
God's Plan for Our Financial Security



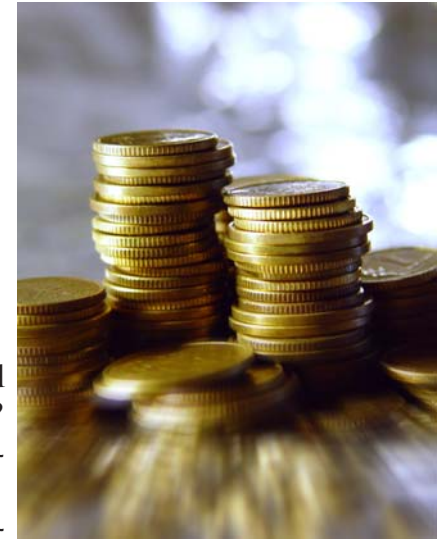
HOW MUCH MONEY would you need to feel entirely secure? A million? Ten million? The \$50 billion that Bill Gates has?

But wealth can't provide real security. What about robbers, dishonest money managers, huge medical bills, depressions, or wars in which your assets are taken or lose all value? What we really need is God's social security plan. Financial security and peace can only be found by following His financial planning.

Thoughts to Remember:

- ♦ We're supposed to save for retirement, pay our bills, buy insurance to protect our homes/heath/cars/life. How can we keep up with the financial demands? God's plan is the real thing. When everything else has proven untrustworthy and collapsed, God is able and trustworthy.
- ♦ "The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you, and you shall find them no more at all" (Revelation 18:14, 15, 17). "Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you! Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten; your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you...You have heaped up treasure in the last days" (James 5:1-3). This is how the Bible portrays the lives of those who pursue money in earth's final days. Those who dedicate their lives to making money will see it slipping through their fingers, and will be filled with terror. But there is a better way, a way of perfect security.
- ♦ God says, "For every beast in the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills...If I were hungry, I would not tell you; for the world is mine, and all its fullness" (Psalm 50:10, 12). "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Psalm 24:1).
- ♦ "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. For he spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast" (Psalm 33:6). When God speaks, it is so. He is not only able, but willing and anxious to help us. He who creates and sustains everything will be our security in troubled times.
- ♦ Here are seven principles from God's Word on how to handle money His way:
 - Since God created me and sustains my life, everything I have is really His. "And you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth" (Deuteronomy 8:18). God gives us strength and opportunity to work, and He provides

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for us. "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the Lord of hosts" (Haggal 2:8).

- **Thinking acknowledges our deep belief that God is both the Creator and sustainer of life.** Bible patriarchs such as Abraham returned a portion of the spoils from any battle—and later in history, a portion of every year's harvest—to the Lord. This portion was called a *tithe* (teeth). They knew they owed gratitude to God for blessings, for life, and for all that they possessed. "Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed me. But you say, 'In what way have we robbed you?' In tithes and offerings....Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house, and try me now in this, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it!" (Malachi 3:8, 10).
- **Giving with the right motive opens our hearts to receive spiritual and material blessings from God.** Returning tithes and offerings to God does not guarantee you will become wealthy and have no financial troubles. But it *is* a promise: "And my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19). "I have been young and now am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (Psalm 37:25). "Honor the Lord with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of all your increase; so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine" (Proverbs 3:9, 10). These blessings are not for the greedy, but for those who are good managers of what God has given them—those who are faithful in returning tithes and offerings to God.
- **Giving enables us to have the deep satisfaction of advancing God's kingdom.** Tithing is dedicated to the sharing of the gospel around the world. In human economy, we live only to get as much as we can for ourselves. In God's economy, others come first. We give so others can know Christ and live eternally in heaven.
- **There is no greater motivation to give than the cross.** The supreme gift of heaven was Jesus, and God gave Him. He gave the most precious gift; we can do no less for Him. Sacrificing for God's cause teaches us deeper lessons of trust. "But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). When I return the first even though I can't pay my bills, the Bible teaches that God will provide. Tithing takes faith. It's not easy. But what a spiritual blessing we receive when we see God in action, providing for us.
- **The real issue is where our affections are.** God is not poor. He doesn't need the money. What He wants is our hearts. Returning tithes and offerings helps loosen our hold on the false security of money and maintain the generous spirit of God. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul" (Matthew 16:28). "And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided'" (Luke 12:19, 20)?

The "take-home" message for you . . .

- Are we laying up treasures for God and eternity, or just for ourselves in this short lifetime? To what are our heart's deepest affections attached—money and security, or God? The God who owns the cattle on a thousand hills has enough to provide for you in any circumstance.

Just between you . . . and God:

- Are you squeezed financially? Are you saying to yourself, "Yet another financial obligation—how can I add it to my already overstretched budget?" There is good news. As you faithfully return tithes and offerings to God in gratitude, you never need to worry about finances again. God is your Provider now, and He is completely secure and always faithful!

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