

## FOCUSING ON YOUR FINANCES

*Since you were brought back to life with Christ, focus on the things that are above—where Christ holds the honored position—the one next to God the Father on the heavenly throne.*

Colossians 3:1 (GW)

*Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. <sup>24</sup> Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.*

Psalms 139:23-24 (NLT)

*To the faithful you show yourself faithful; to those with integrity you show integrity. <sup>26</sup> To the pure you show yourself pure, but to the crooked you show yourself shrewd. <sup>27</sup> You rescue the humble, but you humiliate the proud. <sup>28</sup> You light a lamp for me. The LORD, my God, lights up my darkness. <sup>29</sup> In your strength I can crush an army; with my God I can scale any wall.*

Psalms 18-25-29 (NLT)

*Truly God is good to Israel, to those whose hearts are pure. <sup>2</sup> But as for me, I almost lost my footing. My feet were slipping, and I was almost gone. <sup>3</sup> For I envied the proud when I saw them prosper despite their wickedness.*

Psalms 73:1-3 (NLT)

*Then I observed that most people are motivated to success because they envy their neighbors. But this, too, is meaningless—like chasing the wind.*

Ecclesiastes 4:4 (NLT)

*"No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money.*

Matthew 6:24 (NLT)

*"So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' <sup>32</sup> These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. <sup>33</sup> Seek the Kingdom of God<sup>[a]</sup> above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.*

Matthew 6:31-33 (NLT)

Why bother talking about FINANCES?

- It is PRACTICAL.
- It helps us GROW as Christians.
- Generosity will STRENGTHEN the church.

What finances and generosity have TAUGHT me:

- To THANK God.
- To TURN to God.
- To TRUST God.

Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Proverbs 3:5 (NLT)

<sup>17</sup> Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. <sup>18</sup> Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need,

always being ready to share with others. <sup>19</sup> By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may experience true life. 1 Timothy 6:17-19 (NLT)

What can I do TODAY?

- Establish a GIVING PLAN because generosity is choice.

*The generous will prosper; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed.*

Proverbs 11:25 (NLT)

*But generous people plan to do what is generous, and they stand firm in their generosity.*

Isaiah 32:8 (NLT)

- Choose to put God first.

*Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops.*

Proverbs 3:9 (NIV)

- Choose to think of others.

*We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. <sup>17</sup> If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God's love be in that person?*

1 John 3:16-17

- Choose to support Kingdom purposes.

- Establish a SPENDING PLAN because stewardship is a lifestyle.

Stewardship: The act of utilizing and managing wisely all resources God provides to please the Master and the betterment of His creation.

- Create a budget.
- Deal with debt.
- Make savings a priority.
- Learn to say no.

CLOSING TRUTH:

Focused finances and generosity reflects GOD'S HEART and should reflect the CHURCH and OUR LIVES.