

God and Giving

God says that if we pray for anything in His will, believing, it will be given to us. But God's will and His ways are not always coincidental with ours. So, when we turn our finances over to God, we also must be willing to accept His direction. Too often we impatiently seek our own way without any clear directions from Him. There is nothing wrong with asking God's direction, but it is wrong to go our own way without waiting for God's answer. In order for us to recognize God's directives, it may be necessary to first understand God's view of money and how He uses it to enhance our relationship with Him.

How and for what purpose God uses money

Money is neither good nor bad; it is merely a medium of exchange. It is the misuse and abuses of money that cause the problems

- God uses money to strengthen our trust in Him. It is often through money that God can clearly and objectively show us that He is in total control, if we will trust Him and accept our positions as stewards and manager of His possessions (Matthew 6:32,33)
- God uses money to develop our trustworthiness. This principle is important because our lives generally revolve around making, spending, saving, and using money. If He can trust us with money, then He can trust us with greater responsibilities and His true riches (Luke 16:11).
- God uses money to prove His love. Scripture tells us that God assumes the responsibility of providing the basic necessities for everyone who trusts in Him (Matthew 7:11).
- God uses money to demonstrate His faithfulness. Moses reminded Israel that it was God who would give them the power to make wealth. Our security is in God, not our bank accounts. Discovering His faithfulness through financial needs encourages reliance on Him.
- God uses money to provide direction. There is probably no way God can direct our lives more meticulously than through the abundance or lack of money. Too often we believe God directs our lives through the abundance of money, but He also will lead us down His directed path by withholding money.
- God uses money to cultivate self-control. One of the fruits of the Spirit is self-control, a key aspect of successful money management.
- God uses money to clarify spiritual maturity. Many temptations clamor for Christians' attention. A great deal can be learned about our personal character and spiritual maturity by noticing how we handle money and determine financial priorities.

Areas in which God does not use money

Just like there are several ways in which God uses money for our benefit, there are several areas in which God never uses money to influence our lives

- God never uses money to worry us. If Christians are worried, frustrated, and upset about money, God is not in control. God said that wealth without worry is His plan for our lives. In addition, He promises to meet the needs of those who trust in Him (Matthew 6:25).
- God never uses money to corrupt us. Many Christians have fallen into Satan's trap and are being corrupted. Christians whose financial life is characterized by greed, ego, deceit, and other worldly snares are at enmity with God and His plan.
- God never allows money to satisfy our personal whims or desires. God does not expect His people to live in poverty; however, He also does not endorse lavishness. Surplus is provided so that God's work can be funded and those in need can be helped. If the surplus is hoarded or wasted on lavishness rather than used for His plan and purpose, chances are the surplus will be removed

Conclusion

God offers countless financial principles, intended to make our lives meaningful, because He's interested in us and how we earn and spend money. Once we understand how God uses money and why He chooses to use it in a

particular way, we generally become more familiar with His plans and purposes for our lives and are able to recognize and comprehend His directives.

Resources:

http://upperwest.journeymetro.com/pages/pages.asp?page_id=124734

Larry Burkett: Your Finances in Changing Times Page 43

<http://www.crosswalk.com/family/finances/559178.html>