

Fellowship Notes ~ Sunday, January 12th, 2020



Part 2

Biblical Principles of Money Management

1. God owns it all – Matthew 25:14; Psalm 24:1
2. Life is a test – Matthew 25:21; Luke 16:11-12
3. The amount is not important – Matthew 25:23
4. Faith requires action – Matthew 25:24-30

The 5 Laws of Money Management

1. Spend less than you earn – Proverbs 13:11

Practical Guidelines for Controlling Your Spending:

1. Realize that nothing is a good deal if you can't afford it.
2. Recognize that God isn't behind every good deal.
3. Understand the difference between spending money and saving money.
4. Look at the long-term cost, not just the short-term.
5. Pray before you spend.
6. Examine every purchase in light of its ministry potential.
7. Understand and resist the manipulative nature of advertising.
8. Learn to walk away from things you want but don't need.
9. Realize little things add up.
10. Set up and live by a budget.



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The video, audio, as well as a printable manuscript of the message and this handout are available online

2. Avoid the use of debt

Biblical Principles of Borrowing:

- 1.) God wants His people to be givers not borrowers – Psalms 37:21
- 2.) If I owe anyone anything, I am not free to give love to that person – Romans 13:8
- 3.) When you borrow money from someone you in effect become that person's servant – Proverbs 22:7
- 4.) By taking on debt you may run the risk of not providing for your own family – 1 Timothy 5:8
- 5.) Be on your guard against every form of greed and guard against relying on things for your sense of worth and accomplishment – Luke 12:15

Facts about debt:

- 1.) Debt is not a sin. The Bible discourages the use of debt but does not prohibit it.
- 2.) Debt is extremely deceptive.
- 3.) Debt creates bondage, and if that bondage is to the world system or to a certain lifestyle, we are no longer free to be the witnesses in this world God wants us to be.
- 4.) Debt becomes an affront to God when we rely on it and deny God the opportunity to work.
- 5.) In some cases debt is acceptable, but only under certain limited conditions.

When considering debt, ask the following questions:

- Does it make economic sense? In other words, is the cost to borrow less than the economic benefit received?
- Do I have a guaranteed way of repaying the debt?
- Do my spouse and I have unity about taking on this debt?
- Do I have the spiritual peace of mind or freedom to enter into this debt? Is it consistent with biblical principles?
- What personal goals and values am I meeting with this debt that can be met in no other way?

AVAILABLE RESOURCES FOR YOUR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

In Fellowship Café:

Master Your Money by Ron Blue (Recommended Resource for January)

Free Articles at the Tower near Grand Central

Training Your Children to Manage Money

Tithing: The Training Wheels of Giving

Finding Financial Freedom



Week 2 ~ Sunday, January 12th, 2020

I read a story this week that made me chuckle...

There was a small church that was having a reunion and one of the former members who attended the reunion had become a millionaire. They had a testimony time at the reunion and here's what he said:

He said that when he earned his first dollar as a boy he decided to keep it for the rest of his life. But one Sunday a guest missionary preached about the urgent need of the gospel on the mission field.

As he sat listening, he wrestled with whether to give that special dollar in the offering that day because it was his last dollar. But he said he felt the Lord speaking his heart to give that dollar and the Lord won out so he gave that dollar to God's work.

He went to say with a bit of pride that he was convinced that the reason God had blessed him so much through the years with financial resources was because he had given God everything that day when he was just a boy.

You could tell that everyone in the room at the reunion were moved by his testimony. Then an elderly woman in the front row piped up loud enough for everyone to hear, "I dare you to do it again." 😊

Last Sunday we began this series called Master Your Money. And we talked about the 5 Stages of Financial Journeys (STEPS)

- (Slide)
1. Struggling – not able to make ends meet
 2. Surviving – living paycheck to paycheck
 3. Stable – able to save money with an emergency fund
 4. Secure – able to save for long-term goals
 5. Surplus – having more than enough to live on

We're all sitting at one of the 5 financial stages and the big question that everyone has is, "How do I keep moving to the next stage?" Good question.

So we began to answer that question by looking at 4 basic biblical principles of money management from Matthew 25 – they're on your notes...

Biblical Principles of Money Management

5. God owns it all
6. Life is a test
7. The amount is not important
8. Faith requires action

These are not only principles, they're biblical truths that every child of God must accept and believe with all their heart not only because Jesus taught them...

But also because your future in heaven is going to be impacted by how you live these out in your life NOW. Just to clarify, these aren't necessary for entrance into heaven, but rather they determine what your service for the Lord is going to be for all eternity once you get there.

Now for the rest of this message series we're going to look at 5 practical steps or what I call the 5 Laws of financial management that even people who don't hold to biblical values agree are non-negotiable in mastering your money.

It just so happens that not only are these 5 Laws practical, they're also biblical. Financial Planner Ron Blue explains these briefly for us...

RON BLUE CLIP

(Slide) The 5 Laws of Money Management

3. Spend less than you earn

(On slide) Proverbs 13:11 “Whoever gathers money little by little makes it grow.”

This first step is the foundation to financial strength and it's also the #1 reason people often get into trouble financially. It's really a very black and white issue: if you don't spend less than you earn, the only alternative is to spend more than you earn and that always leads to financial ruin!

Take these people right here: What do these people all have in common? They're all famous: Actor Don Johnson, Rapper 50 Cent, Singer Wille Nelson, Actor Mickey Rooney and singer Meatloaf.

Not only are they famous, they all made a lot of money and they all lost that money in bankruptcy because of one simple reason: they spent more than they earned!

Their problem is the same problem all of us have: it's not that we can't earn money, it's that we find it hard to manage our money wisely. They didn't and they faced the consequences – just as we will.

This first step to mastering your money requires nothing less than a total willingness to either determine our behavior and spend less than we earn or change our behavior and begin spending less than we earn starting now.

Another Christian author and leader that has had a lot of positive influence on my life is Randy Alcorn. When it comes to the challenge of spending less than we earn, he's come up with 10 practical guidelines to controlling our spending. These are so good and so helpful. Let me give them to you...

1.) Realize that nothing is a good deal if you can't afford it.

Have you ever come across a good deal like a car that normally cost \$10,000 and you have a buddy that will sell you that exact car for \$5,000. Sounds like a great deal right? Well it might be for someone, but if you can't afford \$5,000, it doesn't matter how good a deal it is.

2.) Recognize that God isn't behind every good deal.

Let's say you come across another good deal – there's a washer/dryer set on Craig's list that usually sells for \$1,500, and you can get it for just \$400. Wow, what a deal. And best of all, you can afford it.

But does that mean that you should buy it? Maybe, maybe not. This issue this time isn't the money, instead it's a question of whether God wants me to buy it.

Sometimes we have to exercise self-control and turn down a good deal because we get the sense from God that He has other plans for us and for His money.

3.) Understand the difference between spending money and saving money.

Saving money is setting aside money for a future purpose. Spending money is money that leaves your wallet. You don't have it anymore. It's gone forever.

So when you stop at TJ Maxx and buy a pair of shoes that normally cost \$80 but you only paid \$30, you didn't save \$50. You spent \$30. There's no more money in your Savings Account when you left than when you walked in the store. In fact, now there's \$30 less in your checking account.

You might have got a great deal, and it might have been the right purchase for you, but don't confuse the difference between spending money and saving money.

4.) Look at the long-term cost, not just the short-term.

Something you buy might seem like a really good deal if it costs you virtually nothing. But if in buying it you have to maintain it and continually spend money to keep it, then it may not be that good deal you thought it was.

e.g. "THE BUS" that was donated to the church

5.) Pray before you spend.

Impulse buying is so easy to do. But what if before buying something you waited and prayed and gave God the opportunity to provide it for you in answer to your prayers?

Waiting to buy something and praying about it gives God a window of time to act in your life and to show that He cares for you and is able to meet your needs as well as your wants.

6.) Examine every purchase in light of its ministry potential.

Whenever you and I use money to buy something, it prevents that money from being used for something else. So, for example, if we commit ourselves to a monthly expenditure like a subscription service...

That money is now not available to be used to help someone in need or support a missionary or to be used in some other kingdom way. So it becomes important for us to examine our purchases – especially those that carry a regular commitment like a monthly payment –

And be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God and ask God to give us wisdom not to miss potential ministry opportunities because we've spent money for other uses.

7.) Understand and resist the manipulative nature of advertising.

The ads will always tell you what your needs are even if they're really not your needs. We have a lot less needs that advertisers want us to believe. So don't believe what all those ads are telling you. They want your money and that's all they want!!!

8.) Learn to walk away from things you want but don't need.

Say this out loud after me, "Walk away from the display."

Walking away from buying something you want can be one of the most empowering and self-gratifying things you ever do! It can also give you a deep sense of joy and relief. Try it. Then try it again. Become a walk-away junkie and you'll find yourself spending less than you earn.

9.) Realize that little things add up.

You would be right if you said it wouldn't break you financially to buy a Starbucks drink that cost you \$4.50. But when that \$4.50 is added to the \$10 you spent for lunch and the \$100 you spent at the grocery store, and the \$35 you spent at the restaurant last night, then you really see that it adds up fast.

One key to not spending more than you earn is to track your expenditures and see what all those little things add up to. Then start putting a limit on those expenditures. When you get a handle on the little things it pays big dividends in spending less than what you earn.

10.) Set up and live by a budget.

A budget is simply pre-determined allocated spending. But when it's followed it can help you more than anything is spending less than what you earn.

Spending less than you earn isn't just a good idea, it's a law of money management that will help you reach the next level AND assist you in being wise with the resources God has provided for you to faithfully manage.

Let's move now to the second step to managing your money...

(Slide) 2. Avoid the use of debt

Biblical Principles of Borrowing:

6.) (Slide) God wants His people to be givers not borrowers – Psalms 37:21

So our goal should be to become debt-free! This helps us develop a lifestyle of giving.

7.) (Slide) If I owe anyone anything, I am not free to give love to that person – Romans 13:8

Debtors and lenders aren't really free to love each other like God would want us to. So we have to be very careful before we lend money to someone and we have to be very careful before we borrow money from anyone.

8.) (Slide) When you borrow money from someone you in effect become that person's servant – Proverbs 22:7

This verse doesn't prohibit debt, but it certainly cautions us against the use of debt.

9.) (Slide) By taking on debt you may run the risk of not providing for your own family – 1 Timothy 5:8

Debt mortgages the future. Therefore, you may very well end up in the future not being able to provide for your family. That's why we need to be wary of debt.

10.) (Slide) Be on your guard against every form of greed and guard against relying on things for your sense of worth and accomplishment – Luke 12:15

Debt can very easily be a way to fund greed. So with debt we have to be careful to ask if we're funding a need that we have or simply our greed.

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It's easy to get into and hard to get out of.

4.) Debt creates bondage, and if that bondage is to the world system or to a certain lifestyle, we are no longer free to be the witnesses in this world God wants us to be.

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Look at Philippians chapter 4

There's an X factor in Mastering Your Money that is often overlooked. If you leave the X factor out, mastering your money will never add up, it will never work out the way it needs to.

Here in Philippians chapter 4, at the end of his letter to the Philippian Christians Paul gives us the X factor, the secret ingredient that you won't hear in the commercials and the advertising.

READ Philippians 4:10-12

The x Factor in Mastering Your Money, the secret ingredient to financial success, to faithfully managing what God has entrusted to each of us, is CONTENTMENT.

Contentment with who you are, with what God has given you, enables you to be satisfied with God's provision, even though it might not be as much as He's given to someone else.

It's being satisfied with what God has provided you and not always seeking to have more and more of this world's goods. Contentment is realizing that God has placed you where you are, given you what you have...

And if He wants to move you or give you more, He can and will do that in His perfect timing. Until that happens, contentment is thanking God for His provision for you and not allowing the world's message of greed sink in your heart and mind.

You say, "But Rob, that's really hard." It sure is. You can't do that in your own strength. Look at verse 13 (READ). With God's strength, you can do all things, including learning to be content with what He's given you.

Learning to be content is possible with God's help and it's the X factor that will enable you to Spend less than you earn, and to Avoid the use of debt. Learn to be content.

And remember what Paul says in verse 19... (READ).

As you learn to be content, remember that you have a God who is able – able to meet all your needs. And He WILL meet all your needs if you will take what's He's already given to you, be content with it, and be faithful.