

I. Introduction.

- A. God's infallible and all-sufficient Word provides needed wisdom. 2 Tim. 3:16f
- B. People get into financial trouble by violating biblical principles. Pr. 26:12 16:18 Gal. 6:7
- C. Wealth brings opportunity and challenge. 1 Tim. 6:17-19 Mt. 19:24
 - 1. How much may you enjoy through consumption? v. 17b
 - 2. How much should you save for the future? v. 17a Prov. 6:8
 - 3. How much must you give away? v. 18-19
- D. It is important to distinguish between:
 - 1. Biblical precepts, the violation of which is sin.
 - 2. Principles of wisdom, the violation of which is folly.
 - 3. Particular ways one may choose to apply precepts and principles.

II. General principles about money.

- A. Money myths.
 - 1. Money is evil.
 - 2. Money is the secret to security and happiness.
 - 3. Certain forms of wealth (i.e. gold, silver, euros, land) can never lose their value.
- B. What is wealth?
 - 1. Wealth takes various forms, including money (which is a store of value).
 - 2. How does inflation take place and what are its effects?
- C. The theology of wealth.
 - 1. God is the owner and source of all wealth. Dt. 8:18 Ps. 50:10 Hag. 2:8
 - 2. Money is a means by which you fulfill your responsibilities. I Ti. 5:8 II Th. 3:6ff
 - 3. Money provides an opportunity for you to learn to trust God. Pr. 3:5-6 Mt. 6:11
 - 4. Maintain a balanced perspective on money. Pr. 30:8-9
 - 5. Wealth can be a blessing. Pr. 14:20 19:4,6 10:15 22:7 Ecc. 5:18 I Tim. 6:17
 - 6. Wealth can be very dangerous. I Tim. 6:10 Pr. 16:16 19:1,22 10:2 16:8,19 22:1 28:6 15:16-17 17:1 23:4-5 22:2 28:6 11:4,28 Mt. 6:19 Is. 55:1-3 Rev. 3:17-18
 - 7. Most money problems are spiritual. Isa. 55:1-3 Mt. 6:20-21 Col. 3:5 Prov. 24:30ff

III. Acquire wealth wisely.

- A. Money myths.
 - 1. Work is a curse.
 - 2. You can quickly learn the secret to making lots of money without hard work.
 - 3. A college degree is the ticket to a lifetime of high earnings.
 - 4. The early church practiced a form of communism.
 - 5. The best way to get rich is to win the lottery.
- B. The theology of work.
 - 1. God works. Gen. 2:1-3 John 5:17
 - 2. He made us to work productively (and rest) in His image. Gen. 2:15 Ex. 20:8-11
 - 3. Human sin has made work toilsome. Gen. 3:17-19 Ecc. 2:20-21 I Pe. 2:18ff
 - 4. Christ reverses the effects of the Fall thus making our labor meaningful. Eph. 6:5ff
 - 5. We will work in heaven. Rev. 22:3

- C. Work hard and work smart to gain wealth. I Th. 4:11-12
1. Your work reflects your character. Pr. 10:4-5 6:6-11 27:23-24 15:19 I Tim. 5:8
 2. Wisdom's formula for success: Skill x effort = wealth. Pr. 10:4b 12:24 22:29
 3. Profit is not immoral, as long as you treat others fairly. Pr. 31:16,18 I Tim. 2:6
 4. Economic inequality is part of God's plan. I Tim. 6:17ff Pr. 10:4 21:5
 5. Sluggards suffer poverty and shame. Pr. 6:6-11 10:4a 24:30-32 26:14-15 22:13 20
- D. Do not compromise your integrity to gain wealth. Prov. 10:2 13:11,23 15:6 16:8
1. Don't be in a hurry to get rich. Pr. 20:21 28:20,22
 2. Don't cheat others. Pr. 20:10,23 21:6 11:1 16:11 Lev. 25:14 19:35-36 Dt. 25:13ff
 3. Treat those who work for you fairly and don't exploit the weak. Ex. 20:8-11
Js. 5:1-6 Pr. 22:16 20:14 11:24-26 Luke 10:7 Amos 8:4-6
 4. Don't make your work an idol by pursuing wealth at the expense of your relationship with God, your family, and the church. Mt. 6:24 Ex. 20:8-11
 5. God will destroy sinfully gained wealth. Prov. 13:11 20:17 22:16 15:27 28:8
 6. Gambling is a foolish way to try to make money. Prov. 12:11 28:19
 7. What about multi-level marketing? Pr. 21:6 16:8 Col. 3:5 I Tim. 6:8-11 Luke 12:15
- E. Practical wisdom for increasing income.
1. Don't try to circumvent God's way of acquiring wealth.
 2. You may not be able to pursue your dream career. Pr. 28:19 14:23
 3. If you are out of work, your full-time job is to get a job. Ecc. 11:6

IV. Spend money wisely.

- A. Money myths.
1. When money is tight there is no point to making a budget.
 2. Budgeting is unnecessary when one is consistently able to pay the bills.
 3. Owning more things can make you happy.
- B. Your money is not really yours. You are a steward of God's resources. Lev. 25:23
Luke 16:10-11 Ps. 24:1 Mt. 6:33 25:14 I Co. 4:2
- C. Honor the Lord from your wealth. Pr. 3:9-10 22:9 19:17 I Co. 16:2 Mt. 12:44
- D. Plan your outgo by making a budget. Pr. 21:5 24:3-4 Luke 14:28-29
1. Failure to live within a budget leads to the curse of debt.
 2. Control your expenditures and learn to be content with less. Pr. 27:23-27 21:17
Phil. 4:11-13 I Tim. 6:6-8
 3. There are various tools which can help you to make and keep your budget.
 4. The best thing most people can do for their budget is to get out of debt.
- E. Counseling questions.
1. How can we help people who have a hard time making and keeping a budget?
 2. What if one's spouse is unwilling to work within a budget?
 3. What lifestyle best honors God? I Ti. 6:17-19
 4. Should I keep giving/tithing if I am in debt?

V. Get out of debt.

A. Money myths (and debt traps).

1. Debt is a tool to create prosperity.
2. What you can spend is determined by how much credit you have.
3. You need to have some debt so that you can establish a good credit rating.
4. So long as you make your minimum payment on your credit cards you are OK.
5. Student debt can easily be paid back after one graduates and gets a great job.
6. Friends and family show their love for one another by co-signing loans.

B. Debt is always dangerous and often foolish. Rom. 13:8 Pr. 22:7 II Ki. 4:1-7 Neh. 5:5
Ex. 21:2ff Dt. 28:44,12 15:6

C. Practical wisdom regarding debt.

1. What you can spend is determined by what you have, not your credit limit.
2. Pay your obligations promptly (i.e. your credit cards). Pr. 3:27-28
3. If you can't control your use of credit cards, tear them up. Mt. 5:29
4. Don't borrow on depreciating items or on an item which cannot be quickly sold for more than you owe on it.
5. Don't make yourself liable for someone else's debt (co-signing/surety)! Pr. 6:1-5
22:26-27 17:18 11:15 20:16
6. Don't lend money to (or borrow from) friends and relatives!!!

D. Is it legitimate to borrow to buy a home? Prov. 24:27

1. Home ownership is not a surefire investment.
2. If you want to buy a home:
 - a. First get your financial house in order.
 - b. Make a large down payment (at least 25%)
 - c. Get a fixed interest rate loan (ideally for 15 years or less).
 - d. Make sure you can afford your house payment in the long term.
 - e. Be prepared for the extra expenses of owning a home.
 - f. Plan to be in the home for several years.
3. Your goal is to own your house free and clear.

E. What about borrowing for an education or a business?

F. Are we ever allowed to walk away from our debts? Ps. 37:21 15:4c Pr. 3:27-28 6:1-5
Ecc. 5:4-6

G. How can you get out of debt?

VI. Prepare for your financial future – save.

A. Money myths.

1. I don't have a large estate, so I don't need a will.
2. I don't need medical, disability, or life insurance because I trust God.
3. I don't need to save for retirement because I will be receiving Social Security.

4. I don't need to save for retirement because I plan to work until the day I die.
- B. Buy insurance so that you can be prepared to meet your obligations even in calamity.
Prov. 21:5 10:15 22:3 I Tim. 5:8
- C. Anticipate future expenses or financial crises through saving. Pr. 6:8 30:24-25 21:20 How much saving is too much (hoarding)? Luke 12:16-21
- D. Invest wisely.
 1. Investment risk tends to increase with anticipated return.
 2. Diversify your investments. Ecc. 11:2,6
 3. Never invest in anything you don't understand.
 4. Beware of "get rich quick" schemes and other investment scams! Ecc. 5:13-14
Pr. 13:11 28:19-20,22 15:27 27:12
- E. Make a will and create a legacy drawer. Pr. 13:22 19:14 20:21 II Co. 12:14

VII. Concluding applications.

- A. Make it your goal to be wise, not rich! 23:4-5 19:1 28:6,22 8:10-11 15:16-17 16:16
Ecc. 5:10, 15 Mt. 6:19-21,33 He. 13:5-6 Ps. 34:10 II Pet. 3:10-13
- B. Remember our Lord Jesus Christ Who paid your debt and made you rich. II Co. 8:9

VIII. Appendix.

- A. Recommended resources
 1. Money, Debt, and Finances: Critical Questions and Answers, by Jim Newheiser
 2. Money: Seeking God's Wisdom (31 Day Devotionals for Life), by Jim Newheiser
 3. Financial Crisis: What to Do When the Bottom Drops Out, by Jim Newheiser
 4. Money Possessions and Eternity, by Randy Alcorn
 5. The Treasure Principle, by Randy Alcorn
 6. Crown Ministries www.crown.org (free articles, online calculators and forms).
 7. www.youneedabudget.com
- B. Dave Ramsey's Baby Steps to Financial Freedom.
 1. Save \$1000 cash as a starter emergency fund.
 2. Start paying off your debt.
 3. Finish the emergency fund – 3 to 6 month's expenses saved.
 4. Invest 15% of your income in retirement.
 5. Invest/save for college.
 6. Pay off your home mortgage.
 7. Build wealth and give.
- C. What can people do in financial crisis? from Financial Crisis (Newheiser)
 1. Address the heart/root of your financial problems. Isa. 55:1-2 1 Tim. 6:10 Ps. 139:23f
 2. Increase income by following the biblical formula. Prov. 10:4 22:29 Ecc. 9:10 11:6
 3. Create and follow a budget – limiting lifestyle and pursuing contentment. Prov. 21:5,17
 4. Eliminate debt. Prov. 22:7 6:1-5
 5. Put your hope in God
- D. Practical steps to making and keeping a budget.
 1. Write down all your income sources (average per month).

2. Write down all estimated expenses by category (average per month).
3. Total expenses, including savings, must be equal to total income.
4. .Keep detailed records to ensure that you are staying within your budget.