

The Christian Perspective on Financial Management

1- Objective:

- ❖ To understand the Bible view of money.
- ❖ To learn the Christian guidelines of managing and investing money.

2- References

- ❖ “The Spiritual Means” by HH Pope Shenouda III ; Chapter 10 “Giving”
- ❖ Interpretation of the New Testament by Father Tadros Malaty (Matt. 19:23-25)
http://st-takla.org/pub_Bible-Interpretations/Holy-Bible-Tafsir-02-New-Testament/Father-Tadros-Yacoub-Malaty/01-Engeel-Matta/Tafseer-Engil-Mata__01-Chapter-19.html

3- Scriptural Verse:

- ❖ “So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest” (Matthew 25:27)

4- Lesson guidelines

Misperception

Many have the misperception that Christianity does not support the attitude of wealth building or investors. Also the concept that poverty is associated with higher spirituality levels and that the spirit works against the body and materialistic things. The fact that most of the disciples were fishermen and monks choose voluntary poverty may also give an indication that spirituality and poverty are related.

Actual facts

- ❖ Christianity always encourages hard work and success. Frequently, the result of hard work is wealth and money generation.
- ❖ The Bible clearly mocks the lazy hands and lazy people “Lazy hands make for poverty, but diligent hands bring wealth” (Proverbs 10:4).
- ❖ Many spiritual characters close to the Lord in the Bible were wealthy, like Job, Abraham, King Solomon, Joseph of Arimathea, ...
- ❖ The Lord Himself gave a parable about the Talents where He demonstrated that the servants who invested the talents and increased the return were the blessed ones.
- ❖ Humans are granted different talents and money can be one of these talents. The Lord clearly in the parable of the talents asks us to make it grow and invest it.
- ❖ Yet, Christianity warns against the love of money and the dependence on money in our lives versus loving and depending on the Lord “Parable of the Rich Fool” (Luke 12).
- ❖ Wealth and money might lead many to arrogance and self pride (Psalm 49:6).

- ❖ Christianity always cautions us not to fall into these evil tools used by the devil against wealth and investing (1 Timothy 6:9-10).
- ❖ The Bible also indicates that when we lend the brethren that should not be with interest (Leviticus 25:36).

How do we use money and spend it in a Christian perspective?

- ❖ Christianity is not against enjoying the blessing of money or wealth “As for every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, and given him power to eat of it, to receive his heritage and rejoice in his labor—this is the gift of God” (Ecclesiastes 5:19).
- ❖ However, Christianity is against unwise and excessive spending; the use of money should be towards supporting ourselves and our families for an independent living presently and in the future.
- ❖ We also should use the money for the glory of God’s name and to support and share with our brethren the poor and the needy; “He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord, and He will pay back what he has given” (Proverbs 19:17). **The Lord** Jesus to the rich young man, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me” (Matthew 19:21).
- ❖ Most importantly that we invest and save in heaven for an eternal future in the paradise of joy “Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Luke 12:32-34)

5- Conclusion:

- ❖ Managing and investing the gift of money to grow and increase is the responsibility of every Christian. Money should be used to support us and help us to lead a comfortable and a blessed life to the glory of His name. Yet, our ultimate investment and saving should be in the heavenly Jerusalem where there are no thieves or moss to destroy our treasure.

6- Activities / Discussion points:

- ❖ Divide the group into two, one would discuss and outline examples of bad investments for money and the second group would discuss and outline examples of good examples of investments in the Christian perspective.
- ❖ Encourage the group to plan and organize a project for helping the poor or supporting a need in their community or Church.