

Week 1

I. The Introduction

A. Introduce The Teacher

B. Class Format

C. Why this Class?

1. As we will see over the next few weeks, how we handle our money and possessions is important to God. Here are a few stats from the Bible:

a. From John MacArthur's series "Mastering Your Money: Overcoming Materialism"^[2]

i. 16 out of 38 of Christ's parables deal with money

ii. In NT more is said about money than heaven and hell combined

iii. 2300 plus verses dealing with money and possessions while 500+ deal with faith and prayer

b. Per Crown Financial Concepts this topic is second only to love

2. Provide some tools to better manage our financial resources and be different from the world

3. If we can bring this area can be under God's control we have lots of opportunity to bear witness to and minister God's grace to our friends and neighbors

Here are a few stats from the world...

a. One ABA survey found Financial issues are listed as the leading cause of divorce

b. Another survey stated that 90% of crime is committed regarding money

c. Recent survey indicated^[7]

i. 22% don't pay their bills on time

ii. 26% have not saved for retirement

iii. 31% of American households have no emergency savings

iv. 60% don't have a budget or keep close track of their finances

d. Average personal savings rate November 2016 was 5.5% (bea.gov)

e. Debt

i. 65% of Americans with credit cards carry a balance

- ii. If you carry a credit card balance the average is approx. \$16,000.00 ^[8]
- iii. If you have debt the average balance is approx. \$132,500 ^[8]
- iv. In 2016 an average of 10% of disposable income paid to service debt
(Federal Reserve)
- f. Charitable giving averages approximately 3% per household...about the same for Christians
- g. US government doesn't help
 - i. \$19.9 trillion in debt, that's about \$61,300 per person in the US, \$167,000 per tax payer (usdebtclock.org)
 - ii. 6% of budget goes to paying just the interest
 - iii. In 2016 spent \$1.18 for every \$1.00 received
- 4. It has been my experience that this area is one of the most closely guarded by Christians
- 5. Discussion of spending, saving and giving habits is typically off limits for accountability
- 6. In his book *The Treasure Principle*, Randy Alcorn says:
"It's increasingly common for Christians to ask one another the tough questions: How is your marriage? Have you been spending time in the Word? How are you doing in terms of sexual purity? Have you been sharing your faith? But how often do we ask, "How much are you giving to the Lord?" or "Have you been robbing God?" or "Are you winning the battle against materialism?"
When it comes to giving, churches operate under a "don't ask don't tell" policy. We lack communication , accountability, and modeling. It's as if we have an unspoken agreement: "I won't talk about it if you won't, so we can go right on living as we are." ^[3]

D. Objectives for the Class

- 1. Over the next few weeks Increase/Re-enforce our understanding of what the bible has to say about money and possessions
- 2. Work to bring this area of our lives under God's control by faith as we strive to live godly lives

3. Provide some tools and work toward financial success...
Definition: Using God's resources to accomplish His priorities
 4. Provide some tips on how to put together a personalized financial plan.
 5. Discuss/Consider a variety of practical personal financial topics
 - a. Spending, saving, debt reduction, insurance, investing, retirement, estate planning, etc.
 - b. Cover areas that might have impact on where and how you spend money
 - c. Take these things and work them into your budget
 6. Cover the basics of budgeting
 - a. For those with No Budget – discuss the process of establishing and maintaining one
 - i. Time to build a habit – Avg 66 days – European Journal of Social Psychology “How are habits formed: Modeling habit formation in the real world”
 - b. Budgeters – To review and revise your budget, financial position and goals and reinvigorate the use of a budget
 7. Encouragement to interact with the family of God for accountability, support and encouragement in the area of finances just as we do any other areas of our spiritual life
- E. Non-Objectives for the Class
1. Not here to sell you anything
 2. Not going to tell you what specific investments to make, insurance to buy, when to retire or how to spend your money
 3. Not going to give you the steps that will guarantee that you will become wealthy
 4. Not going to tell you that this is easy

II. The Gospel...

- A. We are going to deal with this topic as a spiritual matter
- B. The practical aspects many in the world accept. God's wisdom works for all – even the unbeliever. There is common grace for doing things God's way.
- C. However the WHY and HOW of what we are doing here won't make sense outside of a spiritual framework.

1. WHY is it we do any of the things commanded in the Bible?

1 Corinthians 10:31 “*Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, **do all for the glory of God***” (emphasis mine)

2. HOW is it that we may do these things

Philippians 2:13 “*for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.*”

Gal 5:16 “*But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.*”

- D. You can't do these things unless you know Christ as Savior and Lord. If you don't know Him you can...

1. Acknowledge that you are a sinner

Romans 3:23 “*...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...*”

2. That because of your sin you are alienated from God

Colossians 1:21 “*...you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds*”

3. Know that because God loves us He has made known to us His mercy and grace in the person of Jesus Christ

Titus 2:11, 13b “*For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men...the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,*”

4. Who He sent to die on the cross be buried and raised again on the third day

1 Corinthians 15:3b-4 “*...that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,*”

5. In order to redeem us or to satisfy the price required by God for our sin

Titus 2:13b-14 “*...our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds*”

6. If you accept by faith what Christ has done, you acknowledge your sin, turn away (repent) from it

Acts 26:20b “*...that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance.*”

7. Then you too will be saved from eternal separation from God and can truly understand the WHY and HOW for doing what we will be discussing here and be able to accomplish it through the Spirit's work in our lives bringing about the sanctification and godliness that God desires of his people

III. Biblical Principle – We Are Stewards!

- A. It is important to understand your place in a situation in order to respond appropriately
- B. We need to understand our place in God's order in regard to money and possessions in order know how to deal with them appropriately
- C. We need to know that God owns everything...We own nothing

Psalms 24:1 "The earth is the LORD'S, and all it contains, The world, and those who dwell in it."

- D. If we believe this, we become stewards...Not owners
- E. This an important distinction because...

1. It gives us a proper view of ourselves
 - a. Biblically a steward was the manager or overseer of another's household or estate
 - b. They owned nothing...they may have even been owned (a slave)...as in the parable of the talents (Mt 25:14-30)
 - c. Because the master owned it all, the steward didn't have rights in regards to what was managed...the steward had responsibilities
 - d. Because God owns it all we don't have rights...we have responsibilities
 - e. A steward was expected to be a GOOD steward and to look out for and promote the interest of his employer or master
 - f. God expects us to be good stewards of what He has provided

1 Corinthians 4:2 "In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy"

1 Peter 4:10 "As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

- g. In the big picture we only have anything because of God's grace and we are to be good stewards of the gifts provided
2. It gives us a proper view of what we have

- a. Again it is not ours...it is God's
- b. God can do with his possessions as He pleases to accomplish his goals
- c. God may redistribute as he will...Therefore we should hold lightly. Look to Job's example

Job 1:21-22 *"He said, 'Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD.' Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God."*

- d. God is sovereign over all...weather, natural disasters, thieves, governments, world economic situation...so no use in getting stressed about it

Isaiah 41:10 *"Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not **anxiously** look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."*

3. Gives us a proper view of what we are doing
 - a. Managing his resources to bring about his glory and accomplish his purposes.
 - b. We are NOT to be about looking like the world, satisfying our flesh or exalting our own position, we are NOT to be better than the world...we are to be different from the world
 - c. Because we are stewards and every financial decision reflects on our Master...every decision becomes a spiritual decision
4. We need to transfer ownership of our stuff back to God. Who by the way...really owns it all anyway

IV. Practical Finance – What is a Budget?

1. A budget is simply a personalized spending plan based on the personal financial plan of your home
2. God views planning as a wise thing

Proverbs 21:5 *"The plans of the diligent lead surely to advantage, but everyone who is hasty comes surely to poverty."*

Proverbs 21:5 *"Commit your works to the LORD and your plans will be established."*

3. A budget is a tool to help allocate limited resources in a world of unlimited alternatives by:
 - a. Allowing the opportunity to document and evaluate our behaviors

- b. Allowing the opportunity to prioritize our spending
 - c. Allowing the opportunity to communicate with our families
 - d. Allowing the opportunity to plan ahead and resist temptation
 4. It may be strict or loose depending on where you are in your financial life
 5. What isn't a budget
 - a. The Law - it needs to be flexible a framework for your plan
 - b. A punishment – I/You've been bad so we have to go on a budget
 - c. Device to Control a Spouse
 6. What does it require?
 - a. Thought, prayer and time to develop your plan
 - b. Some short term “sacrifice” to obtain longer term goals
 - c. Time each week to maintain
 - d. Discipline
 7. When is the best time to start a budget? - NOW!!!
- B. The Homework
1. Memory Verse: Psalm 24:1
 2. If you are interested in developing a budget there are some worksheets on the VBC website at:
http://valleybible.net/AdultEducation/ClassNotes/FinancialManagement_2014/financial_management2014.php
 3. Write down ALL of your income and expenses using the Tracking Sheet
 4. Estimate your net income using the Monthly Net Income Calculation Worksheet
 5. Estimate your net worth using the Net Worth Worksheet

C. References

1. Unless otherwise indicated all scripture quotations are from the New American Standard Bible (NASB), 1995
2. **John MacArthur**, Sermon *Mastering Your Money: Overcoming Materialism* (<http://www.gty.org/resources/sermon-series/130/mastering-your-money>)
3. **Randy Alcorn**, *The Treasure Principle: Unlocking the Secret of Joyful Giving* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2001)
4. **John Temple**, *Family Money Matters: How to run your family finances to God's Glory* (Leominster, UK: Day One, 2010)
5. **Ron Blue**, *Master Your Money: A Step Buy Step Plan for Financial Freedom* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1991)
6. **John MacArthur**, *Whose Money Is It Anyway?: A Biblical Guide to Using God's Wealth* (Nashville, TN: Word, 2000)
7. **Harris Poll**, *The 2016 Consumer Financial Literacy Survey Prepared for: The National Foundation for Credit Counseling and Boeing Employees' Credit Union*
8. <https://www.nerdwallet.com/blog/average-credit-card-debt-household/>