

Biblical Economics

October 23, 2022

This week, we'll look at our responsibilities regarding money. What are we to do with money? How are we to think about money?

DAY 1: Faith, Prayer, Trust

2 Corinthians 5:7 For we walk by faith, not by sight.

1. Money is a tangible way God reveals Himself to us. We get to see how God provides for us, blesses us, meets our needs through His involvement in our financial lives. But God is not just trying to build our “faith-muscles” in the arena of finances. He wants us to trust him with every aspect of our lives.

Philippians 4:19 And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

2. What strikes you from this verse?

Pro. 11:28 Those who trust in their riches will fall, but the righteous will thrive like a green leaf.

3. There are a number of ways we can “fall.” Can you think of some?

4. When we trust in money, we set ourselves up for worry, anxiety, discouragement, and fear.

Matthew 6:25 “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

³¹ So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

5. What point is Jesus making about worry?

6. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

For additional study: Prov. 8:20-21; Matt. 6:25-33; Prov. 16:8; Prov 10:2;

DAY 2: Budget, Planning, Prudence-----and Counsel

Proverbs 27:23-27 Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds; ²⁴for riches do not endure forever, and a crown is not secure for all generations. ²⁵When the hay is removed and new growth appears and the grass from the hills is gathered in, ²⁶the lambs will provide you with clothing, and the goats with the price of a field. ²⁷You will have plenty of goats' milk to feed your family and to nourish your female servants.

1. While we are to walk by faith, we are also taught to budget and plan ahead. These things are not mutually exclusive.

2. According to Solomon, why is budgeting important?

3. How does keeping up with your present condition affect meeting the needs of the future?

4. Solomon also tells us that life is uncertain. It is prudent to make plans for “unexpected” expenses.

For additional study: Prov. 31:16, 18, 21

Counsel

Prov. 12:15 The way of fools seems right to them, but the wise listen to advice.

Proverbs 15:22 Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.

5. When I was first married, a CPA taught me how to make a budget for us. He also showed me how to track our budget to manage our finances during the month. It saved me years of learning by trial and error on my own.

6. It helps to get counsel for a retirement plan, buying a house, how to buy a car, etc.

For additional study: Prov. 10:17; 11:14

7. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 3: Work, Diligence, Responsibility

1. While we are to trust God, and walk in faith, we are also commanded to work.
2. Some of the new believers in the city of Thessalonica were convinced the Lord was going to return very, very soon. If that's the case, why work?
3. But, here is what the Apostle Paul instructed.

2 Thess. 3:6 *In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers and sisters, to keep away from every believer who is idle and disruptive and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. ⁷ For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, ⁸ nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. ⁹ We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you to imitate. ¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat."*

4. What does Paul teach about idleness?
5. What example did Paul and his missionary band of men set for the Thessalonians?
6. What principles about work can we glean from this passage?
7. We are not meant just to "clock in and clock out." In the following verses, jot down *how* we should work.

Prov. 14:23 *All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty.*

Prov. 28:19 *Those who work their land will have abundant food, but those who chase fantasies will have their fill of poverty.*

Prov. 10:4-5 *Lazy hands make for poverty, but diligent hands bring wealth. ⁵ He who gathers crops in summer is a prudent son, but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son.*

Prov. 24:30 *I went past the field of a sluggard, past the vineyard of someone who has no sense; ³¹ thorns had come up everywhere, the ground was covered with weeds, and the stone wall was in ruins. ³² I applied my heart to what I observed and learned a lesson from what I saw: ³³ A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest— ³⁴ and poverty will come on you like a thief and scarcity like an armed man.*

8. What strikes you from today's devotional?

For additional study: 1 Tim. 5:8

DAY 4: Giving, generosity

1. God is intent on making His people generous, like He is. That is a gargantuan project because human nature is naturally greedy and materialistic.

1 Timothy 6:6 But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷ For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. ⁸ But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. ⁹ Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

2. Being rich is not a bad thing. Paul warns against the desire to be rich, and “eager for money”. This passage is loaded with the dangers. Underline each one.

3. Which dangers strike you the most? Why?

4. Materialism can get a strong grip on our soul. The primary antidote to materialism is giving.

Matt. 6:19-21 “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

5. Notice how Jesus associates our giving with the condition of our heart. Giving “steers” our heart toward the things of God, toward people, the kingdom of God and kingdom values.

6. It is not just giving that is the antidote to materialism. It is giving generously. Giving generously is not a matter of amount. It is giving more “than you think you should.” It is going the extra mile, walking by faith, and making big investments in God’s kingdom.

Luke 21:1 As Jesus looked up, he saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. ² He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. ³ “Truly I tell you,” he said, “this poor widow has put in more than all the others. ⁴ All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.”

7. What strikes you about this poor widow’s example?

2 Cor. 9:6-7 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. ⁷ Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

8. What does Paul say about generosity?

9. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

For additional study: 2 Cor. 8:13-15; Prov. 28:27; Haggai 1:6

DAY 5: Saving, investing, -----Debt-----and Contentment

1. Saving for the future is also a biblical value.

Prov. 30:24-25 “Four things on earth are small, yet they are extremely wise: ²⁵ Ants are creatures of little strength, yet they store up their food in the summer;”

Prov. 21:20 The wise store up choice food and olive oil, but fools gulp theirs down.

Prov. 6:6 Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise!

⁷ It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, ⁸ yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest. ⁹ How long will you lie there, you sluggard? When will you get up from your sleep? ¹⁰ A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest— ¹¹ and poverty will come on you like a thief and scarcity like an armed man.

For additional study: Prov. 22:3; Matt. 25:14-30; 1 Tim. 5:8

Debt

Prov. 22:7 The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is slave to the lender.

Debt is not a “bad” thing in and of itself. But the problem of debt is twofold. First, we usually end up paying more for something than its cost. We are paying interest. Second, the borrower becomes a “slave” to the lender. There is less money in your monthly budget that could go for giving, saving, or spending. And that doesn’t change until the debt is paid off.

Psalm 37:21 The wicked borrow and do not repay, but the righteous give generously;

For additional study: Prov. 3:27-28; Rom. 13:8

Contentment

Heb. 13:5-6 Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” ⁶ So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?”

5. The writer of Hebrews tells us several ways that can we become content. List 4 ways:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

Philippians 4:11 I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. ¹² I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.

6. What does Paul say about contentment? Does it just come naturally? Is it learned? How?

For additional study: Eccl. 5:10

7. What strikes you from today’s devotional?