

Financial Freedom

A GOAL WORTH PURSUING

Why Financial Freedom Matters

1 Timothy 6:5-10 Proverbs 28:20 & 22 Proverbs 15:27 Proverbs 23:4-5

- (1) It prepares me for a **RAINY DAY**
Genesis 3 Proverbs 10:15

- (2) It allows me to be genuinely **GENEROUS**
Proverbs 19:17 Proverbs 21:13 & 29:7 Ephesians 4:28 2 Corinthians 9:11

- (3) It beats slavery to **DEBT**
Proverbs 22:7

HOW TO GET THERE

Solomon's Four Steps To Financial Freedom

- (1) Stop **FALLING BEHIND**
Proverbs 22:7

- (2) Save a **LITTLE BIT** over a **LONG TIME**
Proverbs 13:11 & 10:4 Proverbs 12:11 Proverbs 20:21

- (3) Choose to live **BELOW** your **MEANS**
Proverbs 21:20

- (4) Give to God's agenda **OFF THE TOP**
Proverbs 3:9-10 Haggai 1:1-11 & 2:15-19

Food for Thought for the week of August 2, 2015

(Questions and Scriptures for further personal study)

1. Our priorities often determine the extent of our financial freedom, contentment and generosity even more than whether we are prosperous or in need. How can the following verses help us keep a healthy perspective on our priorities?

Deuteronomy 8:17-18

¹⁷ You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." ¹⁸ But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today. *[NIV]*

Proverbs 23:4-5

Saying 8

⁴ Do not wear yourself out to get rich;
do not trust your own cleverness.
⁵ Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone,
for they will surely sprout wings
and fly off to the sky like an eagle. *[NIV]*

Luke 16:10-13

¹⁰ "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. ¹¹ So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? ¹² And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?

¹³ "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."

[NIV]

Jeremiah 9:23-24

²³ This is what the LORD says:

"Let not the wise boast of their wisdom
or the strong boast of their strength
or the rich boast of their riches,
²⁴ but let the one who boasts boast about this:
that they have the understanding to know me,
that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness,
justice and righteousness on earth,
for in these I delight,"
declares the LORD. *[NIV]*

2. Larry said that "giving off the top" is both an act of thanking God for his current provision AND a way of trusting him for future provision. Yet throughout history, many of God's people have given to his work primarily out of what's left over rather than off the top. What surprises you about God's attitude toward this practice in Malachi 3:7-12?

Malachi 3:7-12

⁷ Ever since the time of your ancestors you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD Almighty.

"But you ask, 'How are we to return?'

⁸ "Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me.

"But you ask, 'How are we robbing you?'

"In tithes and offerings. ⁹ You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. ¹⁰ Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. ¹¹ I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe," says the LORD Almighty. ¹² "Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land," says the LORD Almighty. *[NIV]*

What is most challenging to you about "giving off the top"?

3. There aren't too many people who'd want to be known as greedy or stingy with their time, money or possessions. That's why the enemy works subtly, yet powerfully, to blind us to the benefits and simplicity of generosity and serving others. What motivations and/or strategies do the following verses give to encourage us to be generous and serve others?

2 Corinthians 9:6-9

Generosity Encouraged

⁶ Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. ⁷ Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. ⁹ As it is written:

"They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor;
their righteousness endures forever." *[NIV]*

Galatians 6:9-10

⁹ Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. *[NIV]*

Matthew 25:31-46

The Sheep and the Goats

³¹ "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

³⁴ "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. ³⁵ 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, ³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

⁴⁰ "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

⁴¹ "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

⁴⁴ "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'

⁴⁵ "He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'

⁴⁶ "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life." *[NIV]*

SEEKING GODLY WISDOM / Proverbs Daily Reading Plan:

Read the chapter that corresponds to the day of the month and consider these questions:

- ⇒ What applies to me today?
- ⇒ Where have I seen this in others?
- ⇒ Where have I experienced this?

Go to this link for more info: <http://www.northcoastchurch.com/proverbs-reading-plan>