

SESSION 5: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Welcome and Review Last Week's Homework: 15 minutes

Session #5 Teaching: Financial Management: 10 minutes

WHY put God in the middle of your finances:

Having a good sense of money management skills is an effective way to reduce stress, so as we evaluate our financial situation, God should be in the center of the equation. Remember, **God is the provider**, so embrace **Matthew 6:31** in your money management. Don't become materialistic but keep in mind that we are not supposed to constantly worry about money, but, at the same time, if we live without being fiscally responsible, we end up being foolish. Be thankful for the opportunities within your financial blessings that God provides, but own your obligations.

THE PROBLEM WITH INCREMENTAL CHANGE

Always discuss finances as a couple. One spouse likely has more financial skills than the other and will naturally take the lead, but this is no excuse for the other spouse not to be involved in the family financial situation. You both need to understand the issues that you are facing, and make decisions as a team. Above all, listen to what God may be saying to you through your financial circumstances. Finances can be a dividing factor in marriage, but they can also bring you together in a new and deeper way, as you trust God together and follow His plan.

1. Give to God First

As Christians, our first financial priority, just as in every other area of life, should be God and His work. The issue of managing all of our gifts, including our finances, is of great importance to God. The Bible instructs us to give a tithe, or one-tenth or our income back to God. This is a great starting point for Christian giving and should be calculated on the gross salary. Luke 6:38 talks about the importance of giving. This is another way we put God first on a daily basis. It's important to remember that God provides you with the strength to work each day, therefore, it's only right to give financially to bring Jesus to our hurting world.

2. Set Up and Keep a Budget

In order to understand your financial situation and to keep on the same page with your spouse, you must keep and maintain a budget. Keep records so you can know where and what your funds are being spent on. Proverbs 24:3-4 talks about the wisdom around understanding your finances.

3. Set Aside Savings

It's critical to establish the discipline of setting aside money for savings. Proverbs 21:20 challenges Christians to see the bigger picture and what saving money each month can equate to. As a family grows, having savings built up will provide a foundation will allow for less stress. Consider getting 6 months of "emergency" money saved, and remember NOT to make savings an afterthought.

4. Stay Out of Debt

If you are willing follow this simple plan and begin to intelligently and prayerfully give away 10% of your income, I believe your financial situation will improve. More importantly, you will be storing up treasures in heaven, which is what really counts. After a few months, please write us and let us know what is happening to your financial position. I have never met an ex-tither and I would love to hear your story as you seek to control your finances and serve God in this way.

Small Group Discussion: 20 minutes

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- **Talk about tithing.**
- **Discuss the importance of budgeting.**
 - How is the “budgeter” in the family?
- **Discuss how and when to save.**
 - What has been modeled for you in the past?
- **Talk about debt.**
 - How do you feel about debt?

Small Group Wrap-Up: 10 minutes

What were the biggest take-aways and action items from your small group time?

Discuss This Week’s Homework: 5 minutes

- **Discuss how conflict is a GOOD thing. Without some conflict, we are not growing, so talk about how you can embrace it.**
- **Discuss how you’ve dealt with conflict in the past and how you want to handle it moving forward.**
- **Discuss how you can improve conflict resolution with your family.**
- **Discuss as a family if applicable.**

Discuss This Week’s Homework: 10 minutes

Focus on the **LIFE Journaling Method** and it will give you more insight to what God says about money

- **Pray for financial freedom and the work involved in getting there.**
- **Make some practical commitments (and RADICAL CHANGE) to address your finances.**
 - What are those commitments and when can you begin the journey toward financial freedom?
- **NOW, spend time this week creating a budget that you both can live and also create a savings plan to get a 6-month “emergency fund” set up. Be ready to review and discuss next week.**
- **Read info for Session #6 on pages 33–34**

SESSION 5: **Weekly Devotional: Day 1**

Read Matthew 6:19-34

God is the provider. Try to engulf Matthew 6:31 in your regiment of money management.

L=Listen: In your journal, write the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, listen to the Holy Spirit and focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal. Writing helps you remember the verses..

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I = Investigate: the context around today's Scripture reading. To whom was this written? Why? How does this passage fit with what comes before and after it? What is the Holy Spirit communicating through this text? Feel free to use Bible study tools for commentary:

Bible Study Tools, or Easy English Bible

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F=Focus: to the text to make it applicable for your own life. What is God saying to you personally through this passage? How can you apply what you've read?

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E = Engage: God. This can either be a short prayer or an action that you can take that day after reading the text. Is there a command to follow in the text? How are you different because of what you've learned?

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SESSION 5: Weekly Devotional: Day 2

Read Luke 6:37-49

As a Christian, it's important to remember that God provides you with the strength to work each day therefore, it's only right to give back to the church and to charities that have the intent to better the world.

L=Listen: In your journal, write the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, listen to the Holy Spirit and focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal. Writing helps you remember the verses..

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SESSION 5: Weekly Devotional: Day 3

Read Proverbs 21

Christians should be able to see the bigger picture and identify what saving a little money each month can equate to.

L=Listen: in your journal by writing the date and the Scripture you're studying. After you've read the passage a few times, focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal

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SESSION 5: Weekly Devotional: Day 4

Read Proverbs 24

Finally, money management is essential in Christian homes – especially the Biblical aspect that’s associated with budgeting. It’s important to remember God’s wisdom in everything we do – especially finances!

L=Listen: in your journal by writing the date and the Scripture you’re studying. After you’ve read the passage a few times, focus on a verse or two that stands out to you and then write out those verses in your journal

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I = Investigate the context around today’s Scripture reading. To whom was this written? Why? How does this passage fit with what comes before and after it? What is the Holy Spirit communicating through this text? Feel free to use Bible study tools for commentary:

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