

When we read the Bible, we are getting to know the One that inspired every word written in its pages.

It is with this in mind that we formed the *Financial Wellness Ministry team*. In his book, *The Blessed Life*, Robert Morris puts it this way, “There are more than 500 verses in the Bible concerning prayer and nearly 500 verses concerning faith, but there are more than 2,000 verses on the subject of money and possessions. Jesus talked about money in 16 of His 38 parables. Clearly, from the Bible’s standpoint, we need to understand money and how to handle it.”

Our Lord tells us that we will have one of two masters (Matthew 6:24) and we can’t serve both. The two choices He gave are God and money.

This means we must be intentional about our financial wellness just as we are about our physical wellness. Our culture is learning that we should not wait until we face a physical crisis to practice the disciplines that help our body function the way it was intended. In the same way we handle our bodies proactively by eating nutritiously, exercising and getting proper sleep, we should also be diligent about our finances.

By the way, if you know your finances are already sick, do not worry, because our Lord specializes in repairing broken things.

Our journey on this path includes two critical elements:

1. Our first step is understanding what stewardship means. This means first acknowledging that God created everything (Genesis 1) and that He owns everything (Psalm 24:1). In that context, we understand that we are just managers of whatever resources He has entrusted to our care. Just as we give our money to someone to invest on our behalf for retirement and trust they will do so according to our instructions, so God has given us everything we have so that we might invest it as He instructs.
2. We also believe the Bible is where we get these instructions. This includes direction on giving, saving, how we spend money on daily needs, and even enjoying the blessings He provides. When we do these things according to His ways, we can enjoy a life of joy and peace that only comes from walking in joyful obedience to our Lord. We can believe in His goodness and know that He has our best interests at heart.

Once we understand that God owns everything and we are just managers of resources placed in our hands, and we have implemented the principles of good stewardship, we are ready for the second leg of our journey. We are ready to give more generously (2 Corinthians 9:6-11).

It is also important to understand that these principles are for every Christ follower. They are not practices reserved for full time ministerial staff or the super religious among us. Additionally, it is important to know that God wants you to start right where you are now. The Bible tells us if we are faithful in the small things we can be trusted with greater things as well. Another Robert Morris quote from *The Blessed Life* states, “Without exception tithers say, ‘I’m blessed,’ or ‘God has blessed me.’ They all give the testimony that God has blessed them. In contrast, every non-tither I have ever spoken with gives this testimony: ‘I can’t afford to tithe.’ Once you commit to this journey of knowing our Lord’s principles and going to Him in prayer on how to apply them to your life, I trust you will never want to stop.”

We invite you to join us on this journey of faithful and deeper trust in our Lord. The Financial Wellness ministry team will be intentional to provide classes each semester on stewardship and living generously. We will also lift up testimonies of those who have experienced God’s work in this area of their lives. Regardless of where you are in this journey there is more to learn, and it affects much more than just your finances. Learning to be a better steward of everything in your life, trusting God more deeply, and putting God first are just some of the by-products of living a life of financial wellness.