

NOTES

~ *Finances* ~

There's plenty in the Bible related to money management. In a nutshell, we are to work hard and pay our bills, avoid debt if we can, not cosign for others, pay taxes, care for fellow followers of Jesus, and save a portion of our resources. It's also important that we're content with what we have (Hebrews 13:5).

- **Work Hard.** God's instruction clearly states that those who can work but don't shouldn't eat (Proverbs 6:6-11 and 19:15; 2Thessalonians 3:10-11)!
- **Avoid Debt** if you can. Going into debt moves an individual from freedom into slavery (Proverbs 22:7). Here are a few tips to help reduce risks associated with going into debt when it's necessary to do so.
 - Don't borrow unless it's absolutely necessary. God doesn't prohibit it (Proverbs 28:8; Matthew 25:27) but remember that it can enslave us.
 - Put 'skin in the game' – as much as possible.
 - Never cosign for a loan (Proverbs 22:26)! It's the same as borrowing the money yourself and can significantly stress relationships.
- **Pay Your Bills (Including Taxes)** in a Timely Manner (Romans 13:8; Psalms 37:21; Luke 20:20-25).
- **Be Benevolent.** Jesus gave us two commandments: serve God appropriately and treat mankind charitably (Matthew 22:35-40). We'll be judged by our obedience (or disobedience) to them (Matthew 25:31-46). Obedience in the form of faith that leads to action will be seen by others as 'fruit' of God's Spirit dwelling within Galatians 5:22-23).
- **Save!** Many, if not most people, live paycheck to paycheck, praying that they don't lose their job or suffer a catastrophic event. This lifestyle leads to stress and broken relationships – both of which can be mitigated by living within our means and regularly saving some of our resources.

Dave Ramsey Budget Percentages

Charitable Gifts 10-15%
Savings 5-10%
Housing 25-35%
Utilities 5-10%
Transportation 10-15%
Food 5-15%
Clothing 2-7%
Medical/Health 5-10%
Personal 5-10%
Recreation 5-10%
Debt 5-10%

Summary: A focus on working hard will reduce the likelihood of 'idle hands' and the mischief that can follow. Avoiding debt will allow us to keep more of the resources we earn. Paying bills and taxes is a biblical principle that, if followed, will help keep us out of trouble. Giving to others out of what's left of our resources is also a biblical principle that is absolutely necessary for being obedient to God and His Christ. Finally, setting aside some of the balance of our bounty will ensure we can weather financial lows when they come our way.

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~ *Finances* ~

The Bible says a lot about money!

WHY is this important? Stresses relationships; can lead to sinful behavior . . .

Need balance . . .

HOW to do this (also introduce the budget %)

Hard work = not idle

Avoid debt to keep \$\$

Pay bills

Be benevolent

Save to weather . . .

The Ant and the Grasshopper story ...

There's plenty in Scripture related to money management. In a nutshell, we are to work hard and pay our bills, avoid debt if we can, not cosign for others, pay taxes, care for fellow followers of Jesus, and save a portion of our resources. It's also important that we're content with what we have.

Understanding what Scripture has to say about these topics is important for a variety of reasons. For instance, debt turns one into a slave and can produce unnecessary stress. This may affect relationships with humans and God alike.

The pursuit of money can result in the same negative consequences. Yet, we must earn a living, pay taxes, save for the future, and help others. All of this must be done in a manner that promotes healthy relationships, lack of worry, a caring environment, and security. Of utmost importance is that we're content with what we have. This will help us avoid the temptation to strive for things outside our financial grasp or take from others to get what we want.

[**Hebrews 13:5**]

A focus on working hard will reduce the likelihood of '**idle hands**' and the mischief that can follow.

Avoiding debt will allow us to **keep more** of the resources we earn.

Paying bills and taxes is a biblical principle that, if followed, will help keep us out of trouble.

Giving to others out of what's left of our resources is also a biblical principle that is absolutely necessary for being obedient to God and His Christ.

Finally, **setting aside** some of the balance of our bounty will ensure we can weather financial lows when they come our way.

Let's explore each of these principles in more detail.

- **Work Hard.** God's instruction clearly states that those who can work but don't shouldn't eat! Remember the children's story about the ant and the grasshopper? Do you know it's based on a biblical proverb that uses the ant as an example for one who isn't lazy and works hard?

[**Proverbs 6:6-11**]

[**Proverbs 19:15**]

[**2Thessalonians 3:10-11**]

Avoid debt to stay out of financial slavery

TIPS

- Don't borrow!
- Put skin in the game
- Don't cosign!

... cosigning can stress relationships!

- **Avoid Debt**. Going into debt moves an individual from freedom into slavery. They *must* now pay a minimum amount of resources to another person or face consequences. Is debt contrary to God's ways? Not necessarily, but there are risks and consequences (like the financial slavery I've already mentioned).

[Proverbs 22:7]

Here are a few tips to help reduce risks associated with going into debt when it's necessary to do so.

- **Don't borrow** unless it's absolutely necessary. God doesn't prohibit borrowing and actually condones the charging of interest for money lent.

[Proverbs 28:8]

[Matthew 25:27]

But remember that borrowing turns us into a slave and any money we borrow will probably cost a lot more than imagined. The Bible tells us to consider the cost of anything we do; borrowing should be no exception.

- **Put 'skin in the game'** – as much as possible. Insert as much of your own cash as you can to reduce the total amount of debt. This will keep payments lower and help ensure you have equity that can be taken back or used to pay off the debt should you need to sell whatever you borrowed for.
- **Never cosign** for a loan!! First, the Bible tells us not to do this.

[Proverbs 22:26]

Second, it's just plain risky. Understand that, when you cosign, you're guaranteeing the debt of another person. It's as good as borrowing the money yourself since you'll be responsible for the debt and its payments if the primary signer defaults.

Another disadvantage cosigning may bring is that it can significantly stress or ruin close relationships.

Pay bills **and taxes** in a timely manner

- **Pay Your Bills (Including Taxes) in a Timely Manner.** God and His Christ have made very clear that we're to care for others and honor the authority of those placed over us. We do this in part by paying others what we owe them and satisfying our tax requirements.

Paul tells us to pay our debts and therefore owe nothing.

[Romans 13:8]

The wicked don't pay

And we learn in the Psalms that those who don't honor their obligations are wicked.

[Psalms 37:21]

Jesus and taxes . . .

Finally, Jesus taught that we must pay our taxes and respect the position of those in authority over us.

[Luke 20:20-25]

Jesus' two commandments

- **Be Benevolent.** Jesus gave us two commandments: serve God appropriately and treat man charitably.

- Serve God
- Serve man

[Matthew 22:35-40]

The 10 commandments are summed up by these admonishments, and we'll be judged by our obedience to them.

[Matthew 25:31-46]

It isn't about being 'nice'!

Being 'nice' doesn't count. No amount of money paid into the church building fund or given in offerings will save us in the end. However, obedience in the form of faith that leads to action and is seen by others as 'fruit' of God's Spirit dwelling within us will.

True followers display characteristics - fruit

The display of fruit is how Jesus said others will know we're His disciples. What is this *fruit*? According to Paul, they include love (charitable action), patience, kindness, and goodness – all lend themselves to honoring the Christ's commandment to *love* others.

[Galatians 5:22-23]

Examples of charity

Children are to take care of their elderly parents. Jesus' followers exhibit their faith best when they charitably support the faithful poor such as orphans, widows, the incapacitated, etc. In fact, early church offerings were specifically given for taking care of the needs of the faith community.

Save!!

- **Save.** Lastly, I'd like to stress the importance of setting funds aside for a 'rainy day'.

Many, if not most people, live paycheck to paycheck, praying that they don't lose their job or suffer a catastrophic event. This lifestyle leads to stress and broken relationships – both of which can be mitigated by living within our means and regularly saving some of our resources.

Also, we're admonished to consider the cost of anything we undertake, which may require us to save an appropriate amount to accomplish goals.

Always consider the cost of anything from faith to finance . . .

Summary

In **summary**, a focus on working hard will reduce the likelihood of 'idle hands' and the mischief that can follow. Avoiding debt will allow us to keep more of the resources we earn. Paying bills and taxes is a biblical principle that, if followed, will help keep us out of trouble. Giving to others out of what's left of our resources is also a biblical principle that is absolutely necessary for being obedient to God and His Christ. Finally, setting aside some of the balance of our bounty will ensure we can weather financial lows when they come our way.

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Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, **being content with what you have**; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU" — Hebrews 13:5.

Go to the ant, O sluggard, Observe her ways and be wise, which, having no chief, Officer or ruler, prepares her food in the summer and gathers her provision in the harvest. How long will you lie down, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? "A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest" – **Your poverty will come in like a vagabond and your need like an armed man.** — Proverbs 6:6-11.

Laziness casts into a deep sleep, and **an idle man will suffer hunger.** —Proverbs 19:15.

. . . if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either. For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies.—2Thessalonians 3:10-11.

The rich rules over the poor, And **the borrower becomes the lender's slave.** —Proverbs 22:7.

He who increases his wealth by interest and usury gathers it for him who is gracious to the poor. — Proverbs 28:8.

Then you ought to have **put my money in the bank**, and on my arrival I would have received my money back with interest. —Matthew 25:27.

Do not be among those who give pledges, among those who become guarantors for debts. —Proverbs 22:26.

Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. —Romans 13:8.

The **wicked borrows and does not pay back**, but the righteous is gracious and gives. —Psalms 37:21.

So they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous . . . They questioned Him, saying, "Teacher . . . Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" But He detected their trickery and said to them, "Show Me a denarius. Whose likeness and inscription does it have?" They said, "Caesar's." And He said to them, "Then **render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.**" —Luke 20:20-25.

One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" And He said to him, "'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."—Matthew 22:35-40.

“But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.’ Then the righteous will answer Him, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ The King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.’ Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.’ Then they themselves also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?’ Then He will answer them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ “These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.” —Matthew 25:31-46.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. —Galatians 5:22-23.