

God's Word on Money

Spending Plan

At the Kitchen Table

11.01.20

We highly recommend <https://goodsensemovement.org/> for complete FINANCIAL FREEDOM training and tools.

We're at the kitchen table to share principles and practices on money that are often communicated through family conversations, informal interactions, and spending time together. My father taught us about money while working in his gardens, repairing cars, and fishing on a lake.

The area we'll talk about today is spending. We can find the money within this area to help our debt reduction efforts and increase giving and saving.

We're going to lay the foundation to develop your Spending Plan.

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 13: 44-46 – “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

⁴⁵ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. ⁴⁶ When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

Proverbs 27: 23-27 – Be sure you know the condition of your flocks,
give careful attention to your herds;

²⁴ for riches do not endure forever,
and a crown is not secure for all generations.

²⁵ When the hay is removed, and new growth appears
and the grass from the hills is gathered in,

²⁶ the lambs will provide you with clothing,
and the goats with the price of a field.

²⁷ You will have plenty of goats’ milk to feed your family
and to nourish your female servants.

PRAYER

1. Let’s begin with the Mind and the Heart of God.
 - i. There are three truths summarized in three statements.
 - ii. God created everything.
 - iii. God owns everything.
 - iv. We are trustees.
- a. **GOD CREATED EVERYTHING!**
 - v. Genesis 1: 1 says that in the beginning, there was nothing, and God created.

vi. God created every grain of sand on the earth and every star in the galaxies. Sometimes, it's easy to lose sight of the fact because we live and work in environments humans have created. But the truth is that first there was nothing, and then there was everything. God created.

b. GOD OWNS EVERYTHING!

vii. God didn't create everything and then go off somewhere else in infinity and turn his back on his creation. Scripture makes it clear that God continues to be involved in creation and has retained ownership of all God created.

viii. In Psalm 50, God declares, "Every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. For the world is mine, and all that is in it."

ix. Psalm 24:1 says, "The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it."

c. WE ARE TRUSTEES!

x. God created and retained ownership.

1. God then entrusted to each of us, who are created in God's image, a portion of God's creation.

2. This means we're trustees, trustees for God of whatever we have been given.

- xi. I Corinthians 4: 2 says, “Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.”
 - xii. To prove faithful, it is essential to understand a trustee has no rights, only responsibilities – the responsibility to care for what belongs to someone else.
 - 1. That’s how we need to look at our possessions – that we are trustees, not owners.
 - 2. There is a more profound point to make. Even our families belong to God.
 - 3. In fact, we don’t even own ourselves. We belong to God first of all because God created us. And, for those of us who have accepted Christ, we belong to God a second time because Jesus saved us. Everything, including our very being, belongs to God.
2. Up to this point, we have focused on the concept of how to pay off more debt. The mindset for this session is less.
- a. We’ll look at how we can spend less while still meeting our needs and the needs of those dependent on us.
 - b. As we discussed in previous sessions, this is another area that is about more than just finances.
 - i. It’s about who you are and who you’re becoming as a consumer concerning God.

- ii. Remember, every financial decision is a spiritual decision.
3. Over the next couple of weeks, from this kitchen table, you'll have the opportunity to reflect on
- a. What "driving your stake" lifestyle-wise would mean to you.
 - b. You'll also set short-term goals for the spending categories and,
 - c. finally, identify some action steps to reduce expenses.

4. THE PULL OF THE CULTURE vs. THE MIND AND HEART OF GOD

- a. Let's start by taking a look at the Pull of the Culture on the consumer.
- b. Four major myths have an influence on us as consumers:
 - i. "THINGS bring happiness."
 - ii. "Your possessions define who you are."
 - iii. "The more you have, the more you should spend."
 - iv. "Spending is a "COMPETITION.""
- c. These statements are not entirely new to us since they flow out of cultural myths we've discussed throughout the series. Let's look at each one.
 - i. **"Things bring happiness."**

1. Advertising aims to make us discontent with what we have and convince us that happiness lies in possessing one more thing.
 2. “Wear me, drink me, drive me, buy me at the ‘Stuff-mart,’ and you’ll be successful, healthy, wealthy, and wise!”
- ii. **“Your possessions define who you are.”**
1. Our culture also tells us that our worth as individuals is somehow tied into whatever we have.
 2. We compare ourselves to others on that basis.
- iii. **“The more you have, the more you should spend.”**
1. We have bought into the belief that as our incomes go up, we should purchase bigger houses, sportier cars, and trendier clothes to keep up with it.
- iv. **“Spending is a “competition.””**
1. The Joneses are the opposing team. And sadly, the research shows that many of us no longer just trying to keep up with our neighbors.
 2. We’re trying to keep up with those several income levels above us through the media's influence.
 - a. We’re spending money we don’t have

- b. To keep up with people, we don't know
- c. Attempting to impress people who don't care

THE SPENDING PLAN

5. What Is a Spending Plan?

- a. A budget is a fundamental tool that enables us to control our money so that it doesn't end up controlling us.
- b. A budget is a plan – a Spending Plan – for how we will allocate our financial resources.
- c. Why do we have plans?
 - i. We have plans to achieve something, to reach a goal, and our goals are based on our values and priorities.
- d. A key point to understand is that a Spending Plan is not restrictive or confining but produces freedom.
 - i. A foundational principle of life is that there is no real freedom without limits. A Spending Plan sets safe limits financially
 - ii. Use the illustration of my mother saying she required a fence around any school she ran.
 - 1. Kids need limits to know they're safe and protected.

2. The fences provide limits within which the kids are free to play, enjoy themselves, and know they're protected.
 3. Can kids leave the safety of the schoolyard? Of course, they can!
 4. Is it wise for them to leave the boundaries of the fences? Of course not.
 5. Outside the fence, there's traffic that could mow a kid down or predators who could snatch a kid up.
- iii. Now think about a Spending Plan. It sets safe boundaries for how we use our money. By spending within its limits, we can safely and freely enjoy our resources.
1. What happens when we spend beyond those limits?
 - a. We get mowed down by the traffic of debt
 - b. and snatched up by a whole series of financial predators that want a piece of us!

6. THE BENEFITS OF A SPENDING PLAN

- a. First, **it gives us the facts about how we're doing.**
 - i. It removes the guesswork and the anxiety we feel when we don't really know the actual situation.

ii. The Bible teaches that it is the truth that sets us free. A Spending Plan allows us to discuss our finances and make decisions based on facts rather than emotion.

b. Second, **it avoids waste.**

i. Without a Spending Plan, we will spend more money.

ii. We all want to be good stewards and not waste God's resources.

iii. We also want to hear God say, "Well done, good and faithful servant – good and faithful trustee."

c. Thirdly, **it keeps our values and priorities in check.**

i. A Spending Plan reflects what is really important to us.

1. Goals exercise in this week's items at
QuinnChicago.org

ii. Without it, we can easily fall into spending patterns that conflict with our financial goals or are not God-honoring.

iii. Following a Spending Plan ensures that our walk will be consistent with our talk.

d. Finally, **it leads to financial freedom.**

i. A Spending Plan enables us to spend with confidence and freedom because it establishes safe limits. It allows our families to experience that freedom as well.

- e. For these reasons, a Spending Plan is for everyone – not just those in financial difficulty.
7. THE MIND AND THE HEART OF GOD on spending
- a. The Bible characterizes the God-honoring consumer as “prudent.”
 - b. The **prudent consumer** is one who enjoys the fruits of their labor yet guards against materialism.
 - c. Let’s examine three Biblical Financial Principles about our behavior as consumers.
 - i. First, **beware of idols**.
 1. In Deuteronomy 5: 7-8, God declares God’s self to be a jealous God and commands that we have no other gods. Yet, we have wrestled with the temptation to replace God with things from the beginning of time. Today we call it materialism, which we need to recognize as a competing theology.
 2. In Romans 1: 25, the Apostle Paul described the wicked as those who “worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator.”
 3. In contrast, God desires us to seek first the kingdom and have faith that all these things will be given to us as well.

ii. Second, **guard against greed.**

1. In Luke 12: 15, Jesus says,” Beware! Don’t be greedy for what you don’t have. Real-life isn't measured by how much we own.”
2. In contrast to greed, the Bible calls us to seek moderation. Proverbs 30: 8 says, “Give me neither poverty nor riches. Give me just enough to satisfy my needs.” (NLT)

iii. Finally, **be content.**

1. In Philippians 4: 12, Paul explains that he has learned to be content in all circumstances. He writes, “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.”
2. *Contentment with and gratitude for what we have is the antidote to greed and envy.*
3. Once again, remember that God wants us to recognize our immeasurable value as God’s beloved children and to not associate our value with the possessions of material things.

- iv. As we seek to become prudent consumers, God reminds us in I Timothy 6 that God “richly supplies us with everything for our enjoyment.”
 - 1. Yet, God instructs us to put our hope in God and not in the uncertainty of wealth.
 - 2. God further teaches us to “do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.”
- v. When we practice moderation and learn contentment in the context of spending, we become free to be a blessing to others.

8. DRIVING YOUR STAKE

- a. Understanding this challenge of being content and seeking moderation raises a fundamental question: Are you willing to “drive your stake” lifestyle-wise?
 - i. What does this mean?
- b. Driving a stake is a metaphor of determination, with a Western flavor.
- c. It is rooted in laying a claim to a piece of territory, owned by nobody, for mining or farm use.
 - i. The rush for land after the Civil War popularized the phrase.

- ii. The stakes driven in the ground were the markers used to post the boundaries of a homestead.
- d. It basically means that there will be a point in time when you declare, “Enough is enough.” You distinguish between your needs and your wants, between your real needs and what the culture says you need.
 - i. For example, will there be a point in time where you would say, “You know, this house is big enough. It keeps me warm in the winter. It keeps me dry in the summer.”
 - 1. Even if I made \$10,000 a year, \$50,000 a year, or \$100,000 a year more and could afford a bigger house in a ‘nicer’ neighborhood, I’m not going to buy it. I’m driving my stake lifestyle-wise.”
 - ii. Similarly, you could also say, “The kind of car I drive now gets me reliably from point A to point B. Even if I could afford a much more expensive car, I’m not going to buy it. I’m driving my stake lifestyle-wise.”
- e. I don’t know where you are in this regard, but I would challenge you to drive that stake somewhere. For some, Maybe your stake is still out there a way. For example, your family is growing, and you’re living in a very small house. It’s okay to wait to drive your stake regarding housing.

- f. For others, maybe you could drive your stake right where you are now and declare that enough is enough, or perhaps you're at a place where God is nudging you to downsize and drive your stake back from where it is now.
- g. The critical question we need to ask ourselves as prudent consumers is, "When is enough enough?"
 - i. As we've already said, if our treasure is in earthly things, enough will never be enough. Enough has much more to do with an attitude we adopt than with a numerical goal.
 - ii. This is a crucial question, and we're not often challenged to consider it.
 - 1. What would it mean for you to drive your stake lifestyle-wise?

INVITATION TO CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

- a. Again, we face the dilemma between choosing to follow the Pull of the Culture or seeking the Mind and Heart of God. And the question is, "What are you becoming as a consumer? Are you becoming more financially faithful, or are you foolishly allowing the culture to pull you away from God?"
- b. At the Cross of Jesus Christ, God drove an eternal stake in the ground.
 - a. God said, "Enough is enough.!"

- i. Enough suffering
- ii. Enough sin
- iii. Enough bondage
- iv. Enough guilt
- v. Enough shame
- vi. Enough poverty
- vii. Enough hatred
- viii. Enough death

c. And God gave God's Son Jesus Christ to end the negative and bring new life

LINKS TO FORMS AND ARTICLES ON SPENDING

We highly recommend <https://goodsensemovement.org/> for complete FINANCIAL FREEDOM training and tools.

PREWORK PACKET – https://quinnchapelchicago-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/jmoody_quinnchicago_org/EaBBrsdklLhEhytD9GmhK48Bh2JcHKoFJRidNdPdliwiwA?e=sgkt7H

FORMS – https://quinnchapelchicago-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/jmoody_quinnchicago_org/Ee13c7g-XqFGrxpmnVBZA8MBjhS0XbWq3jFAIJJ3OUO6iA?e=vDSYFn

SPENDING ARTICLES – Although the information on car prices is outdated, the principles remain applicable. – https://quinnchapelchicago-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/jmoody_quinnchicago_org/ERvxeLcjjZxNp07mrG2BlocBxAKeFHVia9uvbENqrrsyvg?e=3thlMN