

May 21, 2023

HeartWise in Finances (Proverbs 11)

Be wise and honor the One who has given you everything.

Bumper In

Hook – I Want That (3min)

- Greetings, Card, etc.
 - o First service – we are growing! More room in 2nd service if you can make that.
- Years ago, one of my incredible Christian friends and I were talking about our childhoods and how our parents provided for us. He shared with me how his parents didn't have much but they always trusted in the Lord. They had been missionaries and kept that mindset even when they returned to the United States. Once they barely had enough money for food the next day, even with two kids. Then they ran into someone in need, that they knew, and they gave their money to that person. They told their kids that they would have food but the parents may not have food the next day – yet the parents had joy! And the next morning, four bags of groceries showed up on their porch, without being asked for. My friend loved that story!
 - o For me – I had two thoughts.
 - o First – that seemed irresponsible.
 - o But also – I wished I had that trust.
 - o God used that story to invite me into a deeper freedom, joy, and purpose with the finances He has given me.
 - o ***I want to invite you today as well.***
 - o ***ALL ABOUT OUR SAVIOR JESUS.***
- *Main Point – Be wise and honor the One who has given you everything.
*Honor the Lord with your wealth
and with the best part of everything you produce.
Prov 3:9

Prayer

Honor God by Serving in the Church (7-10min)

- Giving the Lord your time and talents. Just as important as finances.
- Matt Gleason's story
 - o Matt was just coming back to church, and he committed to weekly services, a Life Group, and getting on a Team. I got a chance to catch up with him to encourage him on these commitments – they make a difference! Also, tell me why? He said, "I want to be as connected as possible. I have tried the wishy-washy faith, and it didn't work for me."
- Proverbs 11 – (page 532)

"To transform religious and irreligious people into Fully Devoted Followers of Christ."

- Lots of great stuff in this chapter – going to be here for the whole sermon.
- ***Upright citizens are good for a city and make it prosper, but the talk of the wicked tears it apart.**
Proverbs 11:11
 - It is usually the people who are doing the least who complain the most. It is lot harder to complain about the team when you are on the field.
- **SIMPLE PITCH – not guilt but laying it out**
 - Jesus is our King, obeying Him is not optional (too many think this or act like this).
 - Voluntary – Jesus won't fire you – but there are still consequences.
 - Serving Him is freedom.
 - Jesus commands us to serve in the church.
 - ***In the same way, when you obey me you should say, 'We are unworthy servants who have simply done our duty. Luke 17:10**
 - ***We will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love. Eph 4:15-16**
 - PRETTY CLEAR.
- Not about what the church or a pastor want – it is your obedience to God.
 - The church's job is to make sure there is a place for you to serve.
 - This is a family where everyone serves, not a business with transactions.
 - There are certain exceptions (person in cancer recovery).
- ***CARD and DIGITAL FORM.**
 - Ways to serve –
 - Next Gen: Kids, Youth, YA
 - Services: HUG, Media, Worship, Setup
 - Support: Facilities, Admin (Vitality), Prayer
 - Adults: Host LG, Men's/Women's
 - *CARD or email church*
 - Music and Prayer.

Honor Christ by Giving Generously to His Work. (10min, -20)

FOCUS IS ON JESUS OUR SAVIOR

- ***Money is a gift from the Lord.**
 - ***Meme** – not just when you find money in your pocket, but even what comes from your ability to work and your talents – all a gift from God.
 - *Trust in your money and down you go!**
But the godly flourish like leaves in spring.
Prov 11:28
 - Money is not evil – but loving it or trusting it is.

"To transform religious and irreligious people into Fully Devoted Followers of Christ."

*Evil people get rich for the moment,
but the reward of the godly will last.

Prov 11:18

- Money is a “this life” thing – not part of eternity and you can’t take it with you.
 - Don’t mistake it for the true purpose you were created for.
- The Proverbs know that foolish and evil people can have wealth – but it will not help them with what really matters.
 - Those who don’t give to the Lord will always have more money than you – be OK with that.

- *Character matters more than money.

*The Lord detests the use of dishonest scales,
but he delights in accurate weights.

Pride leads to disgrace,
but with humility comes wisdom.

Honesty guides good people;
dishonesty destroys treacherous people.

Riches won’t help on the day of judgment,
but right living can save you from death.

Prov 11:1-4

- The Lord cares about how you get money.
 - The Lord cares how you save, spend, and invest money.
 - God cares about how you treat your employees and co-workers.
 - God cares about your character and heart.
 - Make no mistake – money always reflects your heart.
- Story – A Time of Trust
 - I have talked with one or two people in the last year who expressed struggles with our Building Hope capital campaign – giving above and beyond the General Fund for expanded facilities. We HAVE done work on the property – new patio, playground, grass, site work, and more. We have also worked with multiple architects and contractors to adjust to our new reality post-COVID. We WILL BUILD.
 - *This is a time of trusting God – and sacrificially giving for the sake of the lost.*
 - *This is the way of Jesus.*

- *Generosity grows gratitude.

²⁴ Give freely and become more wealthy;
be stingy and lose everything.

²⁵ The generous will prosper;
those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed.

²⁶ People curse those who hoard their grain,
but they bless the one who sells in time of need.

Prov 11:24-26

- Giving grows more giving.
- God’s goal is your freedom and significance.

“To transform religious and irreligious people into Fully Devoted Followers of Christ.”

- Materialism traps us.
 - Jesus sets us free – a life of generosity is a life of freedom, purpose, and significance!
 - HOW you spend money matters.

Steps to Grow Your Giving (10min)

- *Tone – not shame but caring invitation. Focus on Jesus the Savior.*

- *Give something.
 - David 2 Sam 24:24 – I will not offer what costs me nothing.
 - Paul Phil 4:15 – the ministry of giving and receiving – don't take from the church and God's work and give nothing in return.
 - Start with \$1 or \$10 and be consistent.
- *Grow in generosity.
 - Focus on JESUS.
 - Pay attention to percentages.
 - Average for most Christians is 2.5%.
 - Don't "feel" it out – check it out. Look at your percentages. Be honest.
 - Know the state of your flocks (Prov 27:23) – know your amounts.
 - There are people in our church who have large wealth and seek to honor the Lord with it. They allow me to pastor them through their decisions.
 - See Prov 11:24 – God wants to see that you are faithful in giving, and He will give you more so you can bless more people.
 - It can get hard when you have a lot of wealth and are giving away a lot. But keep your commitments to the Lord who gave you everything!
 - Jesus said those who are faithful little can be trusted with much.
 - This is about freedom more than finances, and making a difference more than money.
- *Give like Jesus (sacrificially).
 - He gave SACRIFICIALLY – that is the standard for Christians.
 - Not 10% – for most of us it is much, much more.
 - Hannah and I are giving over 15% to Covenant Grove, in addition to giving to sponsoring a child and other non-profit giving.
 - **Sacrifice is the path of joy – not materialism.** A constant struggle in our culture.
 - Every commercial is about your money – and we don't seem to mind. Yet we get triggered when the Lord wants to talk about His money in our hands.
 - V.28 – God wants your life to flourish!
 - *Trust in your money and down you go!
But the godly flourish like leaves in spring.
 - Prov 11:28

"To transform religious and irreligious people into Fully Devoted Followers of Christ."

- God's way is the way of freedom, joy, and significance.
- HONOR the One who gave it all.
- Bigger dreams unlocked!
- Not an issue of income, but it is an issue of sacrifice. HEART ISSUE.

- *You know what I love about this church family? We are honored to sacrifice for Christ and His Kingdom. We are faith-filled, prayer-led, big-thinking risk takers.*

Punch – Inspire (2min)

- *Our church isn't all about money – that's too little – God wants your heart and soul, every second and every dollar and every breath, set loose for His glory and basking in His overflowing love and joy. This is the purpose of life.*
- *What is your next step?*
- **What more do I ask than that you give yourself entirely to Me? I care not for anything else you may give Me, for I seek not your gift but you. Just as it would not be enough for you to have everything if you did not have Me, so whatever you give cannot please Me if you do not give yourself.*
Thomas a Kempis, Imitation of Christ, IV.8

Prayer

Benediction – *The “foolish” plan of God is wiser than the wisest of human plans, and God's weakness is stronger than the greatest of human strength. I Corinthians 1:25*