

Biblical Principles for Financial Planning

There were two topics that no one seemed to talk much about growing up, likely because they aren't typical conversation starters around the church or family gatherings. However, these are subjects that many people engage in and spend a lot of time on, even if they don't discuss them openly. As I get older and spend more time in God's Word, I realize that He wants us to handle both of these areas with excellence, following His ways and His timing. It becomes evident that God has spent significant time addressing these issues in the Bible, and our task is to follow and obey His guidance. While I will leave one of these topics for another time, I want to focus on the financial legacy we are leaving behind.

As Christ followers, we firmly believe that this world is not our home, and we anticipate our heavenly dwelling. However, while we are here, we need to conduct ourselves responsibly. With that in mind, I want to call your attention to some key Bible verses:

Proverbs 10:4: “Lazy hands make for poverty, but diligent hands bring wealth.”

Proverbs 13:16: “A wise man thinks ahead; a fool doesn't, and even brags about it!”

1 Timothy 5:8: “But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”

1 Timothy 6:6-8: “But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.”

Matthew 5:45: “That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”

It's important to understand that fairness is not a biblical principle. This means that life as a Christ follower doesn't automatically mean everything will work out perfectly. God makes it clear that we should have a plan and be diligent in our efforts. Pastor Gary often says we should prepare as best as we can and then leave the rest to God.

Regarding your financial legacy, have you made any plans, or are you hoping things will just work out on their own? While it's true that things will work out, how much better could they be if you plan carefully and then trust God with the outcome? God desires for us to avoid laziness and foolishness, and He has already declared the outcomes of such behavior.

There are many financial plans available, and it's important to take personal accountability, study these plans, and choose one that fits your situation. As Dave Ramsey often says, "Adults devise a plan and stick to it; kids do what feels good." A financial plan isn't about how much money you make but about managing what you have. No matter where you are on your journey, it's never too late to reevaluate your plan. The best time to plant a tree was 25 years ago, but the next best time is today!

Key Principles of Action:

1. **Have a Written Budget:** Give every dollar a purpose or "name".
2. **Give:** Tithe, offer, and give charitably to others in need.
3. **Get Out of Debt:** Your income is your biggest tool, eliminate financial liabilities.
4. **Live on Less Than You Make:** Adopt a mindset of frugality.
5. **Save for Emergencies:** Prepare for life's unexpected events, build a safety net.

6. **Invest:** Consider 401(k), Roth IRA, personal business ventures, and real estate. Grow your wealth responsibly.

Final Thoughts:

Jesus taught that we should give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's. As followers of Christ, our primary pursuit should be godliness and contentment, being like Jesus and content with whatever He sends our way.

Comparison is the thief of joy, and it's essential to stay focused on your plan without worrying about what others are doing.

Ensuring your family is taken care of financially is a vital part of your legacy. Surprisingly, many people neglect life insurance, but for a few dollars a month, term life insurance can provide significant security for your loved ones in case of a tragic event.

My prayer is that we all have diligent hands in managing what God has entrusted to us.