

## The Financial Freedom Seminar

### *God's Got the Plan – Do you have the faith?*

-I got some good news, "I just saved a ton of money on my \_\_\_\_\_".

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-Is your current financial situation a major headache? \_\_\_\_\_

-Take the "Financial Health Quiz".

-There is a lot of pain and heartache in many people's lives because of money. Can that ever change?

*God has the plan – do you have the faith?*

-**Hebrews 11: 1** - Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

-**Romans 10:17** - So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

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### Three Foundational Truths about Money

#### 1) God owns it all.

-**Psalm 24:1** - "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it".

Our wealth belongs to us in the same way that a child's bedroom belongs to the child. The room actually belongs to the parent, but the child is given temporary charge over it.

#### 2) God talks often about money.

-2350 verses in the Bible on money.

-Jesus talked often about money

\*His parables - 16 of 38 deal with money or possessions – 42%.

\*In the NT, 500 verses on prayer, less than 500 on faith - but more than 2000 on money!

\*One out of 10 verses or 288 verses in the Gospels, deal with money.

-Why do you think God talks so much about money? \_\_\_\_\_

#### 3) God has a plan so that money is a blessing.

1 **Timothy 6:17** – "(God) richly supplies us with all things to enjoy."

*God has the plan – do you have the faith?*

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### Four Keys to Your Financial Freedom



#### *Key #1* - Give to God first.

-**Proverbs 3:9-10** - Honor the LORD from your wealth And from the first of all your produce; So your barns will be filled with plenty And your vats will overflow with new wine.

-**New Testament - 1 Corinthians 16:2** - On the first day of every week **each one of you** is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come.

-Why do you think that God wants us to give to Him first? \_\_\_\_\_

*Why give to God first?*

### 1) Old Testament – Give to God first to provide for His House.

-**Malachi 3:8-10** - “Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, ‘How have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you! Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test 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 a blessing until it overflows. Then I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of the ground; nor will your vine in the field cast its grapes,” says the LORD of hosts.

-“*Test me*” – only place in the Bible God invites us to test Him – He wants us to go first.

-“*the devourer*” – A good angel or bad angel? A “natural cause” like locusts?

**Storehouse** – Why did God have a storehouse?

To provide for the priests and the poor.

-**Haggai 1:2-10** - Thus says the LORD of hosts, “This people says, ‘The time has not come, even the time for the house of the LORD to be rebuilt.’” Then the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying, “Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses while this house lies desolate?”

Now therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts, “Consider your ways! You have sown much, but harvest little; you eat, but there is not enough to be satisfied; you drink, but there is not enough to become drunk; you put on clothing, but no one is warm enough; and he who earns, earns wages to put into a purse with holes.”

Thus says the LORD of hosts, “Consider your ways! Go up to the mountains, bring wood and rebuild the temple, that I may be pleased with it and be glorified,” says the LORD.

“You look for much, but behold, it comes to little; when you bring it home, I blow it away. Why?” declares the LORD of hosts, “Because of My house which lies desolate, while each of you runs to his own house. Therefore, because of you the sky has withheld its dew and the earth has withheld its produce.”

***The Old Testament principles on giving are carried over into the New Testament.***

*Why give to God first?*

### 2) New Testament - Give to God first to provide for His Church.

-**Provide for the ministers - church staff and missionaries, and the poor.**

-**1 Corinthians 9:13-14** - Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat the food of the temple, and those who attend regularly to the altar have their share from the altar? So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel.

-**2 Corinthians 11:8** - I robbed other churches by taking wages from them to serve you;

-1**Timothy 5:17-18** - The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages."

-Other similar verses - **Galatians 6:6; Romans 15:27; Matthew 10:10**

-**The New Testament Parallel Promise of God's blessing.**

-**Philippians 4:15** - You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone; 16 for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs. 17 Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account. 18 But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God. 19 **And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.**

*God never asks us to give where He doesn't promise to give back more in return to us!*

-**Provide for poor in church and in community (physical - and spiritually poor?).**

-**2 Corinthians 9:6-8; 10** - Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed; Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness;

\***Be a Conduit not a Cesspool** – The goal is not to acquire a lot of things for yourself but to continually be able to help others and continue to spread the gospel!!

-This is not "Prosperity Theology" which focuses on accumulating material possessions.

-Paul teaches how to accumulate generous actions – 'the harvest of our righteousness'.

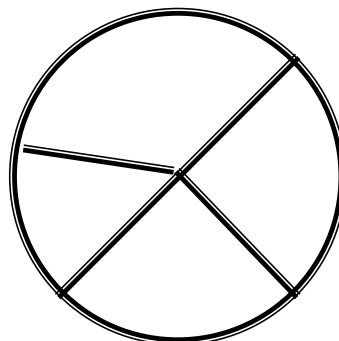
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### **-Frequently Asked Questions – FAQ**

1) **How can I give when I don't make much money – should I pray for a raise?**

Faith is the bottom line for your bottom line – God asks us to go first. When we give, He promises to give us a bigger pie.

When you can't seem to add another expense to your pie chart ...



Get a bigger pie!

– Consider that Jesus did not chase down the widow in the widow's mite story (below) to return her money. Why do you think He didn't chase her? \_\_\_\_\_

**-Luke 21:1-4** - And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury. And He saw a poor widow putting in two small copper coins. And He said, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all of them; for they all out of their surplus put into the offering; but she out of her poverty put in all that she had to live on."

-Maybe we should not ask, "How much am I giving to God?" but, "How much am I keeping for myself?"

**2) Do I tithe from my gross or my net income?** – Depends on how much blessing you want.

**3) Should I give when I am in debt?** - Depends on how much blessing you want.

1) Making the Lord our priority will open our eyes to how we spend the rest of our money.

2) If God promises to make our pie bigger and rebuke the devourer if we give generously to him first, then giving to God first will help get us out of debt faster!

3) Larry Burkett, who helped more Christians get out of debt and get back on track than anyone who has ever lived, taught "the first check we write should be to God and not even a creditor".

4) Even secular sources recognize the value of prioritizing giving to God first.

- Stephanie Boddie, Ph.D., assistant professor of social work at Washington University in St. Louis. "People who donate money on a regular basis take a closer look at where their money is going. This can lead to more financial responsibility in the areas of debt repayment and asset building. Planned-giving practices such as tithing help congregation members focus on their spending and saving habits because they pay more attention to how they use the rest of their money."

- The Religious Liberty and Charitable Donation Protection Act of 1998, signed by President Clinton, had allowed tithing and charitable giving up to 15% of income under the federal bankruptcy code.

- The US Congress believed bankruptcy had become too easy and passed the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act in 2005. Congress later amended the law to overturn a court trial based on the Act which had disallowed tithing.

*So giving to God first while in debt is protected **and even encouraged** by secular law.*

*God has the plan – do you have the faith?*

### **Food for thought:**

Where is your faith attacked when it comes to giving? \_\_\_\_\_

*See you next time!*

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