



Lesson 1: THE BIBLICAL BASIS OF MANAGING MONEY (Keith Lewis)

OVERVIEW

- (7/8) Week 1 (Keith) — *Foundational Considerations*
- (7/15) Week 2 (Ryon) — *The Christian and Giving*
- (7/22) Week 3 (Keith) — *The Christian and Savings*
- (8/12) Week 4 (Keith) — *The Christian and Debt*
- (8/19) Week 5 (Ryon) — *The Christian and A Budget*

SOLICIT QUESTIONS

- Submit via a 3x5 card any questions you would like to have answered in this series.

INTRODUCTION

There sure is a lot said about money — everyone has an opinion on it (<http://bit.ly/1HaRzVI>):

- *The Benefit of Money*
 - View #1: “Money has never made man happy, nor will it, there is nothing in its nature to produce happiness. The more of it one has the more one wants” (Benjamin Franklin).
 - View #2: “The lack of money is the root of all evil” (Mark Twain or George Bernard Shaw).
- *The Importance of Money*
 - View #1: “I have no money, no resources, no hopes. I am the happiest man alive” (Henry Miller). “Money is better than poverty, if only for financial reasons” (Woody Allen)

- View #2: “When I was young I thought that money was the most important thing in life; now that I am old I know that it is” (Oscar Wilde). “It's a kind of spiritual snobbery that makes people think they can be happy without money” (Albert Camus).
- *The Growth of Money*
 - View #1: “The safe way to double your money is to fold it over once and put it in your pocket” (Kin Hubbard).
 - View #2: “Here's how I think of my money - as soldiers - I send them out to war everyday. I want them to take prisoners and come home, so there's more of them” (Kevin O’Leary).
- *The Origin of Money*
 - View #1: “I've made all my money on my own without my family and I work very hard” (Paris Hilton). “No one's ever achieved financial fitness with a January resolution that's abandoned by February” (Suze Orman).
 - View #2: “If God has allowed me to earn so much money, it is because He knows I give it all away” (Edith Piaf).
- *The Desirability of Money* — “In suggesting gifts: Money is appropriate, and one size fits all” (William Randolph Hearst).

Why do a Bible study (learning truth and considering application) on finances?

1. *Many people have significant financial needs.*

- Individual debt statistics (<http://nerd.me/1bSe3jj>):
 - Average CC debt: \$7,327
 - Average CC debt for indebted households: \$15,706
 - Average mortgage debt: \$156,333
 - Average student loan debt: \$32,953
- Total debt statistics (<http://nerd.me/1bSe3jj>) — Americans owe:
 - \$11.85 trillion in debt
 - \$890.9 billion in credit card debt
 - \$8.17 trillion in mortgages
 - \$1.19 trillion in student loans

- About 76 percent of Americans admit money is a significant source of stress in their lives, according to an American Psychological Association report (yhoo.it/1dKxmh3).
- According to a survey published in the Forum for Family and Consumer Issues, finances are the leading cause of conflict in marriage, with 39 percent of respondents listing it as their primary issue and 54 percent as their secondary issue (yhoo.it/1dKxmh3).

2. **God's Word says much about finances.**

- 11 of Jesus' 39 parables deal with money. In fact, Jesus mentioned money in many of His discourses (<http://bit.ly/1UAKV4a>).
- The New Testament speaks more about money than it does heaven and hell combined. It teaches about money five times more than it does on prayer.
- There are over 2,000 New Testament verses dealing with money and material things.

3. **Because there are many myths about money.**

- *Myth #1:* Poverty is next to spirituality (Deuteronomy 8:18; Psalm 1:3; Romans 12:5-8).
- *Myth #2:* Wealthiness is sin (Job, Abraham, Isaac, David, Solomon, Lydia, etc.).
- *Myth #3:* Money brings happiness (1 Timothy 6:17; Luke 12:15; Ecclesiastes 5:8-20¹).
- *Myth #4:* Prosperity Gospel — Spiritual faithfulness brings prosperity (Job, Jesus; Matthew 10; 1 Timothy 6:3-5).
- *Myth #5:* Money is the root of all evil (1 Timothy 6:10). —A better translation of this verse is, "Money-love is a root of all kinds of evil." This passage makes a statement about materialism or covetousness, not about money itself. Furthermore, "root" is indefinite (i.e., "a," not "the") and "all" is distributive, meaning "all kinds."

- *Myth #6:* Everything will turn out all right in the end (Luke 14:28-30).

4. **Because our financial stewardship will affect (for better or for worse) our spiritual success.**

- *Your spiritual understanding must impact your financial stewardship* (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1; Deuteronomy 8:3) — Financial success (whatever God has ordained that be for you), and any success, can be experienced only through a right understanding of biblical principles of finance.
- *Your spiritual passion may be impacted by your financial stewardship* (Matthew 6:19-24) — Money can become your god/idol.
- *Your spiritual maturity may be impacted by your financial stewardship* (1 Timothy 6:6-10) — Your perspective on and handling of your money can contribute to either your spiritual growth or decay.
- *Your spiritual responsibility may be impacted by your financial stewardship* (Luke 16:1-12) — Your material stewardship will be used by God to determine how much responsibility He entrusts to you spiritually/eternally. "Money is a training ground for God to develop (and for us to discover) our trustworthiness" (Larry Burkett).
- *Your spiritual influence may be impacted by your financial stewardship* (Luke 16:1-12).
- *Your spiritual reward may be impacted by your financial stewardship* (Luke 16:1-12; Philippians 4:17).

FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

"A sound financial plan, like any good plan, starts with God. ... The quest for financial security is...largely a matter of applying straightforward lessons that are taught time and again in the Holy Bible. When we align our priorities with God's priorities, and when we apply God's teachings to every aspect of our lives, we prosper."²

A Contrast of Starting Points:

	Christian Success	Earthy Success
Focus	Eternal	Temporal
Goal	God's glory	My greed
Source	God-given	Self-achieved

- *Christian Success* — “To continuously achieve my God-given goals.”
- *Earthy Success* — “To have whatever I want whenever I want it.”

1. Have the right theology of money.

- *God owns everything* (Deuteronomy 10:14; Job 41:11; Psalm 24:1; 50:10-12; Haggai 2:8; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 1 Timothy 6:7). Ownership and possession are not synonymous; while you may possess much in your home, you don't own anything (cf. 1 Chronicles 29:11-12, 16; Mark 8:36).
- *We are merely stewards* (Genesis 1:28; 2:15, 19; Psalm 8:6-8). God has allowed us to oversee His possessions as stewards. In fact, God's ownership demands our faithful, industrious, wise, and accountable stewardship (cf. 1 Corinthians 4:2; Matthew 25:14-30).³ We should use His money for His purpose, so we must know what His purpose is—God's glory through the gospel! We should leverage our finances in order to make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20)!
 - **Illustration:** A distraught man furiously rode his horse up to John Wesley, shouting, “Mr. Wesley, Mr. Wesley, something terrible has happened. Your house has burned to the ground!” Weighing the news for the moment, Wesley replied, “No. The Lord's house burned to the ground. That means one less responsibility for me.”
- *God has determined and has given you everything you have* (Deuteronomy 8:18; 1 Samuel 2:7; 1 Chronicles 29:12; 1 Corinthians 4:7).
- *It is God's self-assumed responsibility to meet our needs* (Matthew 6:25-34; Hebrews 13:5-6). While He uses our diligent labor (2 Thessalonians 3:6-12; 1 Timothy 5:8; Proverbs), it is not up to us to bear financial worries (cf. Philippians 4:6-7).

- *God loves to be asked, and He loves to be a giving Father* (Matthew 7:7-11; James 1:17).

2. Have the right value on money.

- *There is a difference between needs (for survival) and wants (for comfort)* (Matthew 6:25-34; 1 Timothy 6:8).
- *We must be content with what we have* (1 Timothy 6:6-8; Hebrews 13:5; Philippians 4:10-13; Job 1:21-22).
- *Materialism cannot coexist with worship* (Matthew 6:24; Luke 12:15-21; 2 Timothy 3:2) *and can lead to spiritual entrapment* (1 Timothy 6:8-10).
- *God has promised to provide, when we prioritize Him* (Matthew 6:33).
- *The “good stuff” cannot be touched* (Matthew 6:19-21; Ephesians 1:3-14; 2:1-10; Hebrews 10:34; 1 Peter 1:3-4)!

3. Have the right usage of money.

- *Consult God with every financial decision* (Proverbs 3:5-6; Luke 12:15-21).
- *Pay your taxes* (Matthew 22:17-21; Romans 13:1-7).
- *Give back to God* (Genesis 14:14-20; Matthew 23:23; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 8-9).
- *Be generous towards others* (Luke 6:38; 12:33-34; 1 John 3:17-18).
- *Trust God to provide* (Matthew 6:25-34; Hebrews 13:5-6).
- *Determine a budget in order to avoid debt and plan to save* (*Debt*—Proverbs 22:7; Psalm 37:21; Romans 13:8; *Saving*—Proverbs 21:5, 20; Proverbs 6:6-8; Genesis 41:25-27; 33-35; *Budget*—Luke 14:28-30; Proverbs 27:23; 1 Timothy 5:8).
- *Practice denying yourself materially* (Matthew 19:21-24).
- *Use your finances for the sake of the gospel* (Luke 16:1-13).

ENDNOTES

¹ Lesson 7 of our SMBS series through Ecclesiastes: “The Disappointment of Wealth” — singlefocusindy.org/ecclesiastes.

² *God's Simple Solutions: 12 Biblical Principles for Managing Money* (Nashville: Freeman-Smith, LLC: 2010), p. 11.

³ Randy Alcorn, “Steward and the Master,” <http://bit.ly/1UAKV4a>, from Randy Alcorn, “*The Steward and the Master*,” Chapter 10, *Money, Possessions & Eternity* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2003), pp. 139-149. In this article/chapter, Alcorn provides the following helpful overview of Jesus’ three Stewardship Parables:

- **The parable of the shrewd manager** (Luke 16:1-13) shows that each person should carefully invest his financial assets, gifts, and opportunities to impact people for eternity, thereby making preparations for his own eternal future.
- **The parable of the talents** (Matt. 25:14-30), shows that we’re each entrusted by God with different financial assets, gifts, and opportunities, and each will be held accountable to God for how he’s invested them in this life. We’re to prepare for the master’s return by enhancing the growth of his kingdom through wisely investing his assets.
- **The parable of the ten minas** (Luke 19:11-27) shows that those with comparable gifts, assets and opportunities will be judged according to their faithfulness and industriousness in investing them in God’s kingdom, and consequently will receive varying positions of authority in heaven.