

Are You Well Managed in Your Finances?



Every day, we have clients start a new financial journey where they are trying to sharpen their money skills so that they can reach the goals that they have set in front of themselves. Sad is the day when you are unable to make progress towards the life that you feel God has for you. Coincidentally, the area that holds many of us back is our personal finances. Some of us are really good at managing our money and others of us stink. Quick evaluation- on a scale from 1-10 how do you manage your money.

(I stink) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (I rock)

Most of us find ourselves somewhere between stinking and rocking. As to be expected.

Over the years we have come to believe that are 3 key mindsets that guide us to be a rockstar in our finances. The phrase we have coined as a goal for our clients is **Generous Steward**. Let's unpack that a bit.

Psalms 24:1-2 says "The earth is the Lord's, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it. For He has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers."

In this passage, we see a straightforward truth- God owns it all. Everything you see has an ownership deed signed by God. He owns it all. Stewardship is acting like God owns it all. My challenge to you (and to myself) is to become a **Generous Steward**. To be generous is to give of your finances to advance God's kingdom. To be a Steward is to be well-managed and God centered in your finances. Let's look at each of these aspects separately.

1) Are you God centered in your finances? What would you point to that proves your assessment that you are God centered in your finances. To be focused in this manner is the essence of Stewardship. If we have this mindset, we becoming clearer over time that God owns our stuff and we are the managers of it. Years ago, I was the General Manager of a restaurant in a small regional restaurant group. I was not the owner of the store I ran. I had not put up one dime, I didn't create the concept and if things went south, I would not have to deal with the ramification of business failure (except maybe lose my job). I was simply the one that the owners had put in charge to manage their affairs. I served at the pleasure of the owner. With that mindset, clear input from the owners was helpful for me to live out my role. Same is true of God-centered finances. God owns it. We manage it. For His pleasure.

2) Are you generous towards God's Kingdom? The average believer is giving 1-3% of their income and feel terrible about it. Many Christians we talk with want to be more generous but aren't sure how to pull it off. This is a huge issue in their personal finances. And this is a huge issue in the Church with our responsibility to fulfill the Great Commission. It stands to reason that if God owns the money He has given us to manage, that He might be interested in some of it going towards His causes. One guy says it this way- God gives us money to take care of our family and His family.

In the New Testament, there are at least seven key areas believers are expected to give. A helpful acronym to remember is **WELCOME**.

- W- Widows and orphans- James 1:27
- E- Elderly parents- I Timothy 5:3-16 (focus vs 8), Mark 7:9-13
- L- The local church- Acts 4:36-37, 1 Timothy 5:17-18, Acts 13:1-3 , 1 Corinthians 16:1-4, Galatians 6:6-10, I Timothy 5:3-16
- C- Other Christians- Acts 2:43-47, 4:32-35, 6:1-6; 2 Corinthians 8, 2 Corinthians 9, James 2:14-17, 1 John 3:16-18
- O- The poor- Matthew 6:2-4 (Sorry about the alliteration- two O in pOOr.)
- M- Missions- 1 Corinthian 9, 3 John 5-8 , Romans 15:22-24, Acts 15:3, Titus 3:13-14, 1 Corinthians 16:5-6
- E- Personal Evangelism and Discipleship- Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8, Matthew 5:13-16, Hebrews 13:2, Ephesians 2:10

What do you have a heart to give towards?

3) Are you well-managed in your finances? The last area to consider in the Generous Steward is the management of the resource in your charge. That is really the essential area to address in this article. Practically speaking, do you manage money well. In our work with individuals and families we focus on 7 key areas to manage in personal finance. Here is the list. We will address the specifics in future articles but here is the starter list.

- Do you have a **WORKING BUDGET**– Proverbs 21:5
- Are you reaching your **GIVING** goals- 2 Corinthian 9:6-7
- Are you **SAVING** for the future- Proverbs 21:20
- Are you **MANAGING DEBT** well- Proverbs 22:7
- Are you protecting your family with **INSURANCES**– Proverbs 27:12
- Are you protecting your family with an **ESTATE PLAN**– Proverbs 13:22
- Do you have **INTEGRITY IN YOUR FINANCIAL DEALINGS**– Proverbs 28:6

Moving towards becoming a **Generous Steward** is a worthy endeavor. We would contend that it is a Biblical pursuit. In fact, I would go so far as to say that it may be one of the last areas of our personal sanctification that many of us have. Charles Spurgeon says, “With some Christians the last part of their nature that ever gets sanctified is their pockets.”

If we can help you get there let us know. We would love to help. www.freedom5one.com