



March 6 & 7: It's About Choices

Overview

We've been hearing about companies receiving a bailout, but we're going to receive something better than a bailout. We're going BEYOND to follow God's plan for money management. We will learn how God wants to prosper you ... we'll learn how to get out of debt ... and who caused your financial problems. But, we will also discover how to solve those problems and how to excel when it comes to finances.



Take a second look ... Sermon Summary

It's amazing the choices we are willing to make about money without considering the consequences. Maybe you feel financial pressures because of bills which are a result of choices.

If we're going to experience financial freedom, isn't it logical that we'll have to make some changes about our choices?

Who is behind our financial problems?

Your choices and mine have something to do with our financial problems, but there is somebody else behind this. I'm talking about the Lord God himself. This means you can find a way out of financial problems *if you'll do it God's way.*

Haggai 1:1-11

The people of God made bad choices. They did not put God first. Their troubles were a direct result of ignoring God.

Matthew 6:33, But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well.

When God is your number one priority, He will work everything out for your good. You see, financial problems serve the same purpose as pain in your body. Pain is a warning light that something is wrong. In a similar way, financial problems are a warning that something needs to change. You need to reverse some choices.

Malachi 3:8-10

God is behind the blessing, and God is behind the problem. Sometimes God gives a wake-up call to get our attention. People make bad choices and they don't put God first. Troubles can be a direct result of ignoring God.

Proverbs 3:9-11

Eight Principles of Tithing:

1. **The tithe belongs to God — not us.**

Leviticus 27:30-31

2. **We are to *bring* the tithe.**

Malachi 3:10

3. **We are to bring the whole *tithe*.**

Bring the whole 10%, not just a part of it. Partial obedience does not bring partial blessings. Partial obedience is still disobedience.

4. **We are to bring the whole tithe into the *storehouse*.**

5. **We are to bring the tithe as an act of corporate *worship*.**

1 Corinthians 16:2

6. **The tithe belongs to *God*.**

7. **The Old Testament priests administered the tithes and offerings; *church leaders* have this responsibility today.**

Acts 11:29-30

8. **It is *biblical* for leaders to set aside money from tithes and offerings for local ministry, benevolence and missions.**

Luke 6:38, Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.



Take it to the source ... Bible Study

Introductory question: Have you ever been pickpocketed or burglarized or do you know someone who has been? How did the experience affect you or those you know?

Read *Haggai 1:1-11*.

1. What do verses 2 and 4 say about the priorities of the people of God at that time? Can you see any parallels with the priorities of many people in our own culture?
2. Can you relate to verse 6 at all? Have you ever had a time in your life when you felt like your financial situation was like this? How did you handle it?
3. How might the frustrations of the people in verses 6 and 9 be God's way of getting their attention?
4. Are there areas in your life where you have invested for yourself what belongs to God? What steps do you need to take to give God what is rightfully His?

Read *Matthew 6:25-33*.

1. What do these verses say about God's place in our financial and material needs?
2. Do you trust God to take care of your needs or do you make it your priority to take care of yourself?
3. How can a genuine trust in God reduce the stress and tension that permeates our society?
4. What would it mean for you to *seek first His kingdom and His righteousness*? How would that look in your own life?

Read *Leviticus 27:30-31; Proverbs 3:9-11*.

1. What do these two passages say about making God a priority in your financial decisions?
2. How can you personally honor God with your wealth?
3. Why is it important to do this even at those times when it is hard to make ends meet?

Read *Malachi 3:8-10; 1 Corinthians 16:2*.

1. Looking at these two passages, how do these principles apply to our day?
2. What is your reaction to the thought that not tithing is actually robbing God?
3. What is the value of regularly setting aside finances for the work of the local church and the needs of other churches around the world?



Take it home ... Practical Applications

1. Acknowledge the primary place of God in your life and in your finances.—ATTITUDE
2. Be aware of and avoid the subtlety of debt.—BONDAGE
3. Make the principle of tithing to God and to your local church central to your financial planning.—CHOICES



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All Bible references are from the New International Version unless otherwise stated.

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