

Debt - The Thief of Peace

Paul provides a list of the “fruits of the Spirit” in Galatians 5:22-23. One of those “fruits” is peace. God desires that His people be at peace with Him, one another, and even in their finances. Money and stewardship are often neglected subjects of study. And yet, it is hard to find topics more biblical and practical.

- More than 2,000 verses address the issues of money, possessions, and how to manage those things properly.
- The Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes all provide nuggets of truth about the right use of money.
- Out of the 38 parables taught by Jesus, at least 16 address the issues of money and possessions in some way.
- Jesus also constantly exposed the greediness and love of money found in people like the scribes, Pharisees, and the rich young ruler (Luke 16:13-14; Mark 10:17-22).
- The Scriptures make mention of the financial prosperity of people like Abraham, Jacob, David, Solomon, Job, and many others.

The Bible also has much to say about debt and the devastating consequences it can bring into our lives.

The Problem

- Debt can negatively impact us spiritually. While it is not a sin to have debts, it is, not to seek to pay them (Psalm 37:21; Ecclesiastes 5:5; Romans 13:7-8). A failure to pay debts is a failure to keep commitments and promises.
- Debt leads to enslavement (Proverbs 22:7). Being obligated to pay back creditors means that (in a sense) we are working for them!
- Debt can affect our bodies. It can cause stress, affect our mood, and rob us of good health.
- Debt can affect our marriages. Money issues continue to be a leading cause of divorces in this country.
- Debt can affect our morals. It can make it easier for us to compromise our morals and rationalize unethical behavior (Proverbs 28:6).
- Debt can affect our influence (Matthew 5:16). If we fail to honor our financial commitments, we bring shame to the cause of Jesus.
- Debt can affect our ability to be generous (2 Corinthians 9:6-7; Galatians 6:10; Luke 10:35-37).
- Debt can be a sign of greed (Luke 12:15).

The Causes

- Bad stewardship (1 Corinthians 4:2)- This involves a failure to keep track of how much money is made, spent, and live within one’s means (Proverbs 27:23-24).
- Lack of discipline - The person who lacks discipline uses credit cards like free money, makes impulse purchases (Proverbs 21:5) and buys things he knows he cannot afford.
- Unwise decisions – This can include co-signing for someone (Proverbs 11:15), struggling with credit cards, and not saving (Proverbs 22:3).

The Solutions

- We need to know the condition of our flocks and herds (Proverbs 27:23-24). We need to know all our basic financial numbers (income and bills).
- We need to manage our blessings (Proverbs 27:23-24). This requires making a realistic budget and sticking with it!
- We need to start working to eliminate debt (Proverbs 22:7). This may involve cutting some luxuries.
- We need to get some help (Proverbs 12:15). There is wisdom in seeking out counsel.

Conclusion:

God has given us our blessings, and when we take heed to counsel, we can live with financial peace.

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