

# GOD'S SCRIPTURAL PLAN FOR FINANCES-II

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A previous message on this subject told us "let us take heed and be very careful and trust God, that via His Spirit He may help us be Scriptural with our finances, since God's financial plan (if rightly understood), will bring us great blessing spiritually and financially.

However, like any other truth of the Bible, if mis-understood, or if mis-applied, 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 were reminded from Scriptures, that money is not to be our paramount issue in life, instead, we are to "*seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness*", all temporal things will be added for us, (as Jesus taught in His ministry for everyone to know and understand.)

Actually, all of God's dealings with His people have been to get them away from that mindset of having money as one's supreme concern, that of seeking first their material needs and other things for their welfare, instead, to transfer their desire to always 'seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness'.

As we consider God's dealings with Israel, we can realize that His whole plan was to teach them that obedience to His Word was more important than seeking after what they should eat or drink, and where-withal for other things.

It really was based on the 'money question'!, for they would never have called on God if they had not gotten into a "tight place" financially. He took them into a wilderness where they had to trust God for their financial support; suffered

them to hunger and to thirst, and when their financial situation became too desperate they called on God and He delivered them.

All of His dealing with them was for one great purpose, and for one main object, (for He chastened them as a father does a son) (that they might learn from Him).

(Deut.8:3) says, "*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."*

In Jesus' ministry, "He said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consists not on the abundance of the things which he possesses." [ That is telling us that we should, and we need to take heed, that we do not put money ahead of the 'Kingdom of God'. We should not allow money to be the supreme issue in our life, for real happiness does not consist in the abundance of possessions nor is it the pathway to Heavenly happiness. Money should not be our big object in life, but instead the 'will of God' should be our chief object. 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 through Jesus Christ, ('nor will we receive eternal life'.)

Jesus brought 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 the churches in this day (although it is 'clearly brought out in the Word of God').

Money is continually tempting people to be un-Scriptural. The "*mammon of unrighteousness*" is very serious and subtle temptation [as 'money is ever-tempting to dishonesty'.] but it should be used the Bible says, that "they may receive you into everlasting habitations."

(To say that 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', for Jesus said to all of us "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."

( In other words) 'If we have not been Scriptural in handling the money that God has given us (allowed us to handle), how can He trust us with the spiritual life that Jesus came to give us?

From that we could easily infer that our 'eternal life' hinges on how we handle the finances given us to use according to God's will and His financial plan. That understanding led the disciples of Jesus to ask the question: "*Who then can be saved?*" *Jesus replied: "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible* (Matt.19:25, 26).

The verses in the 16th chapter of Luke, say, "*And the master praised the dishonest steward for his shrewdness; for in relation to their own contemporaries, the men of this age are shrewder than the sons of Light.*"

[Shrewdness is not something for any person to be proud of, since a dictionary describes that as evil and cunning (and can't be trusted).

Jesus said, "*But I charge you, so to use the wealth which is ever tempting to dishonesty as to win friends who, when it fails, shall welcome you to the tents that never perish! The man who is honest in a very small matter, is honest in a great one also; and he who is dishonest in a very small matter is dishonest in a great one also.*"

(vs.11-12)"*If therefore you have not proved yourselves faithful in dealing with the wealth that is tainted with fraud, who will entrust to you the true good? And if you have not been faithful in dealing with that which is not your own, who will give you that which is your own?*"

We have other facts brought out in passages of Scripture which we can read, all of which touch on the real plan of God. All this Scriptural teaching on finances in the Bible, is to bring us to a total dependence on God Himself, for there is so much idolatry about us and around us.

We may criticize 'the heathen' for praying to their idols in the idol worshiping temples, but we may be depending on man and his means of healing for these bodies of ours, while we also depend on man and his ways and plans and financial policies for our money affairs.

In the Garden of Eden man trusted in God spiritually, physically, and financially, which kept him altogether with God as his 'source of supply'. Satan, thru his deceitful financial temptations,

has caused mankind to seek to get along without God, spiritually, also to seek help from man for health of his body, and thus, try to get along without God physically along with trust in human plans financially.

The Gospel message brought to us by Jesus Christ, is meant to bring us back to the blessings of the 'Garden of Eden'; trusting God for our 'spiritual welfare'; trusting Him for 'health of our bodies', (without the use of the least drug or medicine); and trusting Him for our financial support (without laying up 'treasures on earth').

God will make these things plain and clear to us, as we seek to know His will (but we are not to dictate to Him how that is to be done).

We are told to 'seek first His kingdom and righteousness' and then all these things are to be added. We are not to worry about how God is going to do it. He has ways we never could think of, and plans that we know not of. He may not do it in our way or as we think, but rather, in 'His own way', for His way is the best way.

(Rom.12:2) "*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*"

So we are brought face to face with the real issue involved in financial matters, which is to have faith in God. It is not a matter of gaining or losing money; but it is a matter of our simple knowledge of God and our faith in God.

FAITH IN GOD is the only issue involved. In 1st Timothy 6:17, we have a direct command that we are not to depend on our money; like the Gentiles do. "*Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches,*" (that is a very important point, that we are not to trust in 'uncertain riches', which means temporal things and plans of man).

(verse continues) "*but (trust) in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;*" (vs.18-20) "*That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate. Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come that they may lay hold on eternal life.*"

Weymouth's) "*They must be beneficent, rich in noble deeds, open-handed and liberal; storing up for themselves that which shall be a*

*solid foundation for the future, that they may lay hold of the Life which is life indeed. O Timothy, guard the truths entrusted to you, shunning irreligious and frivolous talk, and controversy with what is falsely called 'knowledge'; (arguing over which financial security plan of man, is better than the other one). The real Truth is that Eternal life depends on each one trusting in 'the living God', instead of on 'uncertain riches'.)*

In the 6th chapter of Matthew this is brought out very clearly, that *'where our treasure is', 'there will our heart be also'*. (Vs.19) *"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal"* (In other words, our surplus cash or our bank account, is not to be laid up in an earthly bank.

We are to have all we need to eat and wear, but our surplus cash is to be laid up in Heaven. This does not mean we will lose this money; that is not the issue involved. The question involved is 'where is the bank in which we lay our rainy-day account? (is it 'laid up in Heaven' by way of our giving our surplus money to the poor, (or do we have it laid up somewhere so that we can see it and get it when we need it).

God does not say that we are not to have a rainy day account, but He assures us we are to be prosperous down here; we are to have treasures of money for our old age, more than we can handle; but we are however, to place it where God's Word tells us to place it, which is to lay it up in our bank account in Heaven, where we can always tell our needs to God, and so draw from our Heavenly bank account anytime that we need it (which would surely include that time of our older age).

It is not a question of having money or bankers, rather, the only question involved is who we can trust to be our banker? If we have more confidence in man than we do in God, we will bank with man; if we have more confidence in the 'living God' we will bank with Him.

It is not a question of money, but of bankers and banks. And God tells us that our surplus cash is to be placed in His bank in Heaven (from where He promises that He will provide for us, and will watch over and protect us.

The carnal or worldly-minded person does not care to do it that way, for they think it is not safe, and that they could not draw it out

when they needed it; or they could not get the 'interest' when it was due.

God tells us however, that if we deposit our surplus cash in Heaven's bank, it will become an inexhaustible treasure, which cannot be overdrawn in this life, and, that we are to receive ten thousand percent interest (that is a hundred-fold). That is just part of our 'riches in Christ' because we have put our faith on God!

If we believe the lies of Satan, who is controlling the worldly or carnally-minded person, we will bank down here on earth; but if we believe God and have more confidence in Him, we will do our banking in Heaven's bank.

People who deposit their wealth in a bank here on earth, ask themselves the significant question: "I wonder which is the safest bank", and they will always select the safest bank and the most reliable. All we or anyone else need to ascertain is, that whether God's bank is absolutely safe, (that is the only question).

(From his "Life of Trust") George Muller was a man who had literally proven the truth of God's financial teaching (in Luke 12:33. He had sold his surplus property and goods and given the money to the poor, and he started to trust in the living God instead of trusting on uncertain riches; and there passed thru his hands an average of more than most professing Christians (who have their treasures laid up on earth).

But (Matt.6:19-21) says *"Lay not up for yourselves treasures where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."*

We all need to observe the following points concerning this part of divine testimony: It is the Lord Jesus, our Lord and Master, who speaks these things, as the Lawgiver of His people.

It is He who has infinite wisdom and unfathomable love toward us, Who therefore knows what is for our real welfare and happiness, and Who cannot expect from us any requirements that are inconsistent with that love which led Him to lay down His life to die on a cross for us.

As we remember then, Who it is who speaks to us in these verses, we need then to consider them; (His 'counsel', His 'affectionate entreaty', and that His commandment to us His disciples is) "*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal*".

The meaning of this is, obviously, that the disciples of the Lord Jesus, being strangers and pilgrims on earth; namely, neither belonging to the earth nor to remain in it, should not seek to increase their earthly possessions, in whatever those possessions may consist of.

This is a Word of Promise from God that is for the 'poor believers' as well as for the 'rich believers'; it has much reference to putting money into the 'savings bank', or to putting thousands of dollars into a 'funds account', or purchasing a house or a farm for financial security.

(It may be said to us) "does not every prudent and provident person seek to increase his means, that he might have a goodly portion to leave to his children", or "to have something for one's old age, or for a time of sickness", etc.?

One's reply could be that "It is quite true that this is 'the custom of the entire world'. It was that way in the days of our Lord, and the apostle Paul also made reference to this 'custom of the world' when he said that: 'The children ought not to lay up for parents, but the parents for the children.'

But while it is that way in the world (and we have every reason to believe that it ever will be so, among those who are of the world, and who, therefore, have their portion on the earth), then we, as being 'disciples of the Lord Jesus', being 'born again', being 'the children of God' (and not just nominally speaking), "but really, being true partakers of 'the divine nature', and 'being in fellowship with the Father and Son', as well as 'having in future prospect'(1 Pet.1:4) "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away", (then we ought to in every respect to act differently from the world, and so in this particular also.

The whole object as is expressed there, is to have us come to the place where we will depend upon God alone. If we place our money in an earthly bank, we will naturally depend on that bank when we are in need of money.

But, if we have our surplus cash deposited in God's bank, it will cause us to deal with Him when we need it; for Jesus said that "where our treasure is, there will our heart be also."

And He said that, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other; Ye cannot serve God and riches." (Matt.6:24).

Until we have transferred our trust from that paramount and supreme 'seeking after money', instead, for us to be seeking first the 'Kingdom of God' and His righteousness, we cannot serve God right.

We must have that different and Scripturally-correct object in our view and as our priority (so that we stay on the pathway to Heaven).



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## The First Century Gospel Church

S348R SCRIPTURAL FINANCES-II SOME MAIN POINTS:

1, GOD has a Scriptural financial plan for us to follow, and He gives us instructions and guidelines in His Word, that will always point us toward our getting rid of human plans and policies, and other laid-up means that can be depended on, and He will then lead us to always be trusting on Him alone, (because that is the only path that will lead us on the roadway to His Heavenly Kingdom.)

2. The instructions and examples given us in the Bible, are to warn us not to misuse finances in dishonest ways, nor to have any laid-up money or other assets that we could depend on for our finances when needed, for they will always be ever-tempting to use when needed. And so, as misplaced trust, would surely hinder and actually prevent us from receiving our Eternal Life in Heaven.

(Luke 18:22) "*On receiving this answer Jesus said to him, "There is still one thing wanting (or lacking) in you. Sell everything you possess and give the money to the poor, and you shall have wealth in Heaven; and then come, follow me."*