



No.1

FINANCES IN THE BIBLE

God's supreme love

We need to address this important topic of finances from the realisation that everything is to be under the banner of God's love. Whatever aspect of the Bible we are addressing, we are to do it with the understanding that God's love is the source of all Scripture. This disqualifies religion and therefore anything done outside of God's love and our relationship with Him.

MONEY

To address finances according to the Word of God we must look beyond simply addressing money to examine the heart motivation and proper doctrine according to the New Testament.

DISCERNING THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT

First of all, we need to divide the Old and New Testaments correctly. When we open the New Testament Bible we find ourselves at chapter one of Matthew, followed by Mark, Luke and John. We know the New Covenant was established with the blood of Jesus. Before the Cross, Jesus was still fulfilling the law in order to abolish it for our sake. When we read the chapters that take place before the Cross in each of the four Gospels, we need to realise that the law was still in place. This resolves the confusion many believers have in interpreting the Bible, because of the misconception that all scriptures contained within the chapters before the Cross were already NEW COVENANT.

We need to discern the scriptures before the Cross from the perspective of grace and the New Testament. Jesus was fulfilling the law while pointing to the New Covenant of grace.

Hebrews 8:6-13 (*Relating to Jeremiah's prophecy*)

"But now a more excellent ministry He has obtained, by how much also He is a mediator of a better testament, which is of such a character as to have been enacted upon the basis of better promises. For if that first testament had been faultless, in that case there would not have been a constant searching out of a place for a second. For, finding fault with them He says, Behold, days come, says the Lord, and I will consummate with the house of Israel and the house of Judah a testament new in quality, not according to the testament which I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, because they themselves did not continue true to my testament, and I disregarded them, says the Lord. Because this is the testament which I will arrange with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord, giving my laws into their mind, also upon their hearts I will write them. And I will be to them God, and they themselves will be to me a people. And in no wise shall each one teach his fellow citizen and each one his brother, saying, Come to know the Lord in an experiential way because all shall know me in an absolute way, from the least to the greatest of them, because I will be merciful in the case of their unrighteousness, and their sins I will in no wise remember anymore. In the fact that He says, New in quality, He has permanently antiquated the first. Now, that which is being antiquated and is waning in strength, is near to the point of vanishing away".

THE PROPHETIC:

Jeremiah 31:31-34

"Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the

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day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares the Lord. “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the Lord, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,” declares the Lord, “for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

God’s plan and purpose in establishing the New Covenant is to replace the law with His grace. God wants sons and daughters instead of mere servants. God is no longer our judge but our Father. He has put “His Law” on our hearts, which is the Holy Spirit, has forgiven our sins and promised to remember them no more.

Once we have established the New Testament has replaced the Old, we can now discern the Scriptures of the New Covenant without confusion. The law is abolished and we are not to follow it anymore. Some churches and denominations mix the law and grace, that is, the Old and New Testament. This brings confusion, and worse, wrong doctrines which become a bondage to their congregations.

Jesus taught where the real riches are to be found:

Matthew 6:19-21

“Stop accumulating treasures upon the earth for yourselves, where the clothes-moth and corrosion destroy and where thieves break in and steal. But be accumulating treasures in heaven where neither a clothes-moth nor corrosion destroys and where thieves do not break in nor steal, for where your treasure is, there will also be your heart.”

Stewards of God’s provision

Jesus makes accumulating treasures an issue of the heart. When we realise everything we have is from God, we will have the right approach towards money. This will give us the proper motivation to obtain money and possessions. We are only stewards. If we are able to be successful financially, it is because of God’s grace and the gifts and talents He has bestowed on us. When we realise we are only stewards of our wealth we will find it easy to be generous and will not worry about losing anything, knowing we don’t “own” it. We can then trust God because He is the owner and He is in control.

God wants us to be spiritually prosperous

We are God’s righteousness and spiritual prosperity will bring success in every area of our lives. Generally, the prosperity message misleads Christians, because it is focused only on being financially prosperous instead of seeking to be spiritually prosperous. In Matthew chapter 5, when Jesus taught the Beatitudes, He only focused on being spiritually prosperous, that is, spiritually blessed.

Giving to the church

Our Heavenly Father wants us to love one another with His divine sacrificial love. This implies sharing the blessings we receive from our Father, including our money, time, expertise, etc. The love of God is not bound to any obligation, law or pressure. The love of God gives generously and gladly. Any donation to the church done under the obligation of the law is not done with the love of God.

1 Corinthians 13:3

“And if I use all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver up my body [as a martyr] in order that I may glory, but do not have love, I am being profited in not even one thing.”

The love of God needs to be the motivation for giving, otherwise, it is good for nothing. Giving just to receive or out of guilt, fear or any other wrong motivation cannot be blessed. **It will not profit the giver even one thing.** It’s got to be the Holy Spirit and His truth leading us to give out of love.