

God's Scriptural Plan for Finances

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For us to be Scriptural with our finances let us be very careful and trust God that by His Spirit, He help us, because God's financial plan (if rightly understood), brings us great blessing spiritually and financially. However, like any other truth of the Bible, if misunderstood, or misapplied, it can be a curse, since God's truth concerning anything works both ways; if accepted it proves a stepping-stone to wonderful blessing in this life, and eventually eternal life; but if rejected and thrust aside it becomes a curse, a harm, and a hindrance. We have noticed that people who accept the truth of the Bible have received a great blessing and prosperity; while those who have rejected it, sooner or later disaster and distress has overtaken them.

We need to make no apology for taking up this subject of God's will concerning our money, because money is the paramount issue in this entire world. Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, said that the Gentiles sought after all these things; they were making that the paramount issue of life; their financial provisions and supplies. They were continually seeking first and above everything else, what they should eat, drink, and wherewith they were to be clothed. That is the condition of heart of sinners, and large majority of professing Christians today (the Pastor said). They all seek after these things.

The whole object of men in all they say and do in their natural state, is controlled by money. I was visiting a family in another city, he said, and there was a sister in that home (living with the ill sister that I was visiting), who was grieving over something. In the course of conversation, and in relating her troubles, she said: 'My husband is going to break up the home; I am going one way, the little girl another, and he, still another.'

We asked her what his motive was for this move. She said he told me it was that he might learn a new trade and take up some studies, and the reason for this was that he was not making enough money. So, he was breaking up his home and grieving his wife and was making all that sacrifice in order to make more money. The cry everywhere today is "more money", which is the cause of all the labor strikes which are so prevalent in these days. All of these conditions reveal that money is the paramount issue of every life in this entire world; it is the god of this world as far as material things go; in nations, in cities, in families, and in individual lives. It is the cause of many divorces in the world since much of family trouble is over money. The husband thinks the wife is spending too much money, and, then of course, they begin to have quarrels,

This need not be the case in Christian homes; if the husband is unreasonable and thinks the wife is too extravagant, what she needs to do is to lay the matter before God (without getting angry at all) and if God cannot use the husband to give her the proper amount needed, then He will send it to her out of her great bank account in Heaven. Or, if the wife is at fault, the husband can also commit his case to God, and He will straighten it out for him; he need not complain to his wife at all. God can take out that desire of the world and for worldly things and an outward show, out of the wife's heart.

We may have noticed that people have risked their lives for money. When the craze for gold was so prevalent, people would leave their homes and go to the Klondike and endure all sorts of hardships and privation for one purpose--to accumulate money.

Some men were willing to break up their home and thrust their wife aside (one whom he had promised to love, cherish, and provide for) all for the sake of a little money. People will commit crimes against others for the sake of small amounts of money; they will go into a house to steal a few jewels and money or cause other greater harm to gain their end for money.

We all need to know more about God's financial plan, because many people are selling their spirit, soul, and body to Satan, for the sake of a few dollars. We, as Christians, are to be directly opposite to the world in everything.

A book titled "Life of Trust", brought that out very clearly: saying that "The child of God has been bought with the precious 'Blood of Christ', and is altogether God's property, with all that he

possesses; his bodily strength, his mental strength, his ability of every kind, his trade, business, art, profession, etc., for it is written (1 Cor.6:19,20), "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

We are not to have money as the paramount principle in our lives. We would be surprised how far reaching this 'principle of money' is in an average Christian life (when put to the test the Pastor said). For instance, take a stormy night when there is Church service. The average nominal Christian will say: "We will not go out tonight; it is raining too much. That is what they said where I used to attend, he said.

Those same people would go to work in a blizzard or any other kind of inclement weather, to make five dollars a day. What does that signify? 'That a five-dollar note is of more importance to them than God's Truth.' They would miss a meal to make five-dollars, but to miss God's Truth means absolutely nothing to them. However, the Christian is not to seek these things, as money is not to be the paramount issue in their life. Money is to take its own place, while we are to 'seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness' (and all temporal things shall be added).

All of God's dealings with His people have been to get them away from that condition of having money as the paramount issue, of seeking first material needs and welfare of their bodies, instead, to transfer their desire to 'seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.'

As we consider God's dealings with Israel, we discover that His whole plan was to teach them that obedience to His Word (as their main object in life), was more important than importance of seeking what they should eat, drink, and wherewithal by which they should be clothed. The whole history of Israel from beginning to end, is based on the 'money question'. It was the greatest factor in God's dealings with them in their growth and development, and you and I are here because 'Israel's calling' began with the financial question. How was that? (one might ask). They would never have called on God if they had not gotten into a "tight place" financially. They had hard taskmasters to contend with; they were compelled to work

very hard and long hours, without any pay, because they were slaves; so, when their financial affairs became too desperate, they called on God and He delivered them

Then He took them over the Red Sea into the wilderness, where they had to trust God for their financial support; and He said, that all His dealing with them was for one great purpose. He suffered them to hunger, to thirst. He suffered them to be bitten by fiery serpents and wander in a wilderness for forty years. He said that He chastened them as a father does a son, and for one object, that they might learn that "man doth not live by bread alone"(and that was not to be their main object in life; 'material supplies', what they could supply in a human way for their temporal needs as the Gentiles did), but "by every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." (Deut.8:3) "And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knew not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know "that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live."

Jesus referred to this when speaking with the man who came to Him and asked Him to divide his inheritance and to intercede on his behalf. (Luke 12:13-15) "And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. And He said unto him, man who made me a judge or a divider over you? And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consists not of the abundance of the things which he possesses."

We should and need to take heed that we do not put money ahead of the kingdom of God. We should not allow money to be the paramount issue in our life, for a person's happiness does not consist in the abundance of possessions. Money should not be the big issue of life, but instead the 'will of God' should be our chief object.

In Luke 16, we have wonderful teaching on what an important matter the financial end of our salvation is. Money is the paramount issue of everyone in their natural or carnal state, and until we have been delivered from putting money first; until we get on Scriptural grounds financially; we will never have the 'spiritual light' and power which belongs to us, 'nor will we receive eternal life'.

Jesus brought that out many times, that our eternal life depends on how we handle our financial affairs. Some individuals may believe and practice it, but it is not taught in this day (although clearly brought out in the Word of God). We need to notice the emphasis Jesus placed on this matter. "And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he has wasted his goods."(Luke 16:1).

That the man had not handled the money entrusted to him in a right manner (is a parable for us to learn from). This parable represents God and His children. We, as His children are the stewards, and all that we possess belongs to God: our spirit, soul, and body. All that we possess belongs to God— ourselves and our property, etc. Therefore, this parable represents God and Christians (His children). This man, the steward, had not handled the money right.

(Luke 16:2-4) "And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? Give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward. Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do: for my Lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses."

We need to take notice of this plan of the steward. He probably received a month's notice, or a certain time at least was set for his discharge from his position; so he made a plan of his own in which when he would be out of the stewardship, where he would not be privileged to handle any more money, he would still be provided for; he would have a future home. Jesus said that all the Gentiles (children of this world) do just that, and that they are wiser than the 'children of light' (meaning Christians). (The master of the unjust steward commended him). (Luke 16:5-8) "So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my Lord? And he said unto him, a hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty. Then said he to another, And how much owes thou? And he said, an hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill and write fourscore, And the steward's lord commended the unjust steward."

We do not want to think that this employer commended the steward's dishonesty, but commended him for being far-sighted, commended his shrewdness for looking ahead, looking for his future supplies which were only for this life (which the Gentiles and sinners do all the time). All the slaving and work done by people, is for them to come to the place in life where they can sit down and say: "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry, (Luke 12:19).

Then (Luke 16:5-8) "And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely; for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."

What did he mean? He meant the children of the world (sinners) handle money in such a way that they will be looked after (taken care of) when they do not handle money any longer, when they are unable to work etc. But the children of God do not handle their money so as to have a home in Heaven (have a future home when done handling money). That is the thought that Jesus was revealing. "And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."

Money is continually tempting people to be un-Scriptural. The "mammon of unrighteousness" is a very serious and subtle temptation. We are to make friends through the use of the money which passes through our hands, (as that steward made friends to provide his future home when he was no longer handling his lord's money). Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail" (when you leave this course of action; when you go to that place where there is no more money to be handled (vs.9) "they may receive you into everlasting habitations." (said in plain English) 'Let us so handle the money which passes thru our hands while we live on this earth, that when we die or Jesus comes, we will have a home in Heaven. "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust in much."

Do we see that point? The money end in God's sight is the least end of our Salvation; it is the easiest for Him to provide, and it should be the easiest for us to trust for. Jesus practically said there that if a person is Scriptural financially (which is the least or smallest end), then they will also be

faithfully Scriptural in their spiritual life, which is the greatest end. (vs.11) "If therefore, you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?". (Do we see the significance of that statement? If we have not become Scriptural, if we are not willing to become Scriptural in our finances (and God does not ask us to be willing the first day we become a Christian), but we can soon take that 'attitude of willingness to obey God's will in all things', as the Spirit makes all that plain to us.

The Spirit leads us step by step, and all God asks of us is to be willing to yield to that leading. If a person is unwilling to allow God's will to prevail in their money matters (as the Bible tells us), God will never give them the spirituality that Jesus died to give them, which is 'real Holy Ghost power' as people had in Bible times. "If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" (Vs.11)

If we have not been Scriptural in handling the money that God has given us, how can He trust us with the spiritual life which Jesus came to give us? That can be paraphrased in our language. "And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?"

From that statement, we could easily infer that our eternal life hinges on this financial matter. If we have not been faithful in that which belongs to someone else, if we have not handled God's money according to His will, how shall He give us what is our own, what should belong to us? What is "our own" as referred to here? It is eternal life, the gift of God. We will never receive the greater gift if we are not faithful in this lesser thing, This knowledge would lead a person to ask the question, as did the disciples: "Who then can be saved?" Jesus said: "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible (Matt.19:25, 26).



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