

Session 1: God’s Purpose With Money, Part 1: “How Did We Get Here?”



big idea:

God’s Word tells us that he owns all resources and we are accountable to him for how we manage (or “steward”) his resources.

Memorize

“If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won’t be honest with greater responsibilities. And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven?” (Luke 16:10-11)

**Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are taken from the NLT

Take a few moments to read these verses together:

- Psalm 24:1—Everything belongs to God.
- 1 Chronicles 29:11-12—God owns and sovereignly rules over all.
- Luke 12:47-48—Servants will be held responsible for their stewardship of their master’s belongings.
- 2 Corinthians 5:10—We must all stand before Christ one day to be judged for how we’ve stewarded the lives he has given us.

At this point you may be wondering, *“My financial life is kind of a mess right now. Why don’t we just jump right into something practical like making a budget or choosing the right bank?”* The answer is simple: as fallen people, we can easily be deceived into thinking we know how to fix our own problems apart from God. Instead, Scripture tells us that money management is primarily a heart issue (Matthew 6:21), so we must first take time to renew our thinking about money based on God’s Word and rely on the Holy Spirit to help us make necessary changes.

After studying the verses listed above, consider the following questions and journal your thoughts.

How are you operating like God owns everything you are entrusted with and you get the privilege of managing those resources? Alternatively, how are you operating as if you are the owner, but will share some of it with him for his purposes?

In the past year, roughly how many times have you stopped to consult God's Word about your finances? If not God's Word, what is your primary influence on how to handle money? (friends, family, neighbors, social media, TV, yourself, etc.)? What is the danger of this type of counsel?

How are your actions exposing a belief that you created your wealth because of your wisdom and hard work? How are your actions exposing a belief that God created your wealth in spite of your lack of wisdom in all things?

In what ways do you praise God daily for his provision in your life?

God makes it clear that there is an intimate correlation between how one handles resources entrusted to them and a person's commitment to follow him. Meditate on the following verses that present stewardship as a reflection of one's relationship with Christ, and note anything that comes to mind.

- Matthew 6:19-24
- Matthew 19:20-26
- Luke 19:8-10
- Acts 4:32-37

Money as a tool is no different than anything else. The two great commandments, which Jesus shares in Mark 12:29-31 and Matthew 22:37-40, should help us realize that God wants us to use our resources as tools to love him and love others. Here is a list of ways we are called to love God and love others through our financial stewardship.

- Provide for your family (Matthew 7:9-12; 1 Timothy 5:8)

- Find a church where you can give joyfully and join with the mission of the church (2 Corinthians 9:7; Galatians 6:10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2)
- Seek opportunities to share with others in need (Hebrews 13:16; 1 Timothy 6:17-18)

Develop a list of ways you are succeeding and struggling in your love for God and love for others through how you steward the resources God has entrusted you with.

Succeeding	Struggling
<i>Example: I often sacrifice spending on personal wants so that I can help my neighbor purchase school supplies and other necessities for their children.</i>	<i>Example: I pretty much tune out at church when they announce opportunities to give to overseas missions because I don't live there, so I don't see how it affects me personally.</i>

In closing, meditate on the following verses and praise God for his unbelievable mercy, grace, and abundant kindness.

- Proverbs 11:25, 22:9
- Matthew 19:27-29

Prayer of Gratitude:

Small Group Discussion Questions:

1. What are your hopes and expectations for this financial study?
2. What would you like to see God do over the course of these seven sessions?
3. What changes in either thought or action do you anticipate you will need to make?
4. Do you believe that how you handle financial resources has an effect on your walk with Christ? Why or why not?
5. What is your biggest money question?

HOMEWORK / Recap

- Review the Scripture at the beginning of Session #1 about stewarding God's resources and reflect on the questions that follow.
- Review the Scriptures toward the end of Session #1 and list ways you are succeeding and struggling in your love for God and love for others through your stewardship of God's resources.
- Spend some time praising God corporately for his mercy, grace, and kindness as you meditate on the verses at the very end of this session.
- In preparation for session #2, read Luke 12:13-21 and 1 Corinthians 10:31.

