

Chad Hester

SESSION 3: An Inconvenient Discipline – Budgeting, Saving, and Investing

“Let us all be on our guard against the love of money. The world is full of it in our days. The plague is abroad. Thousands who would abhor the idea of worshipping Juggernaut, are not ashamed to make an idol of gold. We are all liable to the infection, from the least to the greatest. We may love money without having it, just as we may have money without loving it. It is an evil that works very deceitfully. It carries us captives before we are aware of our chains. Once let it get the mastery, and it will harden, paralyze, scorch, freeze, blight, and wither our souls. It overthrew an apostle of Christ. Let us take heed that it does not overthrow us. One leak may sink a ship. One unmortified sin may ruin a soul.” – J.C. Ryle

“As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. ¹⁸ They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, ¹⁹ thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.” – 1 Timothy 6:17-19

I. Introductory Remarks

A. Important Topic

- Jesus taught more on money than he did on heaven and hell.
- Of the 39 parables recorded in the Gospels, 11 talk about money.
- “Money matters – there is just no getting around it. It is not unspiritual to think about it, to be concerned about it, or to talk of it often. In a very significant way your life will be shaped by what you think about money, and in a way that is inescapable, somehow, someday, your heart will struggle with money.” –Paul David Tripp

B. There is Much Grace

- *“Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’”* –Hebrews 13:5
- “If we don’t have all we desire, we still have more than we deserve.” –Thomas Watson

II. Budgeting

“For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”

–Hebrews 12:11

A. Keeping a Close Watch

- Repeated theme in the New Testament of being diligent
 - *“Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.”* –1 Tim. 4:16
 - *“Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise”* –Eph. 5:15
 - *“Perhaps the saddest observation of all is that the spending habits of people in the church differ little from those of the world. The lifestyles of most professing Christians are not substantially different from anyone else’s. Too many in the church have adopted the world’s indulgent attitude toward money. Almost every form of materialistic extravagance and excess has found its way into the fellowship of believers. It is as if the church has forgotten Jesus’ mandate to invest in eternity.”* –John MacArthur
- Currency
 - The very word means it’s going somewhere – yet so many of us are confused on where it went.
 - If we don’t direct our money through the proper channels and to its proper purpose, it’s controlling us instead of us controlling it.
 - *“Water is useful to the ship and helps it to sail better to the haven, but let the water get into the ship, if it is not pumped out, it drowns the ship. So riches are useful and convenient for our passage. We sail more comfortably with them through the troubles of this world; but if the water gets into the ship, if love of riches gets into the heart, then we are drowned by them.”* –Thomas Watson
- Foolishness of ignoring it
 - We have a responsibility to steward our finances well
 1. *“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.”* –1 Peter 4:10

B. Pillars and Goals

- Pillars: essentials that will never be taken out of your budget
 - Giving, date nights, hosting, etc.
 - These are in place to serve as guard rails against selfishness and motivation for each month.

MONEY: THE MEASURE OF THE HEART

- Goals: **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistically high, Timed (SMART)**
 - “My goal is to pay off my credit card debt, totally \$6,328 by November 1, 2018.”
 - Visual guides can be particularly effective here as a tool.
- Need to be on the same page
 - Share your fears and concerns; your ideas and personal goals
 - Bring in help!
- Want these to be practical **and** principled
- “Christians can be and ought to be content with the simple necessities of life... First, when you have God near you and for you, you don’t need extra money or extra things to give you peace and security... God is always better than gold... Second, we can be content with the simplicity because the deepest, most satisfying delights God gives us through creation are free gifts from nature and from loving relationships with people. After your basic needs are met, accumulated money begins to diminish your capacity for these pleasures rather than increase them. Buying things contributes absolutely nothing to the heart’s capacity for joy... Third, we should be content with the simple necessities of life because we could invest the extra we make for what really counts (God’s kingdom).” – John Piper

C. Disciplines

- Spending leads to Stewardship
- Craving yields to Contentment
- Destruction replaced with Discernment
- Thrive in the situation you’re in and fight discontentment
 - *“The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance.”* –Psalm 16:6

D. Defensive v. Offensive

- Defensive: wealth/asset protection
 - Insurance – life, disability, long term care
- Offensive: wealth/asset growth
 - Saving & investing; home equity, job growth or transition
- *“For if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”* –1 Tim. 5:8

III. Saving

“Precious treasure and oil are in a wise man’s dwelling, but a foolish man devours it.” – Prov. 21:20

A. Providing at Home

- We budget saving for things to make it realistic and unburdensome when the time comes.
 - Christmas gifts, car replacement/repair, house down payment, new computer, furniture, etc.
- *“Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise. Without having any chief, officer, or ruler, she prepares her bread in summer and gathers her food in harvest.” --Prov. 6:6-8*

B. Looking to Bless Others

- We want to be looking outwardly too!
 - Larger purchase to help someone less fortunate, significant giving to missions or Pastors College, open house, etc.
- *“For the richer any man is, the more abundant are his means of doing good to others.” –John Calvin*
- *“You shall give to him freely [the poor brother], and your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him, because for this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake.” –Deut. 15:10*

C. Goal is to never go into debt again (ever) (never again) (like...really!)

- We have two options: decrease spending or increase income.
- *“For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh.” –Gal. 5:13*

D. This isn’t as crazy as it may sound.

- You can absolutely change your spending patterns, grow in contentment, and save to buy things without ever borrowing money to do so.
 - As you trust God in your spending and implement disciplines you’ll actually have fun eliminating debt and reaching your goals!
- *“The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty.” –Prov. 21:5*

IV. Investing

“Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.” –Prov. 3:9-10

A. Strategic use of Investing

- Planning for being able to bless others and serve generously long-term.
 - “God comes right out and tells us why He gives us more money than we need. It’s not so we can find more ways to spend it. It’s not so we can indulge ourselves and spoil our children. It’s not so we can insulate ourselves from needing God’s provision. It’s so we can give – generously. When God provides more money, we often think, This is a blessing. Well, yes, but it would be just as scriptural to think, This is a test.” – Randy Alcorn

B. Word of Caution

- Need to be aware of the temptation to hoard
 - *“But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be? So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.’” –Luke 12:20-21*

C. Retirement Planning

- Utilize any kind of employer match (free money)
- Dave Ramsey’s Investment Calculator

D. Heart of a Teacher

- Find someone you trust who can help teach you on diversification, portfolios, tax benefits, etc.

V. Dangers of Debt

“The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is the slave of the lender.” –Prov.22:7

A. A Debt Mentality involves these six assumptions:

- We need more than God has given us
- God doesn’t know best what our needs are
- God has failed to provide for our needs, forcing us to take matters into our own hands
- If God doesn’t come through the way we think we should, we can find another way
- Just because today’s income is sufficient to make our debt payments, tomorrow’s will be too
- Our circumstances won’t change – our health will be good, we’ll keep our present job, our salary will keep up with inflation, and God won’t direct us to another job with a lower salary or lead us to increase our giving.

MONEY: THE MEASURE OF THE HEART

Spending Categories:	Suggested %:
Charitable Giving	10-15%
Saving	5-10%
Housing	25-35%
Utilities	10-15%
Food	10-15%
Transportation	7-12%
Clothing	2-5%
Medical/Health	5-10%
Personal	5-10%
Insurance	10-17%
Recreation	5-10%
Debts / Investing	10-15%