

May 4, 2008

“Biblical Principles Of Money” (Part 1)

(Based on *How to Develop Deep Unity in the Marriage Relationship*, by Wayne Mack)

The church leadership had decided that we should have a series of messages on stewardship. So far we had two messages one by PN and one by me. Since next week is Mother's Day, I was thinking of the impact of finances on a marriage relationship. I am convinced that Christians need to have a Biblical philosophy of money. For not only will this help them with their finances, it will help their marriage. If husband and wife had a knowledge of and a sincere commitment to a biblical philosophy of money it would bring unity to their marriage. Most financial conflicts in marriage are caused by a lack of understanding of or a lack of submission to scriptural principles of money. Real unity will come only when a husband and wife adopt a common standard or value system they agree on and are committed to.

A man, his wife and mother-in-law went on vacation to the Holy Land. While they were there the mother-in-law passed away. The undertaker told them, "You can have her shipped home for \$5,000, or you can bury her here in the Holy Land for \$150.00."

The man thought about it and told him he would just have her shipped home. His wife was happy because, of course, this is what she wanted too, and assumed her husband was doing it to please her.

The undertaker asked, "Why?" Why would you spend \$5,000 to ship your mother-in-law home, when it would be wonderful to be buried here and spend only \$150.00?"

The man said, "A man died here 2000 years ago, he was buried here and three days later he rose from the dead. I can't take that chance."

Ralph and Janice were celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary, and Pastor Jones decided to take advantage of their longevity by using their story as a sermon illustration. He asked Ralph to come on stage and share some insight into how he managed to live with the same woman all those years.

Ralph turned to the congregation and said, "Well, I treated her with respect and spent money on her—but mostly I took her traveling on special occasions."

The pastor asked, "Trips to where?"

"For our 25th anniversary," Ralph answered, "I took her to Beijing, China."

The crowd nodded and murmured in appreciation. When things quieted down, the pastor winked and said: "What a terrific example you are to husbands, Ralph. So, tell us where you're going now for your 50th anniversary?"

Ralph replied, "I'm going to go back and get her."

Here is why you should accept a biblical philosophy of money (or a biblical philosophy of any other aspect of life) first and foremost because it is what God wants, second because it works and third, if you are married, it will produce unity.

So let me share with you some biblical principles of money:

1. God Is The One Who Gives You The Ability To Earn Money.

a.) Deut 8:17-18a (NIV)

You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth...

b.) 1 Chron 29: 12a (NIV)

(O LORD) ...Wealth and honor come from you...

c.) 1 Cor 4:7 (NLT)

What makes you better than anyone else? What do you have that God hasn't given you? And if all you have is from God, why boast as though you have accomplished something on your own?

Here are just a few verses that teach us to not forget that all we have comes from God, and that He gives us the ability to earn money. So now, let's look at the next principle because it goes with this first one...

2. Everything We Have Belongs to God

a.) Ps 24:1 (NLT)

The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it.
The world and all its people belong to him.

b.) 1 Chron 29:11,14 (NLT)

Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty.
Everything in the heavens and on earth is yours, O LORD...Everything we have has come from you, and we give you only what you have already given us!

The implications of principles 1 and 2 are that we are only stewards of all we have. All is God's and comes to us from God. We, therefore, must use our resources (whether, money, possessions, skills, time etc.) prayerfully and carefully, as God desires, not as we desire. All we have is His, and He asks us to manage it according to His principles.

3. There Are Many Things Which Are More Valuable Than Money

1.) ***Your Soul***

Matt 16:26-27 (NIV)

What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?

You can't put a price tag on the salvation of your soul.

2.) ***Real Life***

Luke 12:15 (NLT)

"Beware! Don't be greedy for what you don't have. Real life is not measured by how much we own."

This is the exact opposite of what present-day society says. Advertisers spend millions of dollars to entice people to think that if they buy more and more products, they will be happier, more fulfilled, and more comfortable.

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I think of the bumper sticker that says: "Whoever dies with the most toys wins." It's not true. I saw another bumper sticker I liked better, it said, "Whoever dies with the most toys still dies!"

Real life is not measured by how much we own. So what is real life...

3.) ***Knowing God through Jesus Christ***

Phil 3:7-9 (NLT)

I once thought all these things were so very important, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done. Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the priceless gain of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I may have Christ and become one with him. I no longer count on my own goodness or my ability to obey God's law, but I trust Christ to save me. For God's way of making us right with himself depends on faith.

Luke 12:20-21 (NLT)

"But God said to him, 'You fool! You will die this very night. Then who will get it all?'

"Yes, a person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God."

Having a rich relationship with God through faith in Jesus is real life, the salvation of our soul. Or as Jeremiah wrote:

Jer 9:23-24 (NLT)

This is what the LORD says: "Let not the rich man (gloat) in his riches. Let them boast in this alone: that they truly know me and understand that I am the LORD who is just and

righteous, whose love is unfailing, and that I delight in these things. I, the LORD, have spoken!

There is no greater blessing then to have a personal relationship with God that comes through faith in Jesus Christ. And along with that ...

4.) *Being entrusted to proclaim Christ*

Eph 3:8 (AMP)

To me, though I am the very least of all the saints (God's consecrated people), this grace (favor, privilege) was granted and graciously entrusted: to proclaim...the unending...riches of Christ...

5.) *The reverent worship of God*

Prov 15:16 (AMP)

Better is little with the reverent, worshipful fear of the Lord than great and rich treasure and trouble with it.

6.) *Righteousness*

Prov 16:8 (AMP)

Better is a little with righteousness (uprightness in every area and relation and right standing with God) than great revenues with injustice.

7.) *Wisdom and understanding*

Prov 16:16 (NIV)

How much better to get wisdom than gold,
to choose understanding rather than silver!

8.) *A good name*

Prov 22:1 (NIV)

A good name is more desirable than great riches;
to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.

Prov 19:1 (NCV)

It is better to be poor and honest
than to be foolish and tell lies.

9.) *Godliness with contentment*

1 Tim 6:6, 9 (NIV)

But godliness with contentment is great gain...People 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.

10.) *Storing treasures in heaven*

Matt 6:19-21 (NLT)

"Don't store up treasures here on earth, where they can be eaten by moths and get rusty, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where they will never become moth-eaten or rusty and where they will be safe from thieves.

11.) ***Trusting God and using money to do good***

1 Tim 6:17-19 (NLT)

Tell those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which will soon be gone. But their trust should be in the living God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and should give generously to those in need, always being ready to share with others whatever God has given them. By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may take hold of real life.

12.) ***The Law of God***

Ps 19:9-10 (NLT)

The laws of the LORD are true;
each one is fair.

They are more desirable than gold,
even the finest gold.

Ps 119:72 (NLT)

Your law is more valuable to me
than millions in gold and silver!

13.) ***A good wife***

Prov 31:10 (THE MESSAGE)

A good woman is hard to find,
and worth far more than diamonds.

Prov 19:14 (NCV)

Houses and wealth are inherited from parents,
but a wise wife is a gift from the LORD.

I couldn't find a scripture that said a good husband is worth more than gold. I'm sure that is true also...perhaps in biblical times men were just more greedy for money than women so they had to be reminded that a good spouse was better than money. Along with a good spouse being a blessing is...

14.) ***Children***

Ps 127:3 (NLT)

Children are a gift from the LORD;
they are a reward from him.

15.) ***Heaven***

Matt 6:33 (NCV)

The thing you should want most is God's kingdom and doing what God wants. Then all these other things you need will be given to you.

Col 3:1-2 (NLT)

Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits at God's right hand in the place of honor and power. Let heaven fill your thoughts. Do not think only about things down here on earth.

The Bible says, and we would agree that all these things are more valuable than money. Consider the implications of that on how you think and live, and work; How you use your time, etc.