

ABLAZE Men's Virtual Retreat

Budgeting When the Crisis Hits

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Frank Weyer

Introduction

The Bible clearly shows that how we view our money and possessions is significant. What we do with them will influence eternity.

Can money in and of itself, be corrupt or evil?

No – Because money is neither moral nor immoral,

- Money is neither spiritual nor unspiritual,
- Money can be used to further God's kingdom, or it can be used for purposes that are clearly contrary to God's Word,
- In a sense money is neutral, as there is nothing inherently good or bad about money in and of itself.

Further it is God who created money (Psalms 24:1,2)

And it is God who owns the money (Haggai 2:8)

God is concerned about our attitudes/motives toward money (1 Timothy 6:9,10)

Some indicators of "the love of money" would include the following:

- Excessive hard work (Proverbs 23:4,5)
- Limited or no time with God each day (John 10:27)
- Little or no involvement in ministry (Ephesians 2:10)
- Giving little to God's work (Proverbs 3:9,10)
- A lavish and selfish lifestyle with no desire to seek God's will (see the parable of the rich fool in Luke 12:15-21)

Regardless of how much money and material possessions you accumulate, the attitude of "the love of money" will never be satisfied (Ecclesiastes 5:10)

The “root cause” of the love of money is really a spiritual problem in that the individual is putting the desires for money and material things ahead of God (Matthew 6:24)

Some spiritual problems that can give rise to financial problems include the following:

- Covetousness (Exodus 20:17)
- Lack of contentment (Hebrews 13:5)
- Greed (Luke 12:15)
- Selfishness (James 3:16)
- Pride (James 4:6)

Often it is necessary to meditate on God’s Word to think differently (Romans 12:2) about money and material things. (Deuteronomy 6:6-9)

Some Godly attitudes with respect to money and material things would include:

- Contentment (1 Timothy 6:6-8)
- Giving generously (2 Corinthians 9:6,7)
- Unselfishness (Philippians 2:3,4)
- Thankfulness (to God of course) (Psalms 118:1)
- Humility (1 Peter 5:5-7)

Learning contentment is extremely important. (Philippians 4:11-13)

What’s Paul’s secret of learning contentment?

The most important thing is not the amount of money we have, but our attitudes toward it – and it is these attitudes or motives, that will determine how we use the money and resources that God entrusts to us. (Proverbs 16:2)

To obtain an understanding of the difference between godly attitudes as opposed to worldly attitudes, I’ve listed several below from www.coplandfinancialministries.org.

Worldly Attitudes

1. Trusting in money and material things

In parable of the rich fool (Luke 12:16-21), Jesus called this rich man a fool because he trusted in his money and material things, not in God.



Godly Attitudes

1. Trusting solely in God at all times and in every circumstance

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths." (Proverbs 3:5-6 NKJV)

Worldly Attitudes

2. Believing that money and material things will bring happiness and peace of mind.

In explaining the parable of the sower, Jesus said: *"The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful."*

(Matthew 13:22)



Godly Attitudes

2. Believing that happiness and peace can be obtained only through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." (John 14:27)

Worldly Attitudes

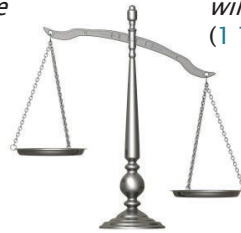
3. Having a strong desire to get rich

"Do not wear yourself out to get rich; have the wisdom to show restraint. Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle."
(Proverbs 23:4-5)

Godly Attitudes

3. Being content with God's provision

"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that."
(1 Timothy 6:6-8)



Worldly Attitudes

4. Serving money

"No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money." (Matthew 6:24)

Godly Attitudes

4. Serving God

"And the people said to Joshua, 'We will serve the LORD our God and obey him.'" (Joshua 24:24)



Worldly Attitudes

5. Being prideful

"God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." (James 4:6)

Godly Attitudes

5. Having humility

"Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up." (James 4:10)



Worldly Attitudes

6. Believing that you are independent of God

"You may say to yourself, 'My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.' But remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth," (Deuteronomy 8:17-18)

Godly Attitudes

6. Acknowledging that you are dependent on God

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." (John 15:5)



Worldly Attitudes

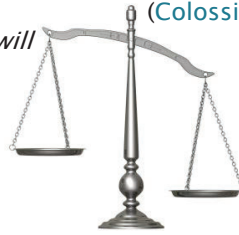
7. Having a heart that treasures money and material things

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:19- 21)

Godly Attitudes

7. Having a heart which treasures things of eternal value

"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things." (Colossians 3:1-2)



Worldly Attitudes

8. Being greedy

"Then He said to them, 'Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.'" (Luke 12:15)

Godly Attitudes

8. Giving generously

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." (Luke 6:38)



Worldly Attitudes

9. Being covetous

"You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."
(Exodus 20:17)

Godly Attitudes

9. Being content

For I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am in. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity;... I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:11-13, NASB)



Worldly Attitudes

10. Worrying excessively about money problems

"So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."
(Matthew 6:31-33)

Godly Attitudes

10. Trusting God to meet your needs

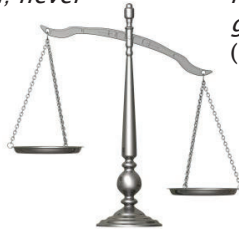
"And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19)



Worldly Attitudes

11. Loving money and material things

"Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'"
(Hebrews 13:5)



Godly Attitudes

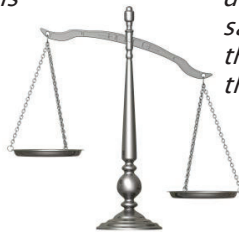
11. Loving God

"Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment."
(Matthew 22:37-38)

Worldly Attitudes

12. Being ungrateful and complaining about one's level of income things

"Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless."
(Ecclesiastes 5:10)



Godly Attitudes

12. Being thankful for God's provision

"Let them give thanks to the LORD for His unfailing love and His wonderful deeds for men, for He satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things." (Psalm 107:8, 9)

Christian Tithing During a Pandemic

The most important, and first part, of every budget would be your tithe.

So, what should a Christian do now - during the pandemic? Does it matter if I remember my tithe to the work of the Lord?

Indeed, your tithe does matter! The Church still needs you to remember to send your tithe.

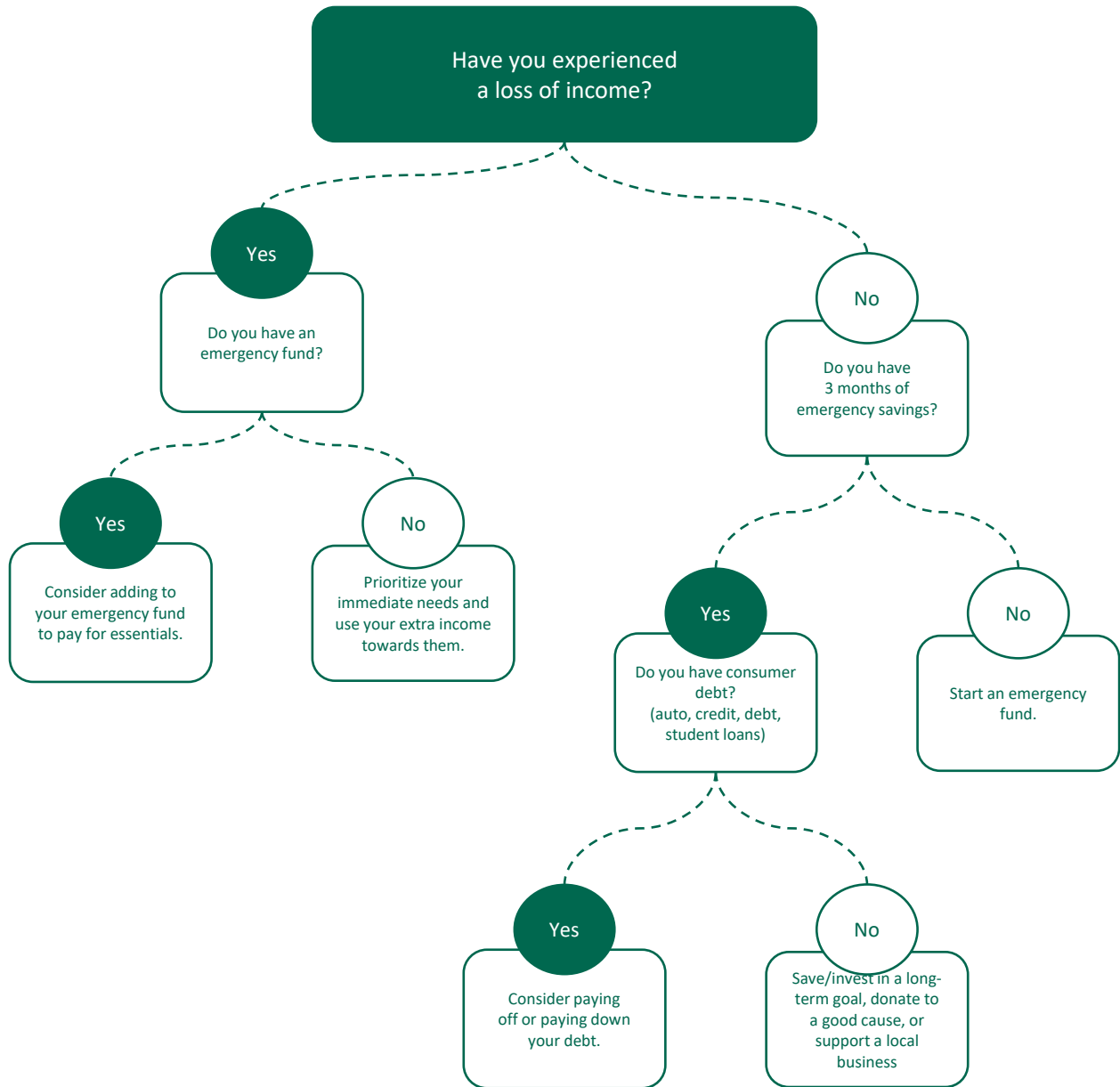
But the most important reason for you to remember your tithe is because it is important for YOUR Christian faith! It is an exercise of your faith and trust in the Lord. The temptation is to "get away" with as little as possible in our Christian responsibility. No one will notice that we aren't in Church or giving an offering right now. We might decide it is more important to safeguard the future and stash our treasure away in these uncertain times.

Without downplaying the importance of proper money management and a savings account for the family, we must re-affirm a complete trust in God by continuing our faithful stewardship. The goal of our faith is to trust in God rather than money, and one way we do that is by being generous in everything that we receive from the generous hand of God. Even as times become more difficult for more and more people around us, God will be calling us all to be MORE generous in our tithing - to the Church and otherwise!

We are to give God the first fruits of all that He gives to us. Christ commended those who tithed each part of their harvest. This means that we should give God the first fruits of our time: the first day of each week, and the first part of each day. Proverbs 3 says, "*Honour the Lord with your wealth and with the best part of everything you produce. Then He will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with good wine.*" (Proverbs 3:9-10 NLT)

In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" - Acts 20:35

Other passages that you may wish to study would be Genesis 14:18-20; Leviticus 27:30; Numbers 18:26; I Chronicles 26:20; Malachi 3:7-12; Matthew 6:19-24, 23:23; Luke 11:42, 16:9-14, 18:12; II Corinthians 8:1-5, 8:12, 9:7, 9:11; Mark 12:41-44 and Hebrews 7:1-10.



Setting Budgeting Objectives

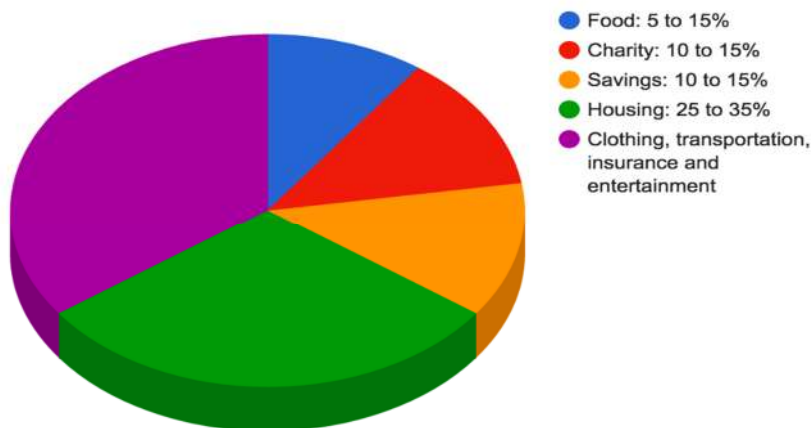
Typical objectives for your personal budgeting may include:

- To get control of your financial affairs
- To alter your lifestyle expenditures, or particular categories of lifestyle expenditures
- To reduce your debts (Proverbs 22:7)
- To start a regular savings program (Proverbs 21:20)

Basic Money Rules

- know where your money is going
- pay yourself "first" (after tithing; emergency fund, retirement savings)
- don't carry a credit card balance
- if you can't pay for it fully, don't buy it (except for mortgages)
- automate what you can (bills, savings)

Dave Ramsey Recommended Household Budget Percentages



Ten Ways to Trim Your Budget While Your Self-Isolating

1. Look for subscriptions to cancel.
2. Cut your cable or satellite service.

3. Shop your home and auto insurance.
4. Review cell phone bill.
5. Beware of online shopping while self-isolating.
6. Watch your food budget.
7. Cut your utility expenses.
8. Cancel home services.
9. Cancel your gym membership.
10. Sell things you no longer need to get cash.

What's Next?

- Insurance needs
- Tax planning considerations
- Your investment action plan
- Wills, estates, and powers of attorney
- Review your entire financial plan annually.

Strategies

Extra Income – Consider the possibility of additional work only after correcting buying habits.

Before Purchasing Give God an Opportunity to Provide the Item – If your purchase is in God's will, He will sometimes manifest Himself in our finances by providing it from a totally unexpected source. (II Chronicles 16:9)

Pray about Every Expenditure – That experience brings God directly into our lives and strengthens our faith so that we can trust Him in greater things.

-No purchase is too large, or too small, to pray about.

-Bring your family in on the petition before God and allow them to share in the spiritual blessing.

-Learn to discern God's will in the areas of new purchases. God may not grant you every wish, because we ask for things that will ultimately hurt us.

Set Your Own Goals – If you allow others to establish your plans and goals, you will be unhappy in the end, and unsuccessful in setting up your own budget. (I Timothy 6:10)

Seek Good Christian Counsel – To get help you must first be willing to ask for it. (Proverbs 11:14)

Borrow for Investment Purposes – Many consumer borrowers have investments. The interest expense on debt for consumer purposes is not deductible, interest expense paid for investment purposes generally is deductible. Borrowings should be structured accordingly whenever possible.

Train Your Children - The most important thing we as parents can do to teach our children is to straighten up ourselves and show them what we are doing, and why we are doing it.

What are You Going to Do?

With your personal finances there are four areas you must constantly and consistently review.

Pray and Read Your Bible - Make sure you have a relationship with God, so that He can give you direction and guidance with your finances. I suggest that you read Proverbs carefully and mark out all the wisdom regarding finances. Also, read what Jesus said about finances in the Gospels. Involve God in your personal finances.

Plan - Without a plan there is no purpose or direction. In every area of your finances, make sure you plan out what you are attempting to accomplish, how well you are accomplishing your goals, as well as what successes you have had so far. I suggest that you write out your financial plans.

Commitment - Once you have a plan, you must commit to it. You must agree to your plans and the methods with which you are going to accomplish them.

Evaluate - At least annually you must evaluate your committed plans with God's involvement. There are cases where you will evaluate more often, like with your written budgets. Learn from the past, keep focused for today and watch for tomorrow.