OUTLINE – BIBLICAL STEWARDSHIP FOR TODAY

1) Biblical Stewardship Overview
2) Money – Making Money is Easy, Keeping it is the Hard Part
3) Debt – The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly
5) Benevolence Giving
6) God’s Wisdom on Money
7) God’s Economy
8) Prosperity Preaching – Pros & Cons
9) Attitude is the Key for God to Bless
10) Biblical Investing vs Gambling
11) Retirement and Taxes

INTRODUCTION / GOALS / OBJECTIVES

- We all would enjoy having more money to live on, to support God’s work, and to share with the needy — ALL very admirable desires
- BUT, do we need more money to accomplish God’s will?
  - There is no guarantee God will bless any of us materially (e.g., widow w/ 2 mites, the destitute widows of 1 Tim 5, the Apostles), but we want to be positioned to be blessed….Ps 84:11; Ecc 5:19
- AND, would having more money really make us more like Jesus?

TEST QUESTIONS

- Do we live in a □ Growing Economy? □ Stable Economy? Or a □ Collapsing Economy?
- In the near term (1-5 years), will things □ Get Better? □ Stay the Same? □ Get Worse? Or □ Don’t Know; Don’t Care
- In the long term (5-10 years), will things □ Get Better? □ Stay the Same? □ Get Worse? Or □ Don’t Know; Don’t Care

YOUR Answers Determine What YOU Need To Do

SOME THOUGHTS ON MONEY AS FOUND IN THE BIBLE

- Almost half (17 out of 38) of the Lord’s parables are about Money
- Money is talked about more than Heaven or Hell
- Only the topic of Love exceeds that of money in the NT
- Out of 31,101 Bible verses, 2,172 (~7%) deal directly with wealth
  - But there are only 272 verses on believing; 371 verses on prayer; and 714 verses on loving (1/3 as many as money)
- More than 10% of all wealth passages are in Proverbs (~250 verses)

Obviously, God Considers Money an Important Topic

Is God more concerned about what is in our checking accounts or what is in our hearts?

- We need to have God’s perspective on Wealth. But our fallen sin nature distorts our view, and we have things backwards a lot.
- It is God that brings poverty and gives wealth ……………1 Samuel 2:7
- God has no problem removing money away from us, His children, if it becomes a hindrance to our spiritual growth
- THEREFORE, we need to evaluate our hearts for GREED, then we can better position ourselves to be blessed …………BUT HOW?
  - Obedient living
  - Trusting God to keep His word to meet our needs DAILY
  - Illustration on Greed…………………………..Ephesians 5:1-6

MORE BIBLICAL CONCEPTS ABOUT WEALTH

- Must watch out for GREED or covetousness for God puts it in the same category as idolatry, immorality, & blasphemy: (Ex 18:21; Ps 119:36; Pr 21:26; Ecc 5:10-12; Jer 8:10; Mr 7:20-23; Lk 12:15; Rom 1:29; Col 3:5; Eph 5:3-5, 1 Cor 6:10; 1 Tim 6:10; Heb 13:5)
- Prosperity on earth is not guaranteed (Pr 27:24), but Peace & Contentment are (Phil 4:7-13, Isa 55:2)
- Most of our toil is not to survive (Ecc 6:7) but because of envy of our neighbor (Ecc 4:4)
- “It is more blessed to give than to receive” …………Acts 20:35
- God is a God of percentages – He blesses proportionally to one’s ability to give, but not always materially (Prov 11:31, Rom 11:35).
  - Some 30x, some 60x, some 100x ……………………………..Mat 13:23
- What is the source of all of all of our problems? 1 Tim 6:10; Jms 4:1
- Where is our true wealth retained? ……………………Ephesians 1:3
- THEREFORE, we need to be more focused on the things of God (Heavenly-minded) instead of so earthly focused …………John 6:27
  - The phrase “He’s so heavenly-minded he’s no earthy good” is not Biblical. We need to be very heavenly-minded
- And what should be our true desire? God or money? …………Ps 73:25
  - and we have to discipline ourselves for this desire
- We even need to treasure God’s Word above everything …………Pr 7:2

RIGHT PERSPECTIVES ON MONEY

1. To meet the needs of family ………………………………..1 Timothy 5:8
2. To further the Gospel………………………………………………Philippians 4:14-18
3. To care for the poor ……………………………Proverbs 19:17; Matthew 19:21
4. To give more ……………………………Proverbs 21:26b, Acts 20:35

MANY TIMES CHRISTIANS ARE IN FINANCIAL WOES BECAUSE OF…

1. Poor stewardship / Not prioritizing life ……………………………Pr 24:27
2. Godly testing………………………………………………………………………………Job
3. For discipline reasons, and ………………………………………………….Jer 5:25
4. At other times we find ourselves in financial hardships because it rains on the just as well as the unjust …………..Mat 5:45

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS / BENEFITS

- We must position ourselves to be blessed
  - Live a godly life and be diligent in your faith, including in the area of giving/generosity …………Psalm 84:11; Ecc 5:19
  - It’s OK to pray for prosperity & for needs to be met – but let God be God & trust Him to meet your needs as He sees fit ......3 John 2
  - “How we handle money is a strong indicator of our level of spiritual maturity” – Larry Burkett.

NEXT WEEK: Making Money is Easy, Keeping it is the Hard Part

- According to Solomon, money is the answer to everything
  - BUT is it? …………………………………………………Ecc 10:19

GOD’S RETIREMENT PROGRAM FOR CHURCHES IS OUT OF THIS WORLD!