

Money – God or Gift? He’s Coming – Be Ready

Luke 12:35-53

Grace Fellowship Church, Pastor Brad Bigney, January 29, 2012

Two Ways you can prepare for that final judgment day!

I. Start Using Your Money Now the Way You’ll Wish You’d Used it When You Stand Before Christ

Budget for judgment day!

We are servants and stewards who should be handling our money with a sense of expectation that the Master could return any moment... so we better be ready!

Ephesians 5:3 "But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people."

II. Don’t Forget that Everything You Have is a ‘Given’ Not a ‘Gotten’

Luke 12:45-46 “But if that servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.”

When you live like you can do whatever you want with God’s money, you’re living like an unbeliever.

Reasons to live by a budget

A. Budget for Judgment Day

“The difference between a dream and a goal is a plan.” -Anonymous

God’s not against us making plans, as long as you hold those plans loosely in your hands, and recognize that He’s sovereign over everything.

Proverbs 16:9 "A man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps"

B. Budget for God’s Glory

“Building a financial plan requires contemplation of all that God has given us—and regardless of our wealth, he has been exceedingly generous. We respond to his grace and goodness not only in song and in prayer. We can also glorify God with a life lived according to his Lordship, choosing to follow and honor him rather than running after the money god and tumbling headlong into financial slavery.” *Money: God or Gift*, Jamie Munson, p.84-85

Having and using a budget is an act of worship!

C. Budget for Your Own Sanity and Financial Peace

If you’re in a financial mess here today – don’t live another year on that same path. Humble yourself. Ask for help. Put together a plan... work that plan... and then watch what God can do!

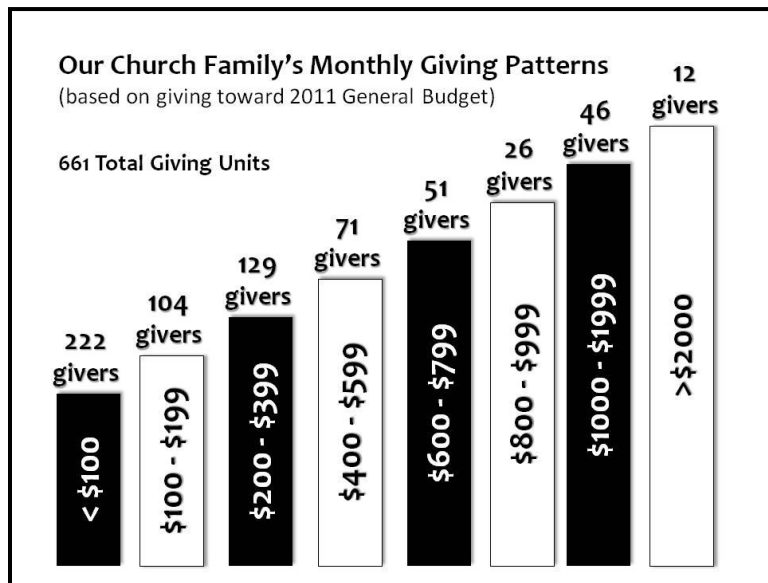
D. Budget for Every Season of Life

Homework and Questions for Reflection

1. Read the 'Giving Covenant' and prayerfully consider signing it... and putting it somewhere that you can see and review on a regular basis this year.
2. Share with one other person what your plans are and how you want to give this year – and ask them to hold you accountable to pray about it and ask you about it.
3. If you don't already - begin tracking your expenses and live by a budget. Use Microsoft Money... paper envelopes... or some other software to get organized... but whatever you do – make a plan for your money... and start telling your money where to go instead of watching it go. Call the church office if you need to... to meet with a financial counselor who can help you work through the details of setting up a budget.

Review of Past Assignments

4. Go to the church website and set up an EFT (electronic funds transfer) this year for your church giving – so that you can make giving back to God, starting with your local church, a top priority... 'first-fruits' giving.
5. Write down what % of your income you think you gave away this past year by investing in the church and kingdom business?
6. Crunch the numbers and find out what you actually gave away this past year. (What Christians *intend* to do, and *think* they've done, is often very different than what they're *actually doing*!)
7. Find yourself on the giving chart and ask God if you need to make plans to grow or increase your giving, starting with your local church, and expanding out to other kingdom ministries and people in need.



My Giving Covenant

1. I affirm God's full ownership of me and everything entrusted to me.
2. I set aside the firstfruits – at least 10 percent – of every wage and gift I receive as holy and belonging exclusively to the Lord.
3. Out of the remaining treasures God entrusts to me, I seek to make generous freewill gifts.
4. I ask God to teach me to give sacrificially to His purposes, including helping the poor and reaching the lost.
5. Recognizing that I cannot take earthly treasures from this world, I determine to lay them up as heavenly treasures – for Christ's glory and the eternal good of others and myself.
6. I ask God to show me how to lead others to the present joy and future reward of the Treasure Principle.

Signed: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____