Biblical Principles of Money Management

2026 Jul 23

Contents

1 Wisdom in Managing My Resources

1.1 God desire us to be wise

Two observations can be drawn from this passage

> Eph. 5:15-17. See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, 16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is

1. First, God expect us to be wise in life. Our God is a wise God and He expects us to be His imitators in all areas of our life including His wisdom. He does not want us to live a foolish life by wasting the resources He has given us. Instead, we need to be wise in handling our life.

2. Second, who is a wise man? This passage also tells that a wise person is the one who understand the will of God for his life. We may have several definitions of a wise person. That does not make a person wise in God's perspective.

   Instead of defining in detail who is a wise person and who is a foolish person, I wanted to give an example of a foolish man and a wise man from the parables taught by Jesus recorded in the gospel according the Luke.

1.2 Model of an unwise man

First we will see the example of a foolish man seen in the parable of the rich fool which we read in

> Luke 12:16-21. Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. 17 And he thought

within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' 18 So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry."' 20 But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then who's will those things be which you have provided?' 21 "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God"

Here is man who is successful in life! His ground yielded plentifully. Will this great harvest happen automatically? This would not have happened without his hard work. He knew the soil, he understood the season, he understood what manures, and manages the workers, and so on. In short he worked hard and smart that yielded a great harvest. He was a successful person, may be in our eyes. However, God calls him a fool. Why God called him a fool? We could see three possible reasons why God called him a fool:

1. First of all, he was concerned about his own needs only. Observe carefully what he says. Six times he was mentioning 'I will'. He is foolish because he never realized that there is a God behind his riches. It never occurred to him that this God would expect him to consider others in spending his riches.

2. Second, he was satisfied with present needs only. He is foolish because he didn't realize that there are greater needs in life than the present day material need. He thought that life consist of meeting the needs of the body alone. He ignored that there is a hungry soul inside him that needs different nourishment.

3. Third, he was ignorant about a different era ahead. He thought the way thing are today will continue tomorrow and day after. He was completely ignorant about eternity. He was oblivious of a new era where today's riches have no value. He didn't know that one day he has to give an account to his creator.

This is an example of a foolish man. He was concerned about his needs only, he was satisfied with present needs of the body only, ignoring the needs of the soul, and he was ignorant about a different era ahead where he has to give an account to his creator. It is good to examine our life. Now, the Lord Jesus doesn't want us to be like this foolish person. So he gave the example a wise person in the form of a parable which is a bit difficult to understand.

1.3 Model of a wise man

The picture of the wise man is illustrated in the parable of the shrewd steward in

> Luke 16:1-8. He also said to His disciples: "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. 2 So he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.' ?3? "Then the steward said within himself, 'What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. ?4? I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.' ?5? "So he called every one of his master's debtors to him, and said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' ?6?And he said, 'A hundred ??measures of oil.' So he said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' ?7? Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' So he said, 'A hundred ??measures of wheat.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' ?8? So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light

Note that the master commended the steward for his shrewdness. It implies that Jesus also comments anyone who acts like him. Then there is problem. He was a shrewd steward. Should we also be like this shrewd steward and manipulate accounts for personal gain? Observe carefully, that the master was appreciating not manipulating the account, but the shrewdness he had shown in securing his life. He was wise in handling his life. Let us try to understand the parable in little detail.

1. There are two important time stages in this parable. The day he realized that he has to give an account to his master and the day he will lose his job. This marks two periods, the time period up to losing the job and the time period after losing the job. We will see in this parable how he handled the crisis in his life. This shows his shrewdness resulting in getting appreciation from the master. Let us try to understand the characteristics of wisdom from this parable and learn some principles.

2. He was not satisfied with the present needs but was concerned about the future need. He knew that he is going to lose his job and days ahead are not smooth. In other words, he is wise because he was concerned about his future need. He recognized there is a different era ahead and he was concerned about that era.

3. He made a quick plan for the future. He realized that time is running out very fast and in any day he will lose his job. So he made a plan to secure, not his present life, but his future life. He was ashamed to beg and dig in the future life. It indicates that he has a desire to have a respectable future life. He believed that his actions today's can bring an honorable position in the future.

4. He made a brilliant investment plan for tomorrow using today's ability. He called the first debtor and reduced his debt from 100 measures to 50. Note that he did not take any commission for this reduction. That is his brilliance. He knew that if he takes any commission, his master can take it from him any time. What was his strategy? By not taking any commission, he converted his commission into a currency of unspecified value which also has value even after he loses his job. This currency is the favor his debtors will show to him after losing his job.

5. He made a business plan that benefited all the parties; himself, the debtors, and the master! He was benefited since even after losing the job his debtors will receive him to their houses. His debtors are benefited because their debt is reduced significantly and they have no problem in entertaining the steward who reduced their debt. Is the master benefited in this business? Yes, the master is benefited in this business and that is why he has commended the steward. But, how is the master benefited? Although the parable is not very explicit, the most probable reason could be something like this: The steward went and told the debtor the master is gracious person and I will recommend to him to reducing your debt. Now when the debtor meets the master, he will thank and praise the master for his generosity! Master is benefited by getting him a good name. Note, for very rich master, their reputation is more important than the money.

6. What all things we can learn from this parable?

   (a) We need to be wise like this steward.

   (b) We need to realize that we too have two important time stages, the present life and the life after death which is eternity.

   (c) We should not be satisfied with the present day needs and should be concerned about the eternity.

   (d) We should know that the time available in the present life is very short and should make a plan for the eternity.

   (e) We should make a brilliant investment plan: Use the resources available to us and invest in some currency that is valid in eternity also. What is that currency? The only currency that we can take to eternity is things done for the people. Therefore, use today's resources and invests in people so that there will great riches in eternity.

   (f) Lastly, what is this business plan that benefits all the parties? It is sharing the gospel and leading a person to discipleship. In this business, we as stewards are benefited for these people in whom we invested our resources will be the currency in eternity; the people are benefited as their debts/sins are forgiven, and the master is also benefited as He is glorified.

2 Managing My Resources: Money

2.1 Introduction

Money is an important theme of the bible. But money is not spiritual. Someone observed the following:

1. The 16/38 parables of Jesus are on money,
2. About 1/10 verse in the Bible speak about money related matters,
3. There are 16 times more verses than on baptism,
4. There are 32 times more verse than on Lord's Table.
5. There are more verses on money than prayer!

2.2 Spiritual Dimension

1. Faithfulness of God (Mat 6:24-34)
   (a) God Promised to Provide our needs
      i. Expect our dependence on God (Have faith in Him)
      ii. Experience the love of God (He is our Father)
      iii. Express gratefulness to God's provisions (Opposite of worry)
   (b) God demonstrates His power to provide
      i. Through natural means
      ii. Through dramatic ways
2. We need to be Faithful to God (Luke 16:1-13)
   (a) We are stewards of HIS money

i. God entrusted us with His riches
ii. He will ask an account

(b) Money is not eternal, but people are

i. Currency and riches has no value in heaven
ii. People will blessing our riches to heaven (Mt 6:19)

(c) Money is a terrible master, but great slave

i. Greed for more money make one inhuman (Luke 16:14)
ii. But, money can be used for so many godly purposes

(d) Faithfulness in money is an indicator of spiritual growth

i. Master praised for he made a financial plan
ii. How a person handle money indicate his spiritual health

2.3 Principles of Giving

1. Secretly

   Mat 6:1-4. "Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. 2 Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 3 But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly

2. Generously

   Luke 6:38. Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you

2 Cor. 9:6. But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully

3. Cheerfully

2 Cor. 9:5. Prepare your generous gift beforehand, which you had previously promised, that it may be ready as a matter of generosity and not as a grudging obligation. 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver

4. Voluntarily

2 Cor. 9:1-2. Now concerning the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you; 2 for I know your willingness

2 Cor. 9:7. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver

5. Systematically

2 Cor. 16:1-2. Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: 2. On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come

6. Sacrificially

2 Cor. 8:8-9. I speak not by commandment, but I am testing the sincerity of your love by the diligence of others. 9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich

7. Commitment

> 2 Cor. 8:10-12. And in this I give advice: It is to your advantage not only to be doing what you began and were desiring to do a year ago; 11 but now you also must complete the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to desire it, so there also may be a completion out of what you have

8. Proportionately

> 2 Cor. 8:12. or if there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have

9. Prudently. Sow where the soil is fertile.

> Gal 6:7. Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap

2.4 Spiritual Giving: How much to give and how to give?

New Testament does not give any details about how much and how to give. Its focus is the quality and assumes that people are aware of the quantity. So Old Testament must give some clue. If so, how and how much Old Testament expects a Jew would give. Jews have three type of giving.

2.4.1 Levitical Tithe

The 10 percent of their income belongs to the Lord, and the Lord has asked them to give to Levites and Priests for they take care of the spiritual responsibilities of the people. They use the money to support Levites and Priest and the maintenance of temple and synagogue.

> Num. 18:21. Behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tithes in Israel as an inheritance in return for the work which they perform, the work of the tabernacle of meeting

2.4.2 Festive Offering

This is ten percent of their income. They should use this money for meeting the expenses to go to Jerusalem for the Jewish festivals, and voluntary sacrifices to be eaten as a fest with friends and family

> Deut. 14:21. You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year. 22 And you shall eat before the Lord your God, in the place where He chooses to make His name abide, the tithe of your grain and your new wine and your oil, of the firstborn of your herds and your flocks, that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always. 26 And you shall spend that money for whatever your heart desires: for oxen or sheep, for wine or similar drink, for whatever your heart desires; you shall eat there before the Lord your God, and you shall rejoice, you and your household

2.4.3 Charity for poor

This money is 3.33 percent of their income and is used to feed the poor and needy people including strangers

> Deut. 14:28-29. At the end of every third year you shall bring out the tithe of your produce of that year and store it up within your gates. 29 And the Levite, because he has no portion nor inheritance with you, and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who are within your gates, may come and eat and be satisfied, that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do

So, how much a Jew would give? 23.33 percent. [Illustration: A preacher once taught this to his congregation and at the end of the message, he gave his address].

These are Old Testament stipulations and one can argue these don't apply to a New Testament believer. Nevertheless, Jesus tells what He is expected of us in

Mat. 5:17, 20. Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. 20 For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven

2.4.4 Practical Advice

The spirit of these verses is that a New Testament believer should exceed in all practical righteousness of a Jew, both in terms of quality and quantity of giving. It is true that 23.3 % is quite large. More important than this percentage is, some practical principles of giving can be drawn from Jewish giving. A very practical at the same time confirming to the above Biblical principle suggested below.

1. Let there be categories of giving: tithes, offerings, and charity.
2. Decide a reasonable percentage for each category. For example, let there be **x** percentage of income be set apart for tithe. Similarly, **y** percentage of income for offering, and **z** percentage for charity.
3. Tithe: Since tithe is Levitical money, spend x percentage of income for Local ministry and Global missions. Local ministry is where ones spiritual needs are met. So one part of the tithe money is for the church, fellowship, and organization that meets one's spiritual needs. The other portion is for frontier mission work where one cannot go. Read mission magazine, and talk with some people to identify where there is real work and genuine need and give there.
4. Offerings: Since offerings are meant to rejoice in the goodness of God, use **y** percent of income for meeting one's own spiritual growth and spiritual growth of others around. So one part of the offering may be spent for own spiritual growth like buying spiritual books, study bibles, travel expenses to attend retreats, camps etc. The other portion may be spent for the spiritual growth of other people such as buying books, gift bibles, taking people of meetings, buying food for various meetings and spiritual guests coming at home.

5. Charity: Since charity is for the needy, spent **z** percentage of income for social needs such as giving to orphanages, old-age homes, very genuine needs of economically less privileged friends and relatives. As far as possible, give very less to those near and dear, unless it is very genuine need such as hospital emergencies.

6. It is encourages to keep an account of all income and spending on each category.

7. At the end of every year prayerfully consider increasing the percent (that is **x** to **x +/- dx**, **y** to **y +/- dy**, **z** to **z +/- dz**). End of every year is a test of faith: should I increase or not, if so how much. After that, I can give generously, cheerfully, and voluntarily.

8. Testimony: God is faithful.

   > Mal. 3:10. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this," Says the Lord of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it

9. Illustration: Weight lifter lifts 250 kg and he is so excited. You try, break your back and wonder why he is so excited. Unless you are a similar weight lifter, you will never know the excitement. Start by 10 kg and gradually reach 250 kg.

3 Personal money management

3.1 Spiritual principles

1. Money management is spiritual (Prov 3:5-20)

   > Pro. 3:9-10. Honor the Lord with your possessions, And with the first fruits of all your increase; 10 So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine

(a) Handling money is a spiritual matter

(b) Sin is the underlying cause of financial struggles

(c) Refusing to seek and submitting to the biblical wisdom

(d) Every financial decision is a spiritual one.

2. Balanced attitude to richness/poverty

   (a) Some are rich and some are poor. It is unlikely to change

   Mt 26:11. For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always

   (b) Rich: not to trust in uncertain riches

   1 Tim 6:17. Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy

   (c) Poor: thankful for the true and eternal riches

   Jas 2:5. Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?

3. God desires us to be rich

   (a) Provides security

   Prov. 10:15. The rich man's wealth is his strong city; The destruction of the poor is their poverty

   (b) Provides friends

   Prov. 19:4-7. Wealth makes many friends, But the poor is separated from his friend. 6 Many entreat the favor of the nobility, and every man is a friend to one who gives gifts. 7 All the brothers of the poor hate him; How much more do his friends go far from him! He may pursue them with words, yet they abandon him

   (c) Provides power

Prov. 22:7. The rich rules over the poor, And the borrower is servant to the lender

(d) But do not love money

1 Tim. 6:10. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows

(e) Instead

i. We should be dependent on God for our riches, not on ourselves
ii. We should use righteous means to gain riches, not wicked ways
iii. We should aim to be rich so as to be a blessing to others, not for self-indulgence

4. Poverty, a reality, but can be avoided to some extend

(a) Due to other's sin

Pro. 22:16. He who oppresses the poor to increase his riches, And he who gives to the rich, will surely come to poverty

(b) Due to idleness

Pro. 10:4. A slack hand brings poverty, but the hand of the diligent brings wealth

(c) Due to ignoring wisdom

Pro. 13:18. Whoever rejects discipline wins poverty and scorn; for anyone who accepts correction: honor

(d) Due to wasting of time and energy

Pro. 28:19. Whoever works his land shall have bread and to spare, but no one who chases fantasies has any sense

5. It this same as prosperity gospel? Apparently 'yes', but is drastically different:

(a) Prosperity gospel aims to be rich by completely depending on 'blind faith', whereas, we follow biblical principles such as honesty, discipline, and hard work.

(b) Prosperity gospel says every believer has to be rich and being poor is sign of lack of faith, whereas we believe that bible gives principles to make one rich, but exceptions are possible. That does not mean his faith is lacking.

(c) Prosperity gospel appeals to the greed of a person and self-indulgence, whereas we follow the motivation to get rich is to become a blessing to others including God's workers, family, and friends.

3.2 True friend and real enemy

3.2.1 Loan

1. It takes away the freedom

    Gal. 5:1. Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage

    Although the above verse speaks about freedom and bondage in spiritual sense, practically, a person who is materially slave to someone is close to spiritual slavery.

2. Should be avoided

    Pro. 22:7. The rich rules over the poor, And the borrower is servant to the lender

    Exception: If taking loan for some wise investments such as property, education, medical emergencies. My recommendation is to study the repayment conditions carefully and consult couple of godly people before taking some decisions.

3. Avoid being a surety

> Pro. 27:13. Take the garment of him who is surety for a stranger, And hold it in pledge when he is surety for a seductress

Exception: if you can pay yourself

3.2.2 Lifestyle

1. Greed vs. contentment (Need vs. Luxury)
2. Enjoy a decent lifestyle

   > Ecc. 5:19. As for every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, and given him power to eat of it, to receive his heritage and rejoice in his labor this is the gift of God

3. But, be content with what you have

   > 1 Tim. 6:6. Now godliness with contentment is great gain

3.2.3 Savings

1. Sign of self-control and contentment

   > Pro. 21:20. There is desirable treasure, And oil in the dwelling of the wise, But a foolish man squanders it

2. Sign of submission to wisdom

   > Pro. 6:6. Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise

3. Expect emergencies

   > Pro. 6:6. A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself, But the simple pass on and are punished

4. Gift for the next generation

   > Pro. 13:22. A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, But the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous

3.2.4 Budgeting and Accounting

1. Needed for financial stability

   Pro. 21:5. The plans of the diligent lead surely to plenty, But those of everyone who is hasty, surely to poverty

2. Sign of spiritual maturity

   1 Cor. 2:15. But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one

3. Will you run your business without budget

   Luk. 14:28. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it

4 FAQ

1. I do not have job (or I am a student). Am I exempted from giving?

   No one is exempted if you have some money and you have the freedom to spend. Give from pocket money/gift whenever you get. Be faithful in little and God will entrust more.

2. Is my tithe calculated on the gross salary or net salary?

   Ask the question back to tax officer. What will be his response? Now, who is greater?

3. Is it a wrong to give with an expectation of gaining more?

   Expecting reward from man is evil, but expecting from God now or in eternity is spiritual, for it is the claiming His promises (Luke 6:38; Mal. 3:10; 2 Cor. 9:6).

4. Is it wrong to announce my needs?

Avoid making request to individuals which violate the secrecy principle of giving. It is preferable to make such requests to large group. Best option is to solicit prayer request. Excellent way, I believe, is to present the needs only to God.

5. Is it okay to give loans?

   Provided (i) the need is legitimate and (ii) willing write of the loan if your debtor fails to pay. It is better to 'write of' the loan than to create unnecessary issues if the debtor fails to return the loan. It will be a good testimony and help to others if you could give small loans especially to secular people around.

6. Is it okay to bargain?

   If I have decided to buy, I will ask one simple question, what discount you give. If he gives, I will go with his price. If I am not sure about the price, I will offer a price. If he accepts, I will buy, if not, I will not buy. It is hard for me to picture ourselves begging before a shop keeper for silly discount as if our God is poor! Illustration: BMG fish buying.

7. Is it okay to take lotteries?

   Never! It is an appeal to my greed and is mild unethical.

8. Is it okay to go for reduction sale?

   Often it is deceptive. Do you think the seller is fool?

4.1 Famous quotes

1. He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot loose. JE

2. Three conversions are necessary: conversion of the heart, mind and purse. ML

3. Economy is half the battle of life; it is not so hard to earn money as to spend it well. CHS

4. If a person gets his attitude toward money straight, it will help straighten out almost every area in his life. BG.

4.2 Closure

Note: I will be my pleasure also if you send your feedback such as how it was helpful in your life. You are welcome to give comments, doubts, criticisms, and suggestion for improvement, however insignificant it may looks to you. This will help me to improve this study material. My email is TFRDN7@gmail.com.