



NEW LIFE

BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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"For the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev 1:9)

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FAITHFUL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

As the world goes through one of the worst financial crises in history, it has become apparent that faithful financial management is in short supply on a global scale. Many financial institutions are presently reaping the fallout of short-sighted credit policies and lucrative but high-risk ventures. As Christians, our management of finances must be governed by biblical principles rather than by what seems to be most expedient and profitable. Here are 8 principles that we should apply:

1. Choose to serve God, not Mammon

Luke 16:13 – *"No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."*

Your view of material wealth must change. Do not let it rule and dominate your life. Do not regard it as an end in itself, but rather, as a means to an end. Someone once said that "Money is a marvellous servant, but a terrible master!" Let God rule your life, and let Him direct you to put your money to good use. Let Him be the Lord of all your possessions.

2. Beware of Covetousness

Luke 12:15 – *"Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."*

Be careful not to love money, *"for the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."* (1 Timothy 6:10). The rich are often tempted to trust in their wealth to solve their problems rather than in God (Proverbs 11:28; 30:8,9). This is why Jesus said that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God (Matthew 19:24).

One way to tell whether you love money or not is to observe how you respond to large personal monetary losses. Are you able to say, like Job, *"Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD?"* (Job 1:21)

3. Get Your Priorities Right

Matthew 6:21,33 – *"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also... But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."*

Examine your budget to see what things you are now spending most of your money on. This can provide an indication of your present priorities. People commonly think of Christian stewardship as the giving of tithes and offerings. This is a mistaken idea. Stewardship has to do with how a Christian uses everything he possesses, including his money. You are to be a good steward in the way you use your car, your computer, your house, your clothing, your books... everything you...

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have. Stewardship does not mean giving only 10% to God (your tithe) and keeping the remaining 90% for yourself. It means using the 100% wholly for the Lord as He directs.

And the Lord does direct you to use part of it to feed and clothe yourself and the ones you are responsible for. The Scriptures teach that 'the labourer is worthy of his hire' (Luke 10:7) and also "*if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.*" (1 Timothy 5:8). The Lord would also direct you to save part of it for future anticipated needs (see below). But the rest should be used for the Lord and for others – to bless the needy (Ephesians 4:28), to encourage Christian brethren (Galatians 6:10), and to provide for God's work (2 Corinthians 9:7-11). Ask Him to show you specific needs that He wants you to meet and what He wants you to do with His funds.

4. Get an Income by Honest Means

Thessalonians 4:11-12 – "*And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.*"

Proverbs 21:6 warns against any attempt to acquire money by deceit: "*The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.*" One of the greatest challenges facing Christians in business is the challenge of maintaining strict godly principles, without succumbing to the fear of losing out to others who seem to enjoy advantages from their use of unethical means to secure profits. Some will say, "It is impossible to do business without doing these things!" Even though a Christian will face problems in today's business world to keep his hands clean and testimony shining and still be blessed with sufficient profits, he can succeed by applying biblical principles.

The Bible teaches us to earn an income by diligent employment. According to 2 Thessalonians 3:10, "*If any would not work, neither should he eat.*" The exception of course is those who want to work but are unable to, because of illness. Man was made to work and to find fulfilment in his work. When God made the first man and placed him in the Garden of Eden, his work was to take care of the garden. Therefore work already existed before the Fall. The Fall of man only made his work more difficult.

However, we should not become 'workaholics.' Work is a means to an end, and not an end in itself. Do not allow your work to damage your spiritual health or to make you neglect your family responsibilities. If you allow your work to take up all the time you should be spending at home with your loved ones, you will have to answer to God for failing in your parental and marital duties.

What if you have tried your best but your income is insufficient to make ends meet? God knows your needs and He is able to provide for them. Philippians 4:19 – "*But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*" Learn to trust in His provision for all your basic needs – food, shelter and clothing (Matthew 6:25,30; Psalm 37:25).

5. Do Not Seek to 'Get Something for Nothing'

Proverbs 13:11 – "*Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labour shall increase.*"

Gamblers often dream of striking it rich overnight and making fortunes merely by risking a small amount of money. Remember at all times that wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished. They will 'make themselves wings and fly away as an eagle' (Proverbs 23:4,5).

One of the hardest things to do in business is to know when to take more risk, and when to take less risk. The highest risk investments often have tantalisingly higher potential returns, but this easily crosses the thin line into gambling. To take an investment risk without gambling you need to assess your motive for taking that investment. If you aim to get something more through higher risk-taking or if you invest on impulse or 'gut feelings' you are probably gambling.

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6. Save Sufficiently for Anticipated Needs

Proverbs 6:6-8 – *"Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest."*

It is good to set aside funds for a rainy day. When Joseph was the prime minister of Egypt, God gave him the foresight to institute a national policy of saving all the excess produce of the land during the 7 years of plenty, so that there would be enough provisions to sustain the country's economy during the 7 years of severe drought. It is therefore wise to save and make sufficient (but not excessive) provisions for the future both for yourself and those you are responsible for.

7. Avoid Being in Debt

Proverbs 22:7 – *"The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender."*

Borrowing puts the borrower at the mercy of the lender. If the borrower is unable to pay back what he owes, the lender can make life very miserable for him! The Bible is not against legitimate buying on credit or paying by instalments or borrowing, but it is against being in debt. A debt exists when payment is past the due date that had been agreed on, for money, goods or services. Psalm 37:21 tells us, *"The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again...."* The practice of borrowing money from others because of an opportunity to make huge gains through investing is also wicked. Do not take financial risks with funds that are not your own.

There are however times when it becomes necessary to take loans, e.g. a housing loan. There is nothing wrong with this provided we can afford the loan and have the means to pay it off. But do not assume that since your business is now doing well, you will have the means to pay off the loan.

There are some who keep borrowing only from those who would not be harsh with them when they are unable to pay off the loan. This is not a good Christian testimony and should not be encouraged. When a fellow church member comes to you requesting a loan, and you feel that he really needs help, please advise him to approach the Mercy Ministry committee of our church. The committee will make all the necessary enquiries, study his case thoroughly and come up with a comprehensive plan of action to help him.

8. Spend Wisely, not Wastefully

Proverbs 18:9 – *"He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster."*

Remember that your money is not your own to spend, but entrusted to you by God. He wants you to be faithful, not wasteful. Do not buy things impulsively but take time to consider whether the need is proportional to the cost. When in doubt on whether to spend or not, compare prices and consult others. Be as conservative as you can in your spending, without stinging on necessities. And before you make any major financial commitments, count the cost (Luke 14:28).

Conclusion

Thus we have seen 8 biblical principles of faithful financial management: Keep applying them, and you will be a good and faithful steward of God, receiving the commendation: *"Well done, good and faithful steward, you have been faithful in little things – Now you will be entrusted with greater things, with greater opportunities to bring glory to the Lord."* Dear brethren, will you be receiving this commendation? It is my prayer that you will.

*Rev Charles Seet, Life B-P Church, S'pore
(adapted from Life B-P Church bulletin 12 October 2008)*

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON

CHURCH THEME: WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING. (Philippians 2:12)

Our worship services begin promptly at **11.00 am and 4.00 pm.**

Please stay back for Bible Study and fellowship lunch after the morning worship and for tea after the evening service. Do invite your friends to come to Church.

Worship Services			WELCOME
Morning	Today: 19/10/2008	Next Week: 26/10/2008	We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day. We like to welcome Jonathan Choo, Sarah Laeuchli, Xie Xing Mao, Joshua Wang, Margaret Wai-Ogosu and Brian Wong to our morning worship service last Lord's Day.
<i>Chairman:</i>	John Poh	Jonathan Kim	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Mark Chen	Rev Yeo Seow Phong	
<i>Message:</i>	The Kinsman Redeemer	The Truth Shall Make You Free	
<i>Text:</i>	Ruth 3:6-13	John 8:31-38	
<i>Organist:</i>	Anthony	Joy	
Evening			
<i>Chairman:</i>	Jonathan Kim	Mark Chen	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Mark Chen	Rev Yeo Seow Phong	
<i>Message:</i>	He That Winneth Souls Is Wise	False Prophets and Teachers	
<i>Text:</i>	Proverbs 11:23-31	2 Peter 2:1-9	NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS • Chairpersons & Musicians Workshop: Please take note that Mark will be conducting the workshop after fellowship lunch in the sanctuary. • YAF Meeting: Please take note that this Friday, there will be a combined meeting with Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony. The message title for the session is "The Spirit of Prophecy". • Pray for those who are sick: Douglas (knee pain), Maria (ankle and joint pain), Constance (left heel pain), Maureen (leg pain) • Pray for those who are seeking employment: Jiak Eng, John, Hubert, Constance • Pray for Journey Mercies: Douglas (Ghana), Jiak Eng (leaving for S'pore - 19 Oct) • Recent bereavement: Do pray for the Teo family (Eld Teo, Linda, Esmeralda, Elrond and Ellerina) following the recent bereavement of Linda's mother, Mdm Van Chin Soon. A memorial service and funeral service was held in Singapore on Friday and Saturday respectively.
<i>Pianist:</i>	Grace	Sophia	
Other Duties			
	Next Week: 19/10/2008	Next Week: 26/10/2008	
<i>Ushers</i>	Joshua / Sharon	Joey / Hannah	
<i>Sunday Sch:</i>	Hui Min	Hui Min	
<i>Lunch:</i>	Maureen	Constance	
<i>Washing-up:</i>	Volunteers	Volunteers	
<i>PA Crew:</i>	Jonathan / John	Anthony	
Appointments of the Week			
Fri 24 Oct	7:00pm	Young Adults Fellowship: Combined SGAT Meeting	
Sat 25 Oct	4.00pm	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study: Led by Rev Yeo Seow Phong	
<u>Last Week's Worship Service Collections</u>			
Offering: £598.45		Lunch: £41.51	
<u>Memory Verse</u>			
<p><i>Last Week (October 08 Wk 2): Psalm 139:24</i></p> <p>And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.</p> <p><i>This Week (October 08 Wk 3): 1 Corinthians 13:1</i></p> <p>Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.</p>			