

Fact Sheet for **“Biblical Principles about Money”**

Ecclesiastes 5:10-6:9

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We all think of money often, everywhere from the big picture... equity in our home, 401k, retirement, life insurance, new(er) car purchase ...to the small stuff... a new pair of jeans, going out to eat, or which brand of corn meal to buy. Money is such an important part of our lives. We can't escape thinking about it. Perhaps this is the reason so much is said in the Bible about money.

There is instruction in giving...

Matt. 6:2-4 _____

2 Cor. 8&9 _____

Haggai

There are good examples...

Matt. 12:41-44; Lk. 21:1-4) _____

Luke 10:25-37 _____

There are bad examples...

Acts 5:1-11 _____

Joshua 7 _____

2 Kings 5 _____

There are sad examples...

Matt. 19:16-22; Mk. 10:17-22; Lk. 18:18-23 _____

There is encouragement...

Heb. 13:5-6 _____

Matt. 6:25-34; Lk. 12:22-34 _____

These are just to name a few passages. There are many more. A good understanding of the Biblical principles about money embraces all of God's instruction on finances. Today let's consider some of that instruction that can easily get missed.

I mentioned earlier that Ecclesiastes is one of the harder books to warm up to. It begins with these words...

^{ESV} **Ecclesiastes 1:2** Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

The word “vanity” has the sense of what is transitory. But it also has the sense of what is empty. That's not a warm snuggly thought, but it makes sense if you understand what Solomon is wrestling with. From an earthly point of view Solomon is wrestling with the purpose of life. In contrast the book of Revelation is written from a heavenly point of view. We wouldn't know anything about the things in that book unless God revealed them to us.

In Ecclesiastes Solomon is wrestling with life from an earthly point of view, a human point of view. He brings the wisdom God gave him to the examination of man's purpose in life. His wise words are a vital part of God's instruction for us. He begins this book with an extended examination of all the work that goes into life and the emptiness of it, if that is all you live for. He sums up that initial examination with some very famous verses (3:1-8). The center section of this book is a lot like the book of Proverbs, but keyed off of Solomon's extended introduction. He moves from topic to topic giving wise instruction on life. Today we are going to begin in 5:10 and look at some biblical principles about money. These are principles that will serve you well in life no matter your age.

ESV ¹⁰ ¶ He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity.

¹¹ ¶ When goods increase, they increase who eat them, and what advantage has their owner but to see them with his eyes?

¹² ¶ Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little or much, but the full stomach of the rich will not let him sleep.

¹³ ¶ There is a grievous evil that I have seen under the sun: riches were kept by their owner to his hurt, ¹⁴ and those riches were lost in a bad venture. And he is father of a son, but he has nothing in his hand. ¹⁵ As he came from his mother's womb he shall go again, naked as he came, and shall take nothing for his toil that he may carry away in his hand. ¹⁶ This also is a grievous evil: just as he came, so shall he go, and what gain is there to him who toils for the wind? ¹⁷ Moreover, all his days he eats in darkness in much vexation and sickness and anger.

Remember what Job said after the loss of his property and his children...

ESV **Job 1:21** And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

¹⁸ ¶ Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot.

"lot" – the portion in life determined by God

¹⁹ Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil-- this is the gift of God. ²⁰ For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart.

6:1 There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, and it lies heavy on mankind: ² a man to whom God gives wealth, possessions, and honor, so that he lacks nothing of all that he desires, yet God does not give him power to enjoy them, but a stranger enjoys them. This is vanity; it is a grievous evil. ³ If a man fathers a hundred children and lives many years, so that the days of his years are many, but his soul is not satisfied with life's good things, and he also has no burial, I say that a stillborn child is better off than he. ⁴ For it comes in vanity and goes in darkness, and in darkness its name is covered. ⁵ Moreover, it has not seen the sun or known anything, yet it finds rest rather than he. ⁶ Even though he should live a thousand years twice over, yet enjoy no good-- do not all go to the one place?

Why does God give to one the power to enjoy wealth and possessions, and not to another? Notice that it does not say when or why God makes these choices. There are several possibilities, some of which are from the foundation of the world, some of which are in response to a person's choices in life.

⁷ ¶ All the toil of man is for his mouth, yet his appetite is not satisfied. ⁸ For what advantage has the wise man over the fool? And what does the poor man have who knows how to conduct himself before the living? ⁹ Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the appetite: this also is vanity and a striving after wind.

NET **Ecclesiastes 6:9** It is better to be content with what the eyes can see than for one's heart always to crave more. This continual longing is futile-- like chasing the wind.

"A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."

Look back over the underlined words. These are some great biblical principles about money!