A GUIDE TO A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE ON MONEY

I. The Context For Thinking About Money
Discussion about money needs to be done in a wider context about the stewardship of our lives. Our calling is to “seek first the kingdom of God” (Matthew 6:33). Within that calling we are to be stewards of all God has given us—our time, our talents (gifts), and our treasure.

II. What We All Need To Know From Scripture About Wealth And Giving
A. God Owns It All And Desires Good Stewardship For What He Entrusts To Each Of Us.
1. God owns it all and gives us what we have
   - Psalm 24:1—“The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it.”
   - I Chronicles 29:12—“Wealth and honor come from you.”
   - I Chronicles 29:14—“Everything comes from you and we have given you only what comes from your hand.”
   - Ecclesiastes 5:18-20—“When God gives any man wealth and possessions and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot, and be happy in his work...this is a gift from God.”
   - Deuteronomy 8:18—“It is He (God) who gives you the ability to produce wealth.”
   - Abraham Kuyper—“There is not a single square inch in the universe in which Christ does not say, ‘It is mine.’”

2. God seeks a return on all he owns
   - Matthew 25:14-30: Parable of the Talents

3. God expects us:
   a. To seek Kingdom things first
      - Matthew 6:33—“Seek first the Kingdom of God.”
      - I Timothy 6:17—“Command those who are rich...not to put their hope in wealth, but to put their hope in God.”
   b. To see management of wealth as an act of obedience
      - Proverbs 3:9—“Honor the Lord with your wealth.”
      - Deuteronomy 14:22-23—“Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year...so you may learn to revere the Lord your God.”
      - John MacArthur—“Giving is not God’s way to raise money; it is His way to raise children.”
   c. To be very good at giving
d. To have these qualities in giving
   (1) Give cheerfully
       • I Corinthians 9:7—“God loves a cheerful giver.”
   (2) Give sacrificially
       • I Corinthians 8:3—“They gave as much as they were able and even beyond their ability.”
   (3) Give secretly
       • Matthew 6:3-4—“When you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing; so that your giving may be in secret.”
   (4) Give proportionately
       • Deuteronomy 16:17—“Bring a gift in proportion to the way the Lord your God has blessed you.”

e. To have special concern for the poor
   • Proverbs 14:31—“...whoever is kind to the needy honors God.”
   • Psalm 82:3-4—“Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed.”
   • Micah 6:8—“And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

B. Use Of Wealth And Possessions Present A Powerful Temptation To Not Be Who God Wants Us To Be
   1. Money is a formidable foe
       • Ecclesiastes 5:10—“Whoever loves money never has enough.”
       • Luke 18:24-25—“How hard it is for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God. Indeed it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God.”
       • Richard Halvorson—“Money is an exact index to a man’s (person’s) true character.”

   2. Money/wealth can lead to trouble
       • Proverbs 11:28—“Whoever trusts in his riches will fall.”
       • I Timothy 6:9-10—“People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered far from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.”
       • I Corinthians 6:10—“Some people are eager for money and have wandered from the faith.”
• Proverbs 30:9—“Otherwise I have too much, and disown, and say, ‘Who is the Lord?’”
• Mark 4:19—“...the deceitfulness of wealth, and the desires for other things come in and choke the word.”
• Matthew 6:24—“You cannot serve both God and money.”

3. Money requires the right perspective
• Luke 12:15—“Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.”
• Proverbs 11:4—“Wealth is worthless in the day of wrath.”
• I Timothy 6:7—“We brought nothing into the world and we can take nothing out of it.”
• Proverbs 16:16—“How much better to get wisdom than gold, to choose understanding rather than silver.”
• Proverbs 22:1-2—“A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed better than silver or gold. Rich and poor have this in common: God is the maker of them all.”
• Psalm 62:10—“Though your riches increase, do not set your heart on them.”
• Proverbs 23:4—“Do not wear yourself out to get rich; have the wisdom to show restraint.”
• Matthew 6:19-21—“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth.”
• Luke 12:33-34—“Where your treasure is, there your heart is.”
• Ecclesiastes 7:14—“Enjoy prosperity whenever you can and when hard times strike, realize God gives one as well as the other.”
• Matthew 16:26—“What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet loses his own soul.”
• Christina Onassis—Happiness is not based on money, and the best proof of that is our family.”

C. The Rewards Of Being A Good Steward of Financial Resources Are Tremendous
• Acts 20:35—“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”
• II Corinthians 9:6—“Whoever sows generously will also reap generously.”
• Proverbs 3:9-10—“Honor the Lord with your wealth...then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.”
• Malachi 3:10—“Bring the whole tithe...and see if I will not open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing you will not have room enough for it.”
• Luke 8:22—“Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven.”
• I Timothy 6:18-19—“Be generous...in this way they lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age so they may take hold of life that is truly life.”
• Luke 6:38—“Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap.”
• Philippians 4:17—“Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account.”
• Randy Alcorn—“You can’t take it with you, but you can send it ahead.”

III. A Call To Serve Through A Development Position
   A. Frederick Buechner: “The kind of work God calls you to is usually the kind of work that (1) you most need to do, and (2) the world most needs to have done. The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.”
      Listening to Your Life, pp. 185-186.

   B. Development Provides the Opportunity to:
      1. Help donors participate in what God is doing in the world. How?
         a. By providing information
         b. By providing experience as observer: adult guest, club in home, etc.
         c. By providing experience as participant
            - meeting with a kid
            - mentoring staff or volunteer leaders

      2. Help donors navigate their way through a very difficult area of spiritual discipline. How?
         a. The starting point is whether my own act is together on stewardship. It is doubtful whether I have much persuasiveness if my own house is not in order.
         b. Affirm donors for what they are doing in giving.
         c. Provide counsel regarding money and wealth. Some possible questions could include:
            1) What is the legacy you desire?
            2) What do you feel is God’s expectation regarding your wealth and/or ability to make money?
            3) Who holds you accountable on whether you ‘love money’?
            4) What does it mean for you to ‘store up treasures in heaven’?