

One Week Devotional Guide

Monday | Recognizing the Owner | Psalm 24:1; 1 Corinthians 4:7b

1. How long do you think it would take you to comprehend the vastness of God's creation where you live?
2. Take a moment to list the possessions God has provided for you to meet your needs.
 - o Physical Needs
 - o b. Relational Needs
 - o c. Spiritual Needs
3. In wrestling with the Lord as the owner of everything in the world, who would some people say owns the things in this world in which we live? Why?
4. Throughout your day, take time to reflect on God's provisions for you.

Tuesday | Being a Responsible Manager | Matthew 25:14-18

1. What does the word "manager" mean to you?
2. In what ways are you managing the things the LORD has provided for you? What is one way in which you could put your talent, ability, or possessions to work to gain more for God?
3. Why do we sometimes become selfish or even hide what we have been given from God and others?
4. What is one thing that you have been given by God that you need to give back to Him? As a manager of what God has given to you, make a choice to give it back to God today.

Wednesday | The Importance of Earning Money | 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12; Deuteronomy 8:17-18

1. From the world's point of view, what are reasons for earning money? From God's point of view, what are reasons for earning money?
2. What is the difference between a "need" and a "want"? Are you being trapped into desiring more "wants" in your life versus fulfilling the "needs" of your life?
3. Spend some time in quietness before the Lord and ask Him to reveal any areas of your life where you are taking credit for what God has done in and through you. Admit that to God and choose to give Him the credit (the glory).

Thursday | Avoiding Debt | Proverbs 22:7; Romans 13:8

1. Is it possible in today's culture to avoid the debt trap? If so, how? Are there material items in your life that are keeping you from becoming who God desires you to be? If so, what?
2. In what ways could you find joy, peace, and freedom through your finances?

Friday | Giving Generously | 2 Corinthians 9:6–8; Luke 6:38

1. In what ways are you holding back from giving generously to the Lord?
2. How can you give more cheerfully to the work of the Lord?
3. Why do you feel God desires for you to give cheerfully rather than reluctantly or under compulsion?
4. Has God ever "surprised" you after you wholeheartedly gave a gift back to Him? If so, in what way?

Keeping on Course

The problem is--many people are experiencing financial challenges. Debt is escalating rapidly. Consumer debt is increasing at the rate of \$1000 per second, and hundreds of thousands of people are forced to declare bankruptcy each year. Over half of all divorces are the result of financial pressure at home.

Inadequate income and frustrating jobs are common. Suffocating materialism is robbing people of their spiritual vitality. Others are prospering but sense the need to be more faithful in handling money.

The solution is--God has given us the answers to our financial problems. You may be surprised to discover just how much the Lord says about money. More than 2,350 verses in the Bible teach us everything we need to know about handling money. Sadly, most people do not manage their finances based on God's principles and suffer the consequences.

Consider these Action Steps

- Take an inventory of the things you have that you don't need; share the items with someone who has a need.
- Attend a Budgeting Workshop in your area or contact the church office for a trained volunteer who can help you.
- Prepare and practice a budget that is honoring to God.
- Becoming a Better Steward is Changing My Life!

When I began tithing a year ago, I did it out of obedience to God and because I had faith that He would take care of my needs. As it turned out, I have been hugely blessed--more than I ever expected or hoped for. No winning sweepstakes or inheritance check came in the mail, but what I have been given is freedom from what I thought was a hopeless situation, peace in my heart, and much excitement about the future. I have never been happier!