proverbs 14:4

Where there are no oxen, the manger is empty, but from the strength of an ox comes an abundant harvest.

Proverbs 21:5

The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty.

Proverbs 28:19

He who works his land will have abundant food, but the one who chases fantasies will have his fill of poverty.

Ecclesiastes 10:10

If the ax is dull and its edge unsharpened, more strength is needed but skill will bring success.

Principle of Increase: Good planning, the right tools and greater skill lead to increase (something that amplifies the labor like an ox or sharp ax).

Principle of Decrease: Chasing fantasies leads to decrease.

How do the beliefs of people who chase fantasies contradict these scriptures?

I can make my vision come true regardless of the evidence or reality. People who are chasing a dream aren't inclined to work hard.

PRINCIPLE FOUR

Proverbs 22:9

A generous man will himself be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor.

Proverbs 28:27

He who gives to the poor will lack nothing, but he who closes his eyes to them receives many curses.

Proverbs 28:22

A stingy man is eager to get rich and is unaware that poverty awaits him.

Principle of Increase: Generosity is related to prosperity.

Principle of Decrease: Stinginess is related to poverty, not wealth.

What are some contemporary ideas that contradict what these scriptures say?

Pie Idea - I only have so much and if I give some of it away then I will have less.

Generosity - Based on the belief that you can't out give God (his shovel is bigger).

PRINCIPLE FIVE

Proverbs 3:9-10

Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

Proverbs 22:4

Humility and the fear of the LORD bring wealth and honor and life.

Proverbs 21:17

He who loves pleasure will become poor; whoever loves wine and oil will never be rich.

Principle of Increase: Honoring and fearing God (giving God what is his) promotes prosperity.

Principle of Decrease: Chasing pleasure (putting yourself first, not God) promotes poverty.

What does this contrast have to say to those who believe godliness is boring?

Godliness is prosperous and satisfying. Chasing pleasure is an empty promise.
It will lead to a desert, not an oasis.

PRINCIPLE SIX

Proverbs 10:2-3

*Ill-gotten treasures are of no value, but righteousness delivers from death.
The LORD does not let the righteous go hungry but he thwarts the craving of the wicked.*

Proverbs 13:11a

Dishonest money dwindles away.

Proverbs 20:17

Food gained by fraud tastes sweet to a man, but he ends up with a mouth full of gravel.

Principle of Increase: Pursing righteousness (becoming a better person) promotes increase.

Principle of Decrease: Ill-gotten gain promotes poverty. Dishonest gain brings decrease.

What mistake do we make when we envy the wealth of the wicked?

We don't see the ultimate outcome. We miss what is or real value (God and his blessings).

THINKING IT THROUGH

In the boxes write in each principle of increase as well as its corresponding principle of decrease.

Principles of Increase (What promotes prosperity)	Principles of Decrease (What leads to poverty)
1. Hard work	1. Laziness
2. Patience in saving	2. Seeking quick gain
3. Managed energy and good planning	3. Chasing fantasies
4. Generosity	4. Stinginess
5. Honoring and fearing God	5. Pursuing pleasure
6. Pursuing righteousness	6. Ill-gotten or dishonest gain

What is so ironic about the principles of increase and decrease?

They are counter-intuitive. Those who love money are the most likely to end up in poverty. They are led to do the things that lead to decrease. Faithfulness is what we need to seek after.



Note: In terms of the infomercials, following the promise of easy money is what will lead to poverty. Real increase comes when money isn't the focus, wisdom is. Real prosperity never comes when prosperity is what you are seeking.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS



WHAT IS REALLY VALUABLE?

Proverbs 3:13-18

¹³Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding, ¹⁴for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold. ¹⁵She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her. ¹⁶Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. ¹⁷Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace. ¹⁸She is a tree of life to those who embrace her; those who lay hold of her will be blessed.

What is the perspective of this passage on money?

Wisdom is better than money as it brings true riches. Wisdom has a multitude of benefits, both temporal and eternal.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE



PERSONAL EVALUATION

Circle the statements below that most closely represent your beliefs.

1. I believe:

- a. With enough money all my needs would be met.
- b. If I put God first he will meet all my needs.

2. I believe:

- a. People who are prosperous are just lucky. They were at the right place at the right time.
- b. People who are prosperous have performed a valuable service that others are willing to pay for.

3. When thinking about how I could be better off, I would more likely be thinking:

- a. How I can make the most money, the fastest way possible?
- b. How can my service to others become more valuable?

4. I would tend to:

- a. Envy those who have become rich through illegal or immoral means.
- b. Rather be poor than face God and have to answer for ill-gotten gain.

5. I am more interested in:

- a. How much I can make and consume now.
- b. My imperishable, eternal reward.

My evaluation of the way I view money is:



PRAYER

Pray for greater understanding of God's principles of money and its management. Pray that you would not be taken in by the empty promises of the world and its views.

BORROWING & LENDING MONEY

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

1. What is money?
A medium of exchange, a representation of value which makes trading easier, portable value.
2. Is money evil? **No** Explain.
It's just a medium of exchange. A wrong view of it can lead to doing evil.
3. What are some principles of wealth increase?
Hard work, patience, managed energy, good planning, generosity, honoring and fearing God, pursuing righteousness.

LESSON FOCUS

This lesson will focus on the principles of borrowing and lending. Is all debt on which a person owes interest the same?

No, some can lead to increase (house) but most will lead to decrease.

THE TWO CATEGORIES OF DEBT:

1. Consumer Debt: Debt that is created in the purchase of consumable goods and services and depreciating assets (ones that decrease in value).
2. Capitalization Debt: Debt that is created in the purchase of appreciating assets (ones that increase in value).

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES



OLD TESTAMENT PRINCIPLES ON CONSUMER DEBT

1. **Proverbs 22:7**
The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.

What does this passage say about debt?

Debt puts you in a position of servitude (indentured servant). You have to pay the debt and gain no personal benefit. Buying on credit costs you two to five times more than paying with cash.

How does that differ from the way most people view credit cards?

Credit cards are promoted and viewed as a way to freedom, to be able to do what you want, whenever you want.

2. **Psalm 37:21**

²¹The wicked borrow and do not repay, but the righteous give generously.

What does this passage say about debt?

It is wrong to renege on a debt (declare bankruptcy).

How does that differ from the current view of bankruptcy?

The world thinks if you get in over your head you can always declare bankruptcy.

The Bible tells us it is wrong not to fulfill our obligations.

3. **Exodus 22:25**

²⁵If you lend money to one of my people among you who is needy, do not be like a moneylender; charge him no interest.

What does this passage say about debt and lending?

Don't lend to get rich. Lending was to help someone get on his feet. God doesn't like usury (charging exorbitant interest). He doesn't want people to be put into slavery.

How does that differ from the current view of lending practices?

Banks and credit card companies are lending to make lots of money. Credit card interest can often go as high as 20%. That would be considered usury.

4. **Leviticus 25:35-36**

³⁵If one of your countrymen becomes poor and is unable to support himself among you, help him as you would an alien or a temporary resident, so he can continue to live among you. ³⁶Do not take interest of any kind from him, but fear your God, so that your countryman may continue to live among you.

What does this passage say about debt?

Lending is intended to help liberate, not to add to an inescapable burden. Lending shouldn't oppress; it should be done to increase capacity to earn.

How does that differ from the current view of debt?

People are being lent money for wants, not needs, and become enslaved.

5. **Deuteronomy 15:1-11**

¹At the end of every seven years you must cancel debts. ²This is how it is to be done: Every creditor shall cancel the loan he has made to his fellow Israelite. He shall not require payment from his fellow Israelite or brother, because the LORD's time for canceling debts has been proclaimed. ³You may require payment from a foreigner, but you must cancel any debt your brother owes you. ⁴However, there should be no poor among you, for in the land the LORD your God is giving you to possess as your inheritance, he will richly bless you, ⁵if only you fully obey the LORD your God and are careful to follow all these commands I am giving you today. ⁶For the LORD your God will bless you as he has promised, and you will lend to many nations but will borrow from none. You will rule over many nations but none will rule over you.

⁷If there is a poor man among your brothers in any of the towns of the land that the LORD your God is giving you, do not be hardhearted or tightfisted toward your poor brother. ⁸Rather be openhanded and freely lend him whatever he needs. ⁹Be careful not to harbor this wicked thought: "The seventh year, the year for canceling debts, is near," so that you do not show ill will toward your needy brother and give him nothing. He may then appeal to the LORD against you, and you will be found guilty of sin. ¹⁰Give generously to him and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to. ¹¹There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land."

What does this passage say about debt and lending?

God doesn't want his people to be in debt. He provides for his people if they follow his way. As lenders we are to be open-handed. God will bless the generous.

How does that differ from the current view of debt?

Debt is promoted as a way to the good life. It is seeking provision apart from God.

6. Deuteronomy 24:6

Do not take a pair of millstones--not even the upper one--as security for a debt, because that would be taking a man's livelihood as security.



Note: Millstones were used in grinding grain into flour. They were essential for the daily provision of consumable food.

What does this passage say about debt and lending?

Don't take a man's means of production or he'll never get out of debt.

How does that differ from the current view of debt and lending?

Lending institutions encourage debt, but when a person is over his head and can't meet obligations, they repossess or evict. There are cash advance businesses that actually let a person borrow on their future earnings.



CAPITALIZATION DEBT



Note: In this passage money is being used as an illustration of a larger principle. It does, however, also reflect the importance of increasing the value of what you have been given.

Matthew 25:14-30

¹⁴Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. ¹⁵To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. ¹⁶The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. ¹⁷So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. ¹⁸But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

¹⁹After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. ²⁰The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.'

²¹His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

²²The man with the two talents also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more.'

²³His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

²⁴Then the man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. ²⁵So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

²⁶His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? ²⁷Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.'

²⁸'Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. ²⁹For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. ³⁰And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

1. What is the nature of the debt in this passage?
The master gave them money for the purpose of bringing increase (capitalization). He wanted them to make the money more valuable, to manage it in such a way as to bring increase.
2. What are some of the examples of this kind of debt today?
Home mortgages, bonds (government borrowing for public works).
3. Why is paying interest on this kind of debt different from paying interest on consumer debt?
It is bringing increase. It is actually a service to you as it has long term benefit. Consumer debt brings decrease.

THINKING IT THROUGH



CONSUMER DEBT

1. What is the value of consumer debt?
There is no value to it. It leads to slavery. It is used to indulge fleshly desires. It is a means for a lender to make money.
2. When are you most likely to incur consumer debt?
When you think you deserve more than what God has provided. When you look at what you don't have rather than being grateful for what you do have. Also, when you have an emergency you aren't prepared for.
3. What is a common motivation for getting into consumer debt?
Thinking you deserve something or having a certain thing will make you happier or make life easier. Wanting instant gratification. Lacking self-control.



STEPS TO CONSUMER DEBT REDUCTION

1. Don't incur any more debt.
Cut up your credit cards.
2. Establish a budget and follow it.
Set spending limits and keep an accounting of money coming in and going out.
3. Create a savings fund for emergencies.
This should be part of your monthly budget.
4. Develop and maintain a debt repayment plan.
After necessities this should be the highest priority, preempting other spending.
5. After your debt is paid off, begin a savings and investment plan.
Debt retirement should be the highest priority.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS



LENDING WITH AN ETERNAL RETURN

Luke 6:35

³⁵But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.

1. As a lender what should your attitude be?
If I need to lend, it should be as a gift. I shouldn't expect repayment.
2. What will be the outcome of that attitude?
There will be eternal rewards.

Proverbs 19:17

¹⁷He who is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward him for what he has done.

1. What are we doing when we are kind to the poor?
We are lending to the Lord.
2. What does being kind to the poor entail?
Helping meet their needs and become productive. Teaching them what they need to know to become better at utilizing money and resources.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE



PERSONAL EVALUATION

Total up the amount of money you pay on the interest serving your consumer debt. Divide the amount by your hourly wage. The result will tell you how many hours a month you serve as an indentured servant to the lending institution.



PERSONAL APPLICATION

Establish a plan to get out of consumer debt and determine not to incur any more consumer debt. Examine your motivation for getting into debt in the first place.



PRAYER

Pray that you would learn to be content with what you have and not borrow to buy unnecessary things. Pray that you would clearly recognize that consumer debt brings servitude, not freedom.

SAVING & INVESTING MONEY

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

1. How does a correct view of money ensure that money will be a blessing and not harmful?
If we see it for what it is (medium of exchange) it won't have power over us, we will see it just as a tool to making trading goods and storing value easier.
2. What are some of the principles of increasing or decreasing our wealth?
Hard work, good planning and managed energy, generosity, patience, honoring and fearing God, and righteous character bring increase. Laziness, seeking quick gain, pursuing pleasure, and stinginess bring decrease.
3. What is the relationship between debt and slavery?
You indenture yourself to pay the interest on the debt.

LESSON FOCUS

The focus of this lesson is on saving and investing money without becoming overly focused on money. Money is a means to save and store for the future.

What is a balanced biblical view of saving and investing?

You need to demonstrate wisdom in saving without putting your faith in your savings account and without making saving the highest priority in your life.

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES



A BALANCED VIEW OF SAVING AND INVESTING

Summarize the biblical principles under the Scriptures.

1. Principle of Saving and Investing

Proverbs 6:6-8

Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest.

Proverbs 21:20

In the house of the wise are stores of choice food and oil, but a foolish man devours all he has.

You put aside for the future out of the abundance of the moment. You don't spend all you have; you make provision for lean times.

Counter-balancing View

Proverbs 28:30

³⁰A faithful man will be richly blessed, but one eager to get rich will not go unpunished.

Proverbs 21:21

²¹He who pursues righteousness and love finds life, prosperity and honor.

Keep a proper perspective. Focus on what is good and right, not the money. You save for provision (own children and the future) but not for money's sake.

2. Principle of Saving and Investing

Psalm 17:14b

^{14b}You still the hunger of those you cherish; their sons have plenty, and they store up wealth for their children.

1 Timothy 5:8

⁸If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Providing for our families is a demonstration of faith. Saving and investing is providing for their future. We have to look beyond ourselves and sacrifice out of love for others.

Counter-balancing View

Luke 12:13-21

¹³Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

¹⁴Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?" ¹⁵Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

¹⁶And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop.

¹⁷He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'

¹⁸"Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹And I'll say to myself, 'You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.'"

²⁰"But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'

Don't put more value on saving and investing than it really has. It can't be your primary pursuit. Thinking too much about it is an empty pursuit.

3. Principle of Saving and Investing

Matthew 25:14-29

¹⁴Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. ¹⁵To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. ¹⁶The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. ¹⁷So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. ¹⁸But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

¹⁹"After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. ²⁰The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.'

²¹"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

²²"The man with the two talents also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more.'

²³"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

²⁴"Then the man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. ²⁵So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

²⁶"His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? ²⁷Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.'

²⁸" 'Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. ²⁹For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. ³⁰And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Our use of money is a demonstration of our faithfulness to God. Faithful money management operates under the same principles for faithful living. We are given to bring increase. We need to put our money (lives) to good use and manage it well for God's purposes.

Counter-balancing View

Matthew 6:19-21

¹⁹"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

It is best to save heavenly treasure. Every act of godly service has eternal value (real savings account). Pursuit of money takes away from real treasure.

THINKING IT THROUGH



A PROPER VIEW OF SAVING AND INVESTING

1. What is a balanced view of saving and investing?

It needs to be submitted to God's design. It is wise to bring increase and store provision (invest and save), if we view it properly, not putting undue value on it and letting it steal from our eternal investment.

2. Storing up wealth should never be our chief priority. However, wise money management involves saving and investing. It is foolish to spend too much or too little attention on money management. How much time is necessary to spend on managing money without money becoming life's chief priority?

At first more because you need to come up with a wise plan, but then it should become automatic (doesn't need much thought).



BASICS OF INVESTING WHAT HAS BEEN SAVED

1. What is investing?

Putting money saved to good use to bring increase for future benefit. Making your money work for you. A good investment brings a 7-10% annual return.

2. When should you start investing?

You should always put aside some of your income for savings. When you have enough savings reserve then you can start investing the surplus. It is fruitless to invest until you're out of debt. Debt reduction would save 12% or more annually. You also must study and gain knowledge before you invest.

3. What is the essence of the following ownership investments?

Real Estate – Putting money into appreciating asset, buying a house is most basic real estate investment. You need to know and understand market to invest more.

Stocks – Mutual funds/buying into a company that produces a diversification product that makes something of value. Need to know about company (price/earnings ratio), don't buy speculative hope.

Small Business – Being your own boss. It is dependent upon own skills and capital. Must have a skill or ability to invest besides money. Most small businesses fail in five years due to a lack of capital, understanding of market, and planning.

4. What is the essence of the following lending investments?

Savings Account – You are letting someone use your money. Usually done through a bank safe investment but lower returns (divide interest rate by 72, that gives years it will take your money to double). Higher interest rates are given for certificate of deposit (CD's), money market accounts.

Bonds – You are the bank, lending money to the government or a company, bonds are at a rate which is an indication of the security of the investment, possibility of collapse.



CONCLUDING THOUGHTS



MONEY GROWS LITTLE BY LITTLE

Proverbs 13:11

¹¹Dishonest money dwindles away, but he who gathers money little by little makes it grow.

How does being eager to get rich affect investment decisions?

You will make poor money decisions that will cause you to be poor. You won't have the patience to increase wealth the way God says to, through hard work and frugality.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE



PERSONAL EVALUATION

In the following statements, circle the one which most accurately describes you.

1. Savings
 - a. I have money set aside for the future and regularly add to my savings.
 - b. I live month by month.
2. Focus of work
 - a. I work to provide adequately for my family.
 - b. The focus of my work is to accumulate more money and/or material possessions.
3. Money management
 - a. The way I manage money is a demonstration of my love for and obedience to God.
 - b. My management of money reflects self-interest.

My evaluation of myself is:



PRAYER

Pray that you would put a proper, biblical focus on saving and investing money and honor God in the way you manage your money.

CHARITABLE GIVING

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

1. How does a balanced view of money protect us?
Keeps us from chasing fantasies. We hold it in right perspective; we neither worship it nor waste it. It holds a right place.
2. How does a correct understanding of debt protect us?
We will avoid consumer debt and keep out of voluntary slavery.
3. How does a balanced view of investing protect us?
It allows us to be blessed with gradual gain without being in the grip of greed. Wise stewardship without being consumed.

LESSON FOCUS

This lesson will focus on charitable giving. What is a willingness or unwillingness to give a reflection of?
Devotion to God or lack there of. Demonstration of what we love (where our heart is).

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES



OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES ON TITHING

Summarize the principles of tithing in the following passages.

Genesis 28:20-22

²⁰Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and will watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear ²¹so that I return safely to my father's house, then the LORD will be my God ²²and this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God's house, and of all that you give me I will give you a tenth."

Principle: Tithing demonstrates a recognition that all that I have comes from God.

Leviticus 27:30-33

³⁰"A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD. ³¹If a man redeems any of his tithe, he must add a fifth of the value to it. ³²The entire tithe of the herd and flock--every tenth animal that passes under the shepherd's rod--will be holy to the LORD. ³³He must not pick out the good from the bad or make any substitution. If he does make a substitution, both the animal and its substitute become holy and cannot be redeemed."

Principle: A tenth of all income belongs to God. If you pick and choose what to give then you need to give more.

Deuteronomy 12:10-12

¹⁰But you will cross the Jordan and settle in the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, and he will give you rest from all your enemies around you so that you will live in safety. ¹¹Then to the place the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his Name--there you are to bring everything I command you: your burnt offerings and sacrifices, your tithes and special gifts, and all the choice possessions you have vowed to the LORD. ¹²And there rejoice before the LORD your God, you, your sons and daughters, your menservants and maidservants, and the Levites from your towns, who have no allotment or inheritance of their own.

Principle: Tithing is an act of worship. It is a way we honor God and provide for those who serve him.

Proverbs 3:9-10

⁹Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; ¹⁰then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

Principle: Tithing opens the door to God's blessing.

Malachi 3:8-10

⁸"Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, "How do we rob you?" "In tithes and offerings. ⁹You are under a curse--the whole nation of you--because you are robbing me. ¹⁰Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it."

Principle: To withhold the tithe is robbery (stealing from God).



NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES ON GIVING

What is the difference between tithing and giving?

Tithing is giving 10 percent of your first fruits to God. Giving is what you generously share where there is a need above a tithe. It is not an obligation, but is to come from the heart.

Summarize the principles of giving in the following New Testament passages.

Luke 11:42

⁴²Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone.

Principle: Tithing is good but what God really wants is our whole heart. If tithing is done right, it starts from the inside (comes out of devotion to God).

Luke 21:1-4

¹As he looked up, Jesus saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. ²He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. ³"I tell you the truth," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. ⁴All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

Principle: The value of the offering isn't in the amount; devotion to God is what gives the offering value.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

¹Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. ²On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

Principle: Our giving should be proportionate to our means.

2 Corinthians 9:6-11

⁶Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. ⁷Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. ⁹As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever."

¹⁰Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

Principle: God seeks cheerful, generous givers who understand that they will reap what they sow. God gives to us so we can give.



SCRIPTURES ON GIVING TO THE NEEDY

Summarize the principles of giving to the needy in the following passages.



Note: The poor in these verses are those in a condition they have no control over, not those who are lazy, slovenly or unwilling to work.

Proverbs 28:27

²⁷He who gives to the poor will lack nothing, but he who closes his eyes to them receives many curses.

Principle: God treats us the way we treat the poor.

Isaiah 58:1-9

¹ "Shout it aloud, do not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet. Declare to my people their rebellion and to the house of Jacob their sins. ²For day after day they seek me out; they seem eager to know my ways, as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God. They ask me for just decisions and seem eager for God to come near them. ³"Why have we fasted," they say, "and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?"

"Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers. ⁴Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high. ⁵Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for a man to humble himself? Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed and for lying on sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD?"

⁶"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? ⁷Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter-- when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? ⁸Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard. ⁹Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.

Principle: God doesn't want us to give just to him. He wants us to be responsive to those who are in grave need. He wants giving to come from a humble heart, not an arrogant one

Matthew 6:1-4

¹"Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

²"So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. ³But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Principle: Giving to the poor should be done in secret. If you are giving to please God, you don't have to let anyone know.

Matthew 25:35-45

³⁴"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. ³⁵For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

³⁷"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

⁴⁰"The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

⁴¹"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴²For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

⁴⁴"They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'

⁴⁵"He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'

Principle: What we do for the needy we do for Christ.

THINKING IT THROUGH



GIVING AND THE TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS

Matthew 22:34-39

³⁴Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. ³⁵One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: ³⁶"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

³⁷Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'

³⁸This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

⁴⁰All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

How do tithing and charitable giving relate to the two great commandments?

Tithing is a demonstration of love for God and charitable giving is a demonstration of love for others.



Remember: Giving is a visible expression of an inward devotion to God. Giving that doesn't come from the heart is not pleasing to God. If we are devoted to God then we will want to honor him with our tithes and we will show our love for others through generous charitable giving.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS



THE RELATION BETWEEN GIVING AND LOVE

1 John 3:16-18

¹⁶This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. ¹⁷If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? ¹⁸Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.

Why does love have to be accompanied by some sort of giving?

Because giving is the natural action born out of love. If we truly love God, we will extend ourselves to bless others.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE



PERSONAL EVALUATION

1. What does your management of money show about you?
2. How does having a charitable heart affect you?
3. How does having a lack of charity affect you?



PRAYER

Thank God for how he gives generously to you out of his love for you. Pray that you would show your love to him by giving generously to others. Pray that any wrong thinking about giving would be exposed and broken.

AVOIDING FRAUD

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

1. What is a correct view of money?
Money is a medium of exchange, a tool to make trading and storing things of value easier.
2. How do the two great commandments relate to giving?
Tithing and charitable giving are a visible demonstration of love both toward God and our neighbor.

LESSON FOCUS

This lesson will look at what fraud consists of and how to avoid becoming a victim of fraud.

1. What is fraud?
Using deceit and trickery to get value from another without exchanging something of equal value. Using deceit to gain something of value that does not rightly belong to you. Promise of something of value that isn't delivered.
2. What makes people vulnerable to fraud?
Greed, ignorance, thinking you can get something for nothing, fear, misplaced trust, desperation, confusion.

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES



GOD'S VIEW OF FRAUD

Leviticus 19:33-36

³³" When an alien lives with you in your land, do not mistreat him. ³⁴The alien living with you must be treated as one of your native-born. Love him as yourself, for you were aliens in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.

³⁵" Do not use dishonest standards when measuring length, weight or quantity. ³⁶Use honest scales and honest weights, an honest ephah and an honest hin. I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt.

Proverbs 11:1

¹The LORD abhors dishonest scales, but accurate weights are his delight.

Proverbs 16:11

¹¹Honest scales and balances are from the LORD; all the weights in the bag are of his making.

1. What does God think of fraud?
He hates it. He delights in honesty. Abhor means to regard with extreme repugnance or aversion, to detest or loathe.

2. What does it mean that accurate weights are of God's making?

God is the creator of all that is just and fair. Accurate measures are of his creation, in line with his nature.



GOD'S RESPONSE TO FRAUD

Deuteronomy 25:13-16

¹³Do not have two differing weights in your bag--one heavy, one light. ¹⁴Do not have two differing measures in your house--one large, one small. ¹⁵You must have accurate and honest weights and measures, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you. ¹⁶For the LORD your God detests anyone who does these things, anyone who deals dishonestly.

Proverbs 23:10-11

¹⁰Do not move an ancient boundary stone or encroach on the fields of the fatherless, ¹¹for their Defender is strong; he will take up their case against you.

Micah 6:10-13

¹⁰Am I still to forget, O wicked house, your ill-gotten treasures and the short ephah, which is accursed? ¹¹Shall I acquit a man with dishonest scales, with a bag of false weights? ¹²Her rich men are violent; her people are liars and their tongues speak deceitfully. ¹³Therefore, I have begun to destroy you, to ruin you because of your sins.

What is God's response to fraud?

He hates the one who commits fraud and will take up the case against him. God is the judge; to the honest he gives long life, but he will destroy the dishonest.



GOD'S WARNING OF FRAUD

Jeremiah 9:4-9

⁴"Beware of your friends; do not trust your brothers. For every brother is a deceiver, and every friend a slanderer. ⁵Friend deceives friend, and no one speaks the truth. They have taught their tongues to lie; they weary themselves with sinning. ⁶You live in the midst of deception; in their deceit they refuse to acknowledge me," declares the LORD.

⁷Therefore this is what the LORD Almighty says: "See, I will refine and test them, for what else can I do because of the sin of my people? ⁸Their tongue is a deadly arrow; it speaks with deceit. With his mouth each speaks cordially to his neighbor, but in his heart he sets a trap for him. ⁹Should I not punish them for this?" declares the LORD. "Should I not avenge myself on such a nation as this?"



Note: In Jeremiah's time, fraud had gotten so bad a person couldn't even trust his brother or friends.

1. What is God's warning about fraud?

To beware and not trusting (cautious), don't listen to the words, look at the heart.

2. How relevant today is God's warning to beware of fraud?

We need to be very cautious because with the expansion of technology and decrease of morality it is hard to keep up and to know a person's heart. People aren't accountable to God or man.



Note: Fraud requires a willing victim; it is not like burglary or robbery. Our best protection against fraud is self-examination:

- What is my motivation? Am I looking to gain something for nothing?
- How much understanding do I have? Do I really know what I am getting into?

THINKING IT THROUGH



WHAT ARE CONTEMPORARY TYPES OF FRAUD?

Explain the following types of fraud:

1. Ponzi, pyramid schemes _____
Redistribution of money, pay off people at the top, nothing of value being made
2. Infomercial fraud _____
False promises of high return.
3. Real estate fraud _____
Hidden cost, not full disclosure.
4. 900 number fraud _____
Call a number for a prize and get charged for phone call.
5. Construction fraud _____
Shoddy, incomplete or unnecessary work.
6. Bait and switch fraud _____
Promise one thing, then exchange it for something of lesser value
7. Car mechanic fraud _____
Similar to construction.
8. Misrepresentation fraud _____
Product isn't what promised, too high a cost.



QUESTIONS TO ASK TO AVOID BEING A VICTIM OF FRAUD

1. Is what is being promised too good to be true? Is it an equal exchange?
2. Am I being asked for money up front? **Don't give money before receiving product.**
3. How many people do I know personally who have benefited?
4. Do I know all the facts and can I understand them?
5. How well do I know the people I'm getting involved with?
6. Is my own greed keeping me from asking the tough questions?
7. Am I being led by facts or desires?
8. Is it legal?



TWO PRINCIPLES TO AVOID FRAUD

1. Buyer Beware. (Recognize the possibility of being cheated.)
2. Do your homework. (Make sure you have researched and know all the facts.)



Note: You should also have peace of mind about the situation.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS



THE DELUSION OF THOSE WHO COMMIT FRAUD

Proverbs 13:11

⁷The merchant uses dishonest scales; he loves to defraud.

⁸Ephraim boasts, "I am very rich; I have become wealthy. With all my wealth they will not find in me any iniquity or sin."

¹⁴But Ephraim has bitterly provoked him to anger; his Lord will leave upon him the guilt of his bloodshed and will repay him for his contempt.

What is the delusion of those who commit fraud?

That they are getting away with it and that their wealth will keep their sin hidden. They won't be held accountable. They fail to recognize their ultimate accountability to God for their actions.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE



PERSONAL EVALUATION

1. Are you willing to do the necessary research to make sure any financial endeavor you get involved with is sound? Are you examining the facts rather than giving into desire?
2. Are you willing to never make financial decisions out of desperation? If you are feeling emotionally compelled, are you willing to wait to make a decision?
3. Are you patient enough to make good financial decisions? Do you take time to research and pray and not make any impulsive moves?



PRAYER

Pray that you would listen to the Holy Spirit and have God's insight into financial transactions and would recognize any dealings that seem shady or not quite right. Pray that you would be fully satisfied with God's provision and not covet more.

BUDGETING

INTRODUCTION

C REVIEW

Lesson 1: What Is Money? – Money is a medium of exchange

Lesson 2: Dangers and Benefits – Money becomes a danger to us if it becomes the object of our pursuit rather than the value of what we produce.

Lesson 3: Principles of Increase – Secure, legitimate money growth is little by little.

Lesson 4: Lending and Borrowing – Consumer debt is voluntary slavery.

Lesson 5: Saving and Investing – Investing is making money your servant.

Lesson 6: Charitable Giving – Giving is a visible expression of the two great commandments.

Lesson 7: Avoiding Fraud – Fraud requires a willing victim. Our best defense against fraud is self-examination.

Q LESSON FOCUS

This lesson focuses on budgeting. There are four principles that form the foundation of this lesson:

1. God is providing for your financial needs.
2. We all do something with 100% of our income.
3. Good money management is the key to financial security.
4. Good money management has more to do with spending than with income.



ILLUSTRATION: BATH TUB DRAIN

If a plug isn't in the drain in the bathtub, then the tub will never fill up no matter how much water is coming in. Managing the outflow of our money has more to do with our financial stability than increasing the inflow.

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES



GOD'S PROVISION

Matthew 6:25-34

²⁵Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? ²⁶Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

²⁸"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? ³¹So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³²For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

What does God promise concerning provision?

God knows our needs. If our priorities are right (we seek him first) then we don't need to worry about lesser needs. If we focus on our material needs, we will miss out on seeing our spiritual need.



PRINCIPLE OF STEWARDSHIP

Genesis 1:26-29

²⁶Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

²⁷So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

²⁸God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

²⁹Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.

Genesis 2:15

¹⁵The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

What is the principle of stewardship in the passages?

We were created for the purpose of and given the task of managing God's resources. (We are above the rest of his creation.) We want God's creation to be better because of our stewardship.

Luke 12:42-44

⁴²The Lord answered, "Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master puts in charge of his servants to give them their food allowance at the proper time? ⁴³It will be good for that servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns. ⁴⁴I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.

What is the principle of stewardship in this passage?

Good stewardship leads to an increase of what we have been given to manage.



THINKING IT THROUGH

1. To budget is to prioritize spending. What things are more essential than others?
We only need the basics: food, clothing, shelter, transportation. Our wants are not essential.
2. Compare things that would be necessary versus discretionary spending.

Necessary

Food & clothing

Transportation

Housing

Health and hygiene

Tithing

Debt reduction or savings

Taxes

Discretionary

Entertainment

Recreation/vacation

Cosmetics

Gifts

Hobbies

Sports programs

Eating out/fast food

3. Necessary spending is what we n ^{need} to spend. Discretionary spending is based on what we ^{want} w to spend. We get in trouble when we spend on things we w ^{want} before we spend on things we n ^{need}.



Note: It is not wrong to spend money on discretionary items unless they are beyond the range of your income and don't fit into your budget after necessary items are taken care of.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS



THE BENEFIT OF GOOD STEWARDSHIP

Luke 16:10-12

¹⁰Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. ¹¹So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? ¹²And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?

1. What is the ultimate benefit of good stewardship?
You are prepared and qualified to manage true riches, something of an eternal nature.
2. What is the connection between the management of worldly wealth and eternal riches?
If you can't manage well what is tangible or material, you can't be trusted with what is intangible and harder to discern.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE



SETTING UP A BUDGET

See the appendix for guidelines in setting up a budget.



PRAYER

Thank God that his principles of money management bring freedom and blessing. Pray that you would more fully submit your family finances to his authority and leadership.

BUDGETING YOUR MONEY



STEPS TO SETTING UP A BUDGET

The first thing to do is to go to prayer and ask the Lord for wisdom in establishing a budget and for discernment in seeing where your spending needs to be cut back. Read the [Guidelines for Setting Up a Monthly Budget](#).

You need to use the monthly budget amount from the [Personal Monthly Budget](#) sheet to determine the percentage of your income going to each category. This will help you see where your spending may need to be adjusted or reduced. Below is a sample of average expenditures. This is just a guideline. When you fill out your own, you will have to personalize it according to your family income and needs. However, you have to remember that all the budget areas added together cannot total more than 100% of your monthly net income.

Income Allocation - Sample Percentages

Salary for Guideline	\$ 40,000 per year
Gross income per month	\$ 3,330 (salary divided by 12)
Taxes (15% of gross)	\$ 3,330 x .15 = \$500/month
Net spendable income/month	\$ 2,830 (gross income minus taxes)

Sample Budget Guideline		
Category	Suggested %	\$ Allocation
Taxes (income tax)	15% gross	\$500
Tithe	10% net	\$280
Pensions/retirement/SS tax	11% net	\$310
Savings	5% net	\$140
Medical/Dental	5% net	\$140
Housing	35% net	\$990
Auto/Transportation	16% net	\$450
Food	11% net	\$310
Clothing/Appearance	3% net	\$90
Entertainment/Recreation	2% net	\$60
Miscellaneous	2% net	\$60
Monthly Net Income	100%	\$2830

Income Allocation – Personal Percentages

1. From your personal monthly budget sheet fill in the amount you actually spend in each category.
2. To find your actual percentage for each budget category, divide the amount you actually spend by your monthly net income.

Housing example: \$1220 divided by \$2830/month = 43% instead of desired 35%. Other categories have to be adjusted down to make up for the overage difference.

3. The desired % is what ideally you would be spending in a budget category. At the end of the appendix there are suggestions for cutting costs in any budget area.
4. To figure the discrepancy between your actual and desired spending, subtract the desired % from the actual %. This shows you how much you need to cut back or increase in an area. Remember the % column and amount you spend cannot add up to more than 100% or your net income.

Personal yearly salary/income _____

Gross income per month _____ (salary divided by 12)

Taxes (15% of gross) _____ X .15 = _____/month

Net spendable income/month _____ (gross income minus taxes)

Personal Budget Percentage Guidelines					
Category	Actually \$	Actual %	Desired %	\$ Allocation	Discrepancy
Tithe/Giving					
Pensions/retirement/SS tax					
Savings					
Medical/Dental					
Housing					
Auto					
Food					
Clothing/Appearance					
Entertainment/Recreation					
Miscellaneous					
TOTALS					

Guidelines for Setting Up a Monthly Budget

A. Total Monthly Income

- **Income** – Figure out your income from all sources to get your monthly gross.
- **Income Tax** – Income tax paid subtracted from gross monthly income gives you the net income left to distribute to other categories. Income tax is usually withheld from a paycheck unless you are self-employed. Write in the amount withheld monthly or the average amount that needs to be paid if you are self-employed.

B. Giving

- **Tithe** – This should be a first fruit which means it comes off your income before any other budget items are paid.

C. Pension contribution/Social Security/Life Insurance/Savings

- **Pension/retirement** – If you are contributing to a company retirement plan or Roth/IRA, enter the amount here. If you are not on a company retirement plan, you would need to increase your savings for retirement.
- **Social Security Tax** – Social Security taxes are usually withheld from a paycheck unless you are self-employed. Write in the amount withheld monthly or the average amount that needs to be paid if you are self-employed.
- **Life Insurance** – If you have a full or term life insurance policy, you need to figure the monthly cost.
- **Savings** – Before you start a savings plan, pay off any outstanding debts (with the exception of a house or car). Having a savings account is critical for staying on a budget as it is there to cover any emergency expenditures that are certain to arise.

D. Medical expenses

If your employer pays your medical insurance you can leave that out, but you still need to figure costs of visits if you have a co-payment charge. Multiply the average number of visits times the co-payment. Put aside an amount monthly for prescriptions and dentist visits if these are not covered by insurance.

E. Housing costs

- **Mortgage/rent** – Record the amount you pay each month.
- **Insurance/property taxes** – These are often paid to the lender, if so, just fill in the amount paid monthly. If not, take the year total and divide it by 12.
- **Utilities** – Collect all the utility bills for at least 6 months and divide to find the average per month cost. Some utility companies have a program where you just pay an average amount each month. Check into this as it could be helpful to you in establishing and staying on a budget.
- **Cleaning/household supplies** – These are things like detergent, toilet paper, etc.
- **Routine maintenance** – If you have any kind of cleaning or yard service, etc., or pay a child to mow the lawn, that needs to be figured into the budget.
- **Long term housing maintenance/improvement** – 10% of mortgage payment. Necessary to maintain your home and replace carpet, furniture, appliances, etc., when needed.

F. Automobile expenses

- **Loan payment** – If you borrowed money to buy your car write in the monthly payment.
- **Insurance/registration** – Divide the yearly cost by 12.
- **Gas/oil** – Account for the monthly amount you spend on gas and oil.
- **Routine maintenance/repair** – Approximately 10% of your car payment should be put aside for routine maintenance and repairs (oil changes, tires, mechanical failures, etc.)
- **Car replacement cost** – Put aside what your budget will allow to replace your car rather than borrow money; borrowing money greatly increases the cost of a car. If your car payment is for five years, keep the car for ten years and save what would be the payment to pay cash for your next car.

G. Food

Groceries can cost anywhere from \$75-150 per month per person, depending on age and eating habits. To figure the cost of eating out at fast food restaurants, multiply the number of times you go out each month to eat by the average amount you spend.

H. Appearance

To figure a family clothing budget, you need to figure out the amount of clothes each family member needs per year and the approximate cost and then divide it by 12. Figure out other costs associated with appearance (hair cuts, toiletries, dry cleaning, etc.)

I. Recreation/entertainment

You need to set aside a monthly amount to cover the cost of any recreation and entertainment expenses. Family vacations and birthday parties, sports programs, going out to eat, etc. need to be figured into the budget. Take the amount of money these cost over the year and divide it by 12.

J. Miscellaneous

- **Credit card debt** – This is a killer to any budget. Stop buying on credit. Don't purchase an item or spend money until you have the money saved in the correct budget category.
- **Gifts** – The amount you spend on Christmas and birthday gifts needs to be averaged over 12 months.
- **Education** – If you have your children in private school or learning programs, you need to put in the amount.
- **Cell phone** – If you didn't include your cell phone charges with your housing costs, you need to record it under miscellaneous.
- **Other expenses** – It is very important not to overlook any other expenses such as picking up a coffee at Starbucks, pets, etc.

TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME	
Salary	
Interest/Dividends	
Notes/Rents	
Gross Monthly Income	
Subtract Income Tax	
Monthly Budget Amount	
GIVING	
Tithe & other fixed giving	
Monthly Budget Amount	
PENSION & SAVINGS	
Social Security tax	
Pension/Retirement plan	
Life insurance	
Regular savings/investment	
Monthly Budget Amount	

MEDICAL EXPENSES	
Medical insurance	
Dental insurance	
Doctor visits	
Dentist visits	
Drugs, glasses, etc.	
Monthly Budget Amount	

HOUSING EXPENSES	
Mortgage	
Homeowners insurance	
Property tax	
Electricity	
Gas	
Water/Sanitation	
Telephone	
Cable	
Cleaning/household supplies	
Routine Maintenance	
Long term maintenance & improvement costs	
Monthly Budget Amount	

AUTOMOBILE EXPENSES	
Payments	
Insurance	
Car registration	
Gas & oil	
Maintenance/Repair	
Replacement cost	

FOOD EXPENSES	
Grocery	
Fast food	
School Lunches	

APPEARANCE EXPENSES	
Clothes, shoes, etc.	
Hair cuts, barber, nails, etc.	
Toiletries, cosmetics, etc.	
Dry Cleaning, laundry, etc.	

RECREATION EXPENSES	
Entertainment, parties, etc.	
Babysitting	
Vacation, trips, etc.	
Sports programs	
Dining out	

MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES	
Credit card debt	
Books, Magazines, Computer	
Education programs	
Children's Allowances	
Christmas & other gifts	
Pets	
Cell phones	
Starbucks, etc.	

Monthly Budget Amount	
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Keeping Budget Records

Once you have established a dollar amount for each budget category, fill out a budget accounting page for that category. Write the name of the category next to "budget account." Write the amount allocated for that category next to "monthly allocation." At the beginning of each month, write a deposit of the monthly allocation for that category on the accounting page and then keep a record of all spending during the month in that category. You should have a surplus in the account at the end of the month because each account will be accumulating money for larger or periodic expenditures. There may be some accounts in deficit as you start out because of immediate large expenditures, but that deficit should be balanced out by other accounts.

Never, never base your spending on the amount in your checking or savings account. Spending should be based on whatever amount is in each budget category. You should accumulate quite a bit of excess cash in your account; this excess will then cover large bills when they arise. If you follow a budgeting plan, you should never have a lack of funds at the end of the month and you will be prepared to meet unexpected expenses.

Sample Accounting Page				
<i>Category – HOUSING</i>		Monthly Allocation	\$1130.00	
Date	Transaction	Deposit	Withdrawal	Balance
<i>Jan. 1</i>	<i>Monthly allocation</i>	<i>1130.00</i>		<i>1130.00</i>
<i>Jan. 1</i>	<i>House payment & insurance</i>		<i>800.00</i>	<i>330.00</i>
	<i>Edison Co.</i>		<i>50.00</i>	<i>280.00</i>
	<i>So. Calif. Gas Co.</i>		<i>30.00</i>	<i>250.00</i>
	<i>Water Dept.</i>		<i>30.00</i>	<i>220.00</i>
	<i>General Telephone</i>		<i>30.00</i>	<i>190.00</i>
	<i>Miscellaneous cleaning supplies</i>		<i>12.00</i>	<i>178.00</i>
	<i>Yard work supplies</i>		<i>15.00</i>	<i>163.00</i>

Ways to Cut Costs

A. Income Tax

1. Consult a tax expert and/or financial planner for advice.
2. Keep good financial records so you can itemize deductions if possible.
3. Start some sort of family business that will give deductions.
4. Don't use the IRS as a savings plan. If you get money back each year, increase your deductions so the withholding is only what you actually will owe.

B. Pensions/Retirement Savings

Set up some sort of Tax Shelter Annuity (IRA). If you are going to invest in the stock market, get into a good mutual fund and hold on to it.

C. Medical expenses

1. Invest in a good medical resource book to eliminate unnecessary visits to the doctor.
2. Keep up on vaccinations and routine physicals to prevent future costs.
3. Increase your insurance co-payment. Shop around for better insurance.

D. Housing expenses

1. Do household repairs and basic home services (yard, painting, cleaning, etc.) yourself.
2. Lower utility costs:
 - a. Give up extra telephone or cable services. Shop for a good bundle deal.
 - b. Raise the thermostat in summer, lower it in winter. Get a more efficient heating/cooling unit.
 - c. Turn off lights, use florescent bulbs.
 - d. Have an inspector tell you how you can make your house more energy efficient.
3. Increase your insurance deductible. Shop around for better insurance. If the value of your house has decreased, have your taxes reassessed.
4. Make your own cleaning supplies and recycle as much as possible. Use rags instead of paper towels.
5. Sell unwanted items at a garage sale and shop for needed items at garage sales.
6. Rent out a room in your house to a foreign student. This can also be a way of sharing the gospel.

E. Automobile expenses

1. Cut down on driving expenses: walk or ride a bike when possible and have your children do the same, carpool as much as possible, and plan errands carefully.
2. Buy a used car (insurance, license and payments are less) or buy a new car (loss leader) and keep it for a long time. Car dealers will often advertise one new model car at an especially low price. This can be a very good way to get a new car.
3. Increase your insurance deductible. Shop around for better insurance.

F. Food expenses

1. Cook from scratch as much as possible. Don't buy prepared foods or eat out.
2. Buy in bulk and stock up on sale items.
3. Learn to cook with less expensive ingredients.

G. Appearance expenses

1. Learn to cut children's hair, invest in good clippers and scissors.
2. Learn to color hair and do nails. Exchange services with a friend.
3. Buy clothes at the end of the season. Exchange clothes with other families.
Have teenagers buy own clothes out of own earnings.
4. Buy needed personal items on sale and keep on hand.

H. Recreation expenses

1. Entertain in home with pot-luck style meals, family games, videos, etc.
2. Exchange babysitting services with another mother or family.
3. Use 2-for-1 coupons when eating out. Check the newspaper or Internet.
4. Engage in family recreation activities rather than sports programs.
5. Limit the number of birthday parties you give for your children.
Do the party at home or a park instead of an expensive recreation facility or restaurant.
6. Camp as a family rather than go to amusement parks.

I. Miscellaneous expenses

1. Get rid of credit cards. Don't buy on impulse. Pay off balance as soon as possible.
2. Exchange books and magazines with other families. Make use of the library.
3. Make gifts to give for Christmas and birthdays. Cut down on giving.
4. Have your children earn money to buy the things they want.
5. Buy pet food in bulk. If you don't have a pet, don't get one.
6. Look for ways to lower your cell phone costs.
7. Cut out going to Starbucks or indulging in other expensive habits.

