

The Struggle of Financial Stress

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Synonyms of stress: *'Pressure, strain, worry, tension, weight'*. One of the big struggles in life that people face comes in the form of financial stress and problems.

The state of our finances matters to God. Jesus taught much in the gospels in matters relating to finances, therefore issues that relate to finance should never be a taboo subject amongst the Christian Church today.

Martin Luther King

"Any religion that claims to be concerned about people without addressing the economic conditions that strangle them is a dry and useless religion."

It's not that the individual who lives the life of a Christian will not face at some time, financial challenges, needs, setbacks, and even discouragement. Sometimes it can seem that we can just live from pay cheque to pay cheque to just get by. Having a job though it is a blessing, can at times seem to stand for "J-Just, O-Over, B-Broke."

Rich Brott

"That which was a mighty river on payday, overnight seems to become a dried up little creek."

Solomon in the Bible attributes money to that which has a say in everything we do in life.

Ecclesiastes 10:19 (NKJV)

But money answers everything.

- Meeting our everyday needs takes money: Food, shelter, clothes, security
- Raising up children takes money
- Student life takes money
- Unforeseen setbacks takes money
- Pursuing life's milestones takes money: leaving home, getting married, planning for retirement.
- Enjoying the blessings and privileges of _____ takes money
- Christmas takes money!
- Planning for the finer things in life takes money: holidays, upgrading, interests and hobbies.

Going through times of financial hardship is:

- Not necessarily a consequence of not being in a right standing with God (Philippians 4:12)
- A great opportunity to raise your expectation for God to breakthrough on your behalf (Psalm 145:15)

Equally striving for and even attaining an excess of finances in life can also bring stress and problems with it, if not stewarded purposefully (Proverbs 23:4-5)

Biblical Principles of Overcoming the Struggle of Financial Stress:

1. Embrace financial pressures with a strong _____ perspective (Proverbs 3:15)
 - 'Know that God alone is our ultimate financial _____ (Deuteronomy 8:18; Psalm 24:1; Psalm 50:10-11; Haggai 2:8)

- Choose not to worry, but let God work it out instead (Matthew 6:25)
 - Stay open and expectant for a financial miracle (Ecclesiastes 11:5)
 - Declare a faith confession over your finances, watch what you say (Joel 3:10; Proverbs 18:21; Proverbs 21:23)
2. Honour the Lord with the finances that you do have (Proverbs 3:9)
- You cannot afford not to _____ your gross income (Malachi 3:10; Matthew 23:23)
 - Be faithful even with the little you may have
'He who is faithful in what is least is faithful in much' (Luke 16:10)
If God cannot trust you with £100 now, how can He trust you with £1000 or £100,000.
 - 'If in need first plant a seed'. We must recognise the need to sow seed to provoke miraculous supply (1 Kings 17:12-15; 2 Kings 4:1-7)
 - Be generous (Proverbs 11:24-25; 2 Corinthians 8:3; Job 42:10)
 - Keep on persevering in sowing your finances to serve God's purpose on earth (Galatians 6:9)
3. Maintain a right _____:
- Be thankful for what you do have (1 Thessalonians 5:18; Habakkuk 3:17-19)
 - Learn to be content and avoid envy (Proverbs 23:17)
'I have learnt to be content with or without'. (Philippians 4:12)
 - Develop a prosperous mind-set (Proverbs 23:7)
 - It is God's will for us to be financially empowered (Deuteronomy 8:18)
4. Pursue God's practical _____ for your financial situation (Proverbs 4:7)
- Avoid impulsive negative debt. Do not spend what you do not have. Distinguish between what is a need and what is a want (Proverbs 22:7)
 - Free yourself from peer pressure (Proverbs 15:16)
 - Seek improvement by considering your expenditure (Psalm 119:59)
"Don't drift through life become purposeful with your finances!"
 - Evaluate what you have in your hand (Exodus 4:2)
"Make all you can, save all you can, give all you can." John Wesley
 - Don't try and make ends meet at the expense of your home and church life
"Make money your God, and it will plague you like the devil" Henry Fielding

Conclusion: Profound Biblical Truths to Hold Onto During Times of Financial Hardship

- God will never forsake you and allow you to be left ashamed in your time of need.
'I have been young, and now am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread'. (Psalm 37:25)
- God knows how to take care and provide for His own.
'Now if God clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith'. (Matthew 6:30)
- God promises to meet all your needs according to His unlimited resources
'And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus'. (Philippians 4:7)
- The best is still yet to come
'I will wait until my change comes'. (Job 14:14)