



The Minister's Finances

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Did you know that the Bible teaches us that the way in which we handle our money determines how much God can bless us? Actually, Christ said that—probably because he knew that the way in which we handle our money is evidence of our heart and priorities. Scripture also teaches that if we don't handle our money well, God can't bless us with true spiritual blessings. Luke 16:11 says, *"So if you've not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?"* Our personal responsibility with worldly wealth or money, determines how much of God's blessing, or true riches he can give us. Boy, with that understanding let's consider some of the stewardship strategies that the Bible endorses.

Did you know the Bible supports the value of budgeting? It really does! In other words, planning how you spend your money. Solomon wrote in Proverbs that we should know the state of our flocks and put our heart into caring for our herds. It's interesting that when Solomon wrote that everybody had their assets tied up in flocks. Today, Solomon might say something like, "Know where your assets are," or "Know how you're spending your money." You know, financial freedom doesn't have to do with how much money you make, but rather how much you spend. *"The wise have wealth, but fools spend whatever they get."* So I would encourage you not only to know how much you make, but watch closely how much you're spending.

The Bible also validates and values savings, specifically saving for the future. The Bible says that it's wise to save. Proverbs 13:11 says, *"Easy come, easy go, but steady diligence pays off."* If you don't have an effective savings strategy, I would encourage you to check out and consider the various options of the Assemblies of God Financial Solutions. They are proven to be extremely effective in providing personalized investment services for savings, retirement, investments, plan giving, life insurances. Personally, I've been very satisfied with the service and the results that I've received from the Financial Solutions company. You know, savings really is biblical and it's huge. I was taught at an early age that when your outgo exceeds your income, your upkeep will be your downfall.

The Bible also endorses and promotes the value of giving. In talking about giving, I'm not necessarily referring to tithing. We know that one tenth, according to Leviticus 27, one tenth of everything that we have belongs to the Lord and must be set apart to him as holy. But I want to encourage you to be a generous giver with the 90 percent that the Lord privileges you and I to manage. You know when you think about it, the true test of stewardship is not so much about what your money is doing for you, but rather what your money is doing to you. Giving people are generally happier people, but stingy people, well they're unhappy. Have you ever thought about what the root word for miserable is?

It's miser. When I give to God I'm confident that he's going to supply all my needs according to Philippians chapter four. Honestly, I give because I want the blessing of God in my life: I've discovered that God can't bless what I don't give him. So I give to missions, ministries, special kingdom causes and appeals, simply because I want to have something in Heaven waiting for me. I'm convinced that what I spend in this life will eventually be gone, but what I give to kingdom causes, it's going to be waiting for me. Probably why Jesus said in Matthew chapter six that we should store up for ourselves treasures in Heaven where moth and rust can not destroy.

I also give because I want to be emotionally healthy; contentment is huge in life and ministry. Thankfully, Paul reminds us that contentment really is learned behavior. You know, managing our money is critical. And thankfully, there are clear scriptural guidances and resources, like those that the Assemblies of God Financial Solutions provide, to help us be good stewards of what God has entrusted to us. So ministers, I encourage you, protect yourself from any unnecessary stress, frustration, anxiety, depression and manage your money biblically.