

Godly Finances 2 - Larry Coy

Sermon Recap: God's Purpose for Money and Family Responsibility

Introduction: Remembering the Source of Our Wealth & God's Value System

The sermon begins by illustrating how our human impulses and values often conflict with God's, admonishing against forgetting God as the source of our provision once we become prosperous. The core idea is to shift from a consumer mindset to one that reflects God's wisdom, which requires patience, discernment, and trust in His provision.

- **Scripture Reference & Context: Deuteronomy 8.** The pastor explains that in this chapter, God warns the people of Israel about the dangers of prosperity. He promises that if they obey His commandments, their "herds and thy flocks shall multiply, and thy gold and thy silver shall multiply." However, the danger is that their hearts will become lifted up, and they will begin to believe, "It was my power that got this money."
- **Who is God?** God is the one who "giveth thee power to get wealth" (**Deuteronomy 8:18**). He is a provider who blesses obedience. However, He is also a God who will discipline us if we forget Him and misuse the resources He provides. If we hoard His money for ourselves, He can easily take it away.
- **Who Are We & How Should We Live?** We are stewards of the resources God gives us. When we were in our "wilderness" with nothing, we cried out to Him. As He trusts us with more, we must not change our values. We must remember where we came from and recognize that wealth is from Him.
- **Example: Buying when it's not necessary.** The pastor's interpreter in Brazil was expecting his first child. Though they had the money for baby furniture, they decided to wait, trusting God to provide. They put the money in the bank. Months later, just before the baby was due, another missionary couple gifted them with furniture that was even better than what they would have bought. They were then able to give the money they had saved to another couple in need.
- **Lesson:** By waiting and giving God a chance to provide, we not only witness His faithfulness but also avoid robbing our children of the opportunity to see God work.

- **Warning:** The pastor cautions that very few people could spiritually handle a sudden windfall of a half-million dollars. He references **Proverbs**, stating that “a man that is hasty to get rich? There is more hope for a fool than for him.” If you feel an intense emotional excitement about getting rich quick, you should “hit the cancel button” and recognize you probably couldn’t handle it.

God’s Purpose for Money

- Three biblical categories:
 - Meet the needs of the entire family.
 - Give to the needs of others.
 - Wisely invest.

The Reality of Our Financial Future

The pastor shifts to the practical need for wise financial management in light of long-term economic realities.

- **The Threat of Inflation:** We must be realistic about the future. The pastor provides a sobering example:
 - An income of \$12,000/year today (\$1,000/month) would require \$1,800/month in ten years just to maintain the same standard of living.
 - A 25-year-old today, hoping to retire at 65 and live on the equivalent of \$12,000/year, will need **\$16,000 per month**.
 - At age 75, that same person will need **\$32,000 per month** just to live at that same level, based on a 7% inflation rate.
- **Who is God?** God is our resource. We should not be scared by these numbers because our trust is in Him, not our own ability to earn.
- **Who Are We & How Should We Live?** We are called to be responsible. If God has given us more than we need, we must ask Him *why*. The answer is twofold: to give to the needs of others and to invest wisely for the future.

Biblical Vision for Multigenerational Family Responsibility

- **Immediate family basics:**
 - Food, clothes, and shelter are baseline responsibilities.
 - The pastor challenges modern assumptions about “when responsibility ends,” asserting that Scripture envisions responsibility extending to grandchildren through inheritance.
- **American Culture vs. Biblical Vision:**

- Modern assumptions end parental responsibility at high school or college graduation. The biblical model envisions multi-generational provision and inheritance.
- Many families and young couples are unprepared, leading to crises when parents cannot care for themselves and children lack margin.
- **Scripture References and Context:**
 - **Proverbs 13:22 (implied):** A wise father leaves an inheritance to his “children’s children,” extending responsibility beyond the immediate generation.
 - **2 Corinthians 12:14:** “For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.” Paul’s pastoral example of not being a financial burden while affirming the parental duty to provide.
 - **1 Timothy 5:8:** “If anyone does not provide for his relatives... he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” Family responsibility is a witness to genuine faith.

Who God Is and How He Responds

- **God is the Giver and Owner:**
 - Scripture affirms that God grants the power to get wealth (**Deuteronomy 8:18**).
 - God holds His people accountable for stewardship beyond basic needs (see: **Parable of the Talents, Matthew 25:14–30**).
- **God blesses prudent foresight and faithful stewardship:**
 - He expects believers to plan for adversity and to invest wisely (**Proverbs 22:3**).
 - He will not “bail out” irresponsible financial behavior with presumption disguised as prayer.
- **God’s heart for restoration:**
 - He calls His people to be “repairers of the breach” and “restorers of foundations,” reclaiming biblical patterns across generations (**Isaiah 58:6–12**).

Who God Says We Are

- **Stewards, not owners:**
 - Believers are accountable managers of God’s resources. Faithfulness is measured by how we use money beyond necessities.

- **Family covenant people:**
 - Parents are called to lay up for children and provide across generations.
 - Children are called to honor and, if necessary, care for aging parents.
- **Repairers of the breach:**
 - Christians are called to rebuild God's foundations in their families and finances, breaking cycles of poor stewardship.

Two Enduring Economic Principles

- **Principle 1: Double Portion to the Firstborn**
 - **Scripture: Deuteronomy 21:17.**
 - **Purpose:** The oldest son receives a double portion to have resources to care for parents in their later years, not as favoritism but as provision.
 - **Application:** Families should plan for eldercare; children must consider parent care as a real possibility and responsibility.
- **Principle 2: Fathers Capitalize Their Children**
 - **Purpose:** Provide operating capital so sons/daughters can start work or business debt-free, profiting from day one.
 - **Example:** Orthodox Jewish practice of funding an account at bar mitzvah; starting business with cash to avoid debt slavery.

Debt Culture Critique

- Entering business by borrowing leads to prolonged servitude, delaying true savings and retirement.
- **Scripture: Proverbs 22:7** — "The borrower is servant to the lender." Debt places one in economic servitude; God's wisdom urges avoiding slavery to lenders.
- God's wisdom urges starting with capital, avoiding debt, and building from profitability.

Four Types of Giving Beyond the Tithe

1.

Offerings

- This is giving from the surplus God has provided, not from the money set aside for basic needs (food, clothing, shelter).

- **Application:** When God presents a need and you have the funds, you give. Don't rationalize by assuming others will pitch in and only give a small portion of what you could. If God showed *you* the need, He may want *you* to meet it.
- **Warning:** It is foolish to give away money designated for your essential responsibilities, like a mortgage payment, and call it dedication. That is not faith, but irresponsibility.
- **Example:** The pastor shared how he and his wife, Carol, will often give from their resources, whether it is money or simply taking bags of food from their freezer to give to someone in need.
-

Sacrificial Giving

- This occurs when you have money saved for something important, but God lays a more urgent need on your heart.
- **Who is God?** He sees our sacrificial obedience and honors it by providing for our own needs in unexpected ways.
- **Example:** The pastor and his wife were saving \$100 for a new suit for him. After visiting ministry friends who were struggling financially, they felt led to mail them the \$100. A month later, a man from his church bought him a brand-new suit.
- **Application:** We must learn to have grace in receiving as well as giving. When someone gives to you because God led them, receive it with gratitude, recognizing it ultimately comes from God.
-

Cheerful Giving

- As we mature in faith, we learn to give cheerfully, not grudgingly.
- **Application:** Initially, you may not "feel" like giving. But when you are obedient and God blesses that obedience, you will learn the joy of giving and wish you had the right attitude from the start.
-

Giving to Exercise Our Faith

- This is about trusting God to provide funds for His purposes through you, beyond your own known income or resources.

- **Who is God?** There is money God is willing to give *through* you that He is not willing to give *to* you. He is a God who can supply supernaturally to accomplish His work.
- **Application:** The pastor challenges the congregation to ask, “How much money do you believe God could supply through you this next year, over and above any known income?” Start with a small amount until you feel nervous—that is your “measure of faith.”
- **Examples:**
 - The pastor’s family did this together. The first year, his daughter Cheryl believed God for \$20. The family began the project, and the pastor found a dime the next day.
 - The first year the pastor did this personally, he gave away more than his gross income. After counseling a man, the man gave him \$1,000 in cash and said, “Give this to people you meet who have needs.” The man did this three times that year.
- **A Cautionary Tale:** A man in the Midwest was inspired and put \$10,000 in the commodities market, promising God the profits. He made \$280,000 but decided to keep it. A year and a half later, he had lost over a million dollars. This is a warning against getting selfish with what God was willing to pass through us for His work.

How We Are to Live: Practical Steps for Financial Stewardship

1. Evaluate: Is It Necessary?

This is described as one of the “rottenest” but most important questions to ask before a purchase. Our culture trains us to buy what we *want*, but God’s wisdom encourages us to consider what is truly *necessary*.

- **Who God is:** He is a Provider who meets our *needs*.
- **How I am to live:** I should question my motives for a purchase. Am I acting out of selfish want or a genuine need? Buying out of mere want often leads to purchasing “lemons.”
- **Example:** The pastor recounts his own experience of buying things he simply wanted, only to be questioned by his wife, “Honey, if it’s not necessary, why would you buy it?” He learned that when he bought items selfishly, he would become paranoid and often ended up with a bad purchase.

2. Discern: Does It Violate Scripture?

God will not lead you to make a financial decision that contradicts His other commands.

- **Who God is:** God is consistent. His principles do not contradict each other.
- **How I am to live:** My financial choices should align with all of scripture. I should not go into debt (violating the principle of owing no one anything) under the guise of doing something good for my family.
- **Example:** A man felt he needed to spend more time with his family, so he went into debt to buy a camper. Soon after, his wife became ill for a year, and they were never able to use it, yet he was still stuck with the payments.

3. Stop the Use of Consumer Credit

While credit cards are not inherently evil, using them to accumulate consumer debt for depreciating items is unwise.

- **How I am to live:** If I use credit cards, I must pay them off in full each month. Consumer debt is for things that are wearing out.
- **Mortgaging a House:** This is a different principle, as a house can be an appreciating asset. The three keys to buying a house are: **location, location, and location.** If the property is not highly likely to appreciate, renting may be a better financial choice.

4. Understand the Law of Depreciation

This economic law states that you should always pay cash for items that wear out over time.

- **Who God is:** God established principles for His people to live by that would lead to blessing. To the Israelites, He said, *"Loan to all nations, but don't you borrow."* He instructed them not to charge each other interest but to help one another.
- **How I am to live:** For a depreciating item (like a car), the wise path is to pay cash, save an amount equal to its depreciation rate, and earn interest on those savings.
- **Example:** After paying off a car, the pastor started saving the amount of his old payment. When his car with 160,000 miles was failing, he had saved some money but not enough. Because he had been responsible, God supernaturally provided the rest. A friend sent a check for \$2,300, allowing him to buy a demonstrator station wagon with cash. He then gave his old car to a young couple, helping them become debt-free.
- **Who God is:** When we are responsible with what He has given us, God has no trouble making up the difference when we have a true need.

5. Control the Impulse to Buy

Our first reaction to a perceived need is often to run out and buy something. God's way is to first assess what we already have.

- **Scripture:** The feeding of the 5,000 (**Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6:31-44, Luke 9:12-17, John 6:1-14**).
- **Context:** When the disciples saw the hungry crowd, their immediate solution was to "go and buy" food.
- **Application:** Jesus' response was, "What do we have?" He took the five loaves and two fish, used what was available, and multiplied it. Before rushing to the store, we should look in our cupboards and use what we have.
- **Who God is:** He is a God of multiplication who works with what we give Him.
- **How I am to live:** I must first use what I have before determining what I need.

6. Develop Resistance to Advertising and Sales Pressure

- **How I am to live:** I need to be discerning about advertising, recognizing that what a product claims to do is often the one thing it won't.

7. Don't Co-Sign for Anyone

- **Scripture Context:** The book of **Proverbs** is filled with wisdom on this topic, strongly warning against taking on the debt of another. It advises that if you have co-signed, you should run and beg to be released from the obligation.
- **How I am to live:** Before any major financial decision, I should review the wisdom in **Proverbs** concerning money. This will provide a "check" in my spirit if the decision is wrong.

8. Exchange Your Skills

Giving isn't just about money. God sees legitimate work and the sharing of skills as holy and sacred.

- **Who God is:** He sees everything we do as sacred and has gifted each of us with specific skills and talents.
- **Who Are We & How Should We Live?** We should use our God-given skills to meet the needs of others. The older should teach the younger.
- **Examples:** Women who know how to cook or sew should teach those who wish they knew how. Men skilled in carpentry or mechanics should share that knowledge. In a poverty-stricken area in Maine, churches had members list their talents and formed teams to fix each other's homes and serve one another.

Pastor's Personal Application and Examples

- **Life calling:** He identifies with **Isaiah 58** — to “repair the breach” by restoring biblical financial foundations in his family.
- **Commitment to children:** He is committed to his children for life, offering friendship and capital provision.
- **Capitalizing his son David:**
 - **Silver:** Bought at 4.17; sold at 9.99 — illustrating disciplined, profitable investing.
 - **Stocks:** Experienced splits and reinvested gains, compounding growth.
 - **Horses:** Trained and sold an Arabian colt that placed third in a show; proceeds reinvested.
 - **Work and missions:** Earned money, saved, gave to the Lord, and received a full scholarship for a missions travel year. This early responsibility led to God’s blessing.

Practical Planning & Accountability

Anticipating Crises

- **Scripture Context: Proverbs 22:3** — “A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself.” Plan for unemployment, illness, and disability.
- **Guidance:** Assess your vocation’s risk profile and direct resources to the most probable, highest-impact crisis first.

Accountability for Surplus Beyond Basics

- **Diagnostic questions:** Have you ever earned more than needed for food, clothes, shelter? If yes, why did God give the surplus, and how should it be used?
- **Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15):** The son asked for operating capital, squandered it, and returned willing to serve, highlighting stewardship and its consequences.
- **Warning against presumption (Parable of the Talents - Matthew 25:14–30):** If surplus is consumed without stewardship, do not expect miraculous bailouts. Jesus rebuked the “wicked and lazy” servant who hid his talent, saying, “the least you could have done was put my money in the bank...”
- **Application:** Track gross household income over the last 15 years. Identify surplus beyond basic needs and account before God how it was used: family provision, generosity, and wise investments.

Have a Will

- This is a crucial responsibility. If you do not have a will, the state has already written one for you. You are responsible for designating who will care for your children and how your assets are distributed. Consider tithing a portion of your estate to the church.

Heart Posture: Gratitude vs. Envy

- **Envy condemned:** If jealous of the wealthy, the deeper issue is anger toward God's providence (**Deuteronomy 8:18**).
- **Gratitude commended:**
 - **Example:** Dwight Eisenhower's childhood — poverty without bitterness, shaped by grateful perspective.
 - **Example:** Appalachian relatives: Hardship endured with persevering gratitude despite repeated setbacks.

How to Live in Light of the Sermon

- **Trust God as Provider and Owner.**
- **Embrace multigenerational responsibility:** Plan for children, grandchildren, and eldercare.
- **Practice debt-averse discipline:** Aim to start ventures with capital, not loans.
- **Steward surplus with accountability:** Assign surplus to giving, investing, and family provision.
- **Prepare prudently for adversity:** Build emergency funds and consider appropriate insurance.
- **Parent as lifelong friends and capitalizers:** Offer guidance, discipleship, and seed capital.
- **Cultivate gratitude, reject envy.**

Key Points (Numbered)

1. God's purposes for money: family needs, generosity, wise investment.
2. Responsibility extends to "children's children"; inheritance is biblical.
3. Two enduring economic principles: double portion to firstborn for eldercare; fathers capitalize children for debt-free starts.
4. Debt enslaves; wise investing and capitalization build freedom.
5. God holds us accountable for surplus beyond basic needs; presumption is rebuked.
6. Prudence foresees adversity; plan for unemployment, illness, and disability.
7. Lifelong parental commitment to children fosters stewardship and blessing.

8. Gratitude over envy acknowledges God as the source of wealth.

Closing Exhortation & Guidelines

- Be “repairers of the breach” in your generation: rebuild biblical financial foundations in your family.
- **Make a commitment to God today.** Set an appointment with yourself and the Lord to manage your finances His way.
- **Begin to buy on a cash basis.** If you don’t have the money, don’t buy it. The pastor shared that when he first did this, he realized he had no money for anything beyond his debt payments—not even a haircut. This exercise reveals what God truly thinks you need right now.
- **The Danger of Poor Stewardship:** The pastor concludes with a personal story about buying a full set of expensive encyclopedias as a poor college student. He went into debt for something he didn’t need and couldn’t use.
 - **The lesson:** We may need something later, but that doesn’t mean we need it now. Acting on impulse and perceived “signs” without true necessity and biblical wisdom leads to poor stewardship and unnecessary debt.

Let’s pray.