

**YOU'VE ALL
OVER BID!****Core Competency***Stewardship*

I Tim 6:17-19

Core Competencies**Core Beliefs**

- Trinity
- Salvation by Grace
- Authority of Bible
- Personal God
- Identity in Christ
- Church
- Humanity
- Compassion
- Eternity
- **Stewardship**

Core Practices

- Worship Prayer
- Bible Study
- Single-Mindedness
- Biblical Community
- Spiritual Gifts
- Giving Away My Time
- Giving Away My Money
- Giving Away My Faith
- Giving Away My Life

Core Virtues

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness/Goodness
- Faithfulness
- Gentleness
- Self-Control
- Hope
- Humility

Dear Fellow Good Stewards,

Well, we are entering our third week in *"When The Price is Right."* Our **Core Competency** remains the same for this entire series —"I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God." As I reflect on the key Bible passage 1 Timothy 6:17-19 (printed on page 5 in your *Engage*), I'm reminded once again that God is not impressed by outward appearances, rather is concerned about the heart. God knows the seduction and the false securities that often are associated with wealth. Believing that all we are or own belongs to God is one way to keep us from thinking too much of ourselves.

God's Word gives us another perspective on who we are. In 1 Timothy we read a command (more than a reminder or suggestion) that we are to "...be generous and willing to share." Our own self image and attitudes toward others can often be swayed by what we 'own' and the things we 'have.' Living openhandedly is a key to living in balance between our heart and our pocketbook. Our Grace family recently demonstrated this with their surpassing generosity in giving to the Tsunami Relief Fund and last November's Thanksgiving mission projects. These are all a part of the process in making sure we move closer and closer to "...be generous and willing to share." Many of you go above and beyond your normal giving to support missionaries and give to efforts and causes that are close to your hearts. You are living out the belief, "I believe that everything I am or own belong to God."

Because of previous choices you have made, some of you may have the heart to give but not the ability in your budget. If you would like additional information to help line your budget up with your heart, check out the resources <http://www.gccaz.org/ministry.aspx?id=6da8c803-94a5-4aef-8323-fda3d9b71173> provided by Steve Vlahovich, our Pastor of Stewardship.

I pray that all of you are in relationships where you can honestly ask the tough questions that are central to the heart of God and to your heart. We all need others so we are not seduced into thinking that the more we have, the more God or others love us.

On the path with you,

*Juno***Engaging Our Minds & Hearts****Day 1**

The title for this week's message is **"You've All Over Bid!"** Our text for the week is comprised of nine different passages from the book of Proverbs. We will use these passages, not to determine exact answers for every stewardship question of life, but to see key principles that will guide us in discerning practical and Biblical financial counsel.

This week's *Engage* format will vary somewhat, but the purpose remains the same...to guide our time in God's Word so He can speak to our minds and our hearts, and so we can be obedient to God's command in Romans 12:2—"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

Today's Passages: Proverbs 18:12; 18:15; 19:8; 21:20; 24:3-4; 6:6; 26:11

Pray first

Jesus said in Matthew 16:17 that truth is revealed to us by God, and in John 14:26 that the Holy Spirit will teach us all things and bring to our minds those things that God has revealed to us through His Son. So each day, before you open your Bible, go to God in prayer and ask for His Holy Spirit to reveal the truths that are contained in His Word and to apply them to your heart and life.

Today read through each passage at least two times in different versions. Write down in general terms and, with just a few words, what you think each passage has to do with **Stewardship**.

Proverbs 18:12

"Before his downfall a man's heart is proud, but humility comes before honor."

Proverbs 18:15

"The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge; the ears of the wise seek it out."

Proverbs 19:8

"He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; he who cherishes understanding prospers."

Proverbs 21:20

"In the house of the wise are stores of choice food and oil, but a foolish man devours all he has."

Proverbs 22:7

"The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender."

Proverbs 22:26-27

"Do not be a man who strikes hands in pledge or puts up security for debts; if you lack the means to pay, your very bed will be snatched from under you."

Proverbs 24:3-4

"By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures."

Proverbs 6:6

"Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise!"

Proverbs 26:11

"As a dog returns to its vomit, so a fool repeats his folly."

Day 2

Today's Passages: Proverbs 22:7, Proverbs 22:26-27

Pray first!

Two weeks ago we looked at Jesus' conversation with a man seeking eternal life (Mark 10:17-31). It was obvious from this exchange that Jesus will look at our checkbook and our budget, not for the dollars and cents balance sheet, but for what it reveals about our heart and our deepest desires. Our attachment to money is a barrier to our relationship with and our affection towards God.

Last week as we looked at the passages Ecclesiastes 5:10-6:2 and Proverbs 23:1-5, we saw how meaningless it is to chase after wealth...that a lifestyle of consumerism will not satisfy.

Money and our use of it is something we face everyday. So this week as we look at the wise sayings of Proverbs, it is our goal to observe carefully the truth we find there, to interpret that truth to our culture and to apply it to the financial decisions and actions of our daily lives.

Today we will concentrate our time in two of the Proverbs passages that give specific financial advice or principles.

1. What specific areas of finances are being addressed in Proverbs 22:7 and 22:26-27?
2. Draw a diagram showing the positions of the various people and how their relationship is described in **Proverbs 22:7**.
3. Considering the words of Jesus to his disciples in Mark 10:23, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!" and the relationships that result from borrowing and lending, what do you see as a conflict or reason that a believer should be very mindful of?
4. **Proverbs 22:26-27** gives another warning. What are we told not to do? Considering what you saw in Proverbs 22:7, why is it unwise to be entangled in another person's debts? What does it say may be the results? Do you consider your bed a necessity or a luxury? If you lose your bed, what do you think this is saying about your financial situation?
5. Paraphrase each of these two passages into modern day financial advice to yourself (use first person – "I").
6. By way of personal application, consider those times and situations where you have the opportunity of being a borrower, a lender or a co-signer. Keeping in mind that you are a steward of the money in your possession, not the owner, in what ways has your thinking been challenged or changed as to the heavenly wisdom of borrowing and lending?

Day 3

Today's Passages: Proverbs 18:12; 18:15; 19:8; 21:20; 24:3-4; 6:6; 26:11

Pray first!

Today we will do observation on the remainder of our passages. Although these seven passages do not appear to be specific to finances, they still offer principles that have bearing on our overall stewardship decisions. Read through each passage looking for repeated words or synonyms. Mark each of them in distinctive ways.

1. What do these words tell you about what God wants to be a part of our financial decisions and actions?
2. Where has your personal knowledge and wisdom come from regarding financial management and decisions? What other resources are you aware of that are available to you? What are the merits and drawbacks of each of these resources?
3. Read through the passages once more and make a list of all the verbs used.
4. What do these verbs reveal to you about God's expectations of each of us?
5. What things do you see about the foolish man/fool?
6. What principles can you learn from this?
7. Read through the passages again and note below any contrasts or comparisons you see. The word, "but," often indicates a contrast is being made, and the words "like" or "as" are often indicators of comparisons.
8. What current principles can you draw from these observations?

Day 4

Pray first!

Now that you have done thorough observation of each of the passages, take time to consider all that you have seen. Write a separate modern day principle for each of the seven passages you have looked at on days 3 and 4. Write it in the first person. For example, Proverbs 18:12, "If my heart is prideful and I don't think I need to listen to God or anyone else about how I use my money, I can be sure that my future will include being publicly embarrassed. But if I am truly humble before others, listening and learning from those whom I admire, they will respect me for that and I will be able to hold my head up."

Day 5

The **Core Competency** for our current series is **Stewardship**, and our **Creed** reads, “I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.” The key passage for this is 1 Timothy 6:17-19.

“Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.”

Read through this story from Max Lucado’s book, *When God Whispers Your Name*.

Let’s say you bring over a house-sitter to care for your home over a weekend. You leave them with keys, money and instructions. And you leave to enjoy your trip.

When you return, you find your house has been painted purple. The locks have been changed, so you ring the doorbell and the house-sitter answers. Before you can say anything, they escort you in proclaiming, “Look how I decorated my house!”

The fireplace has been replaced with an indoor waterfall. Carpet has been replaced with pink tile, and portraits of Elvis on black velvet line the walls.

“This isn’t your house!” you proclaim. “It’s mine.”

“Those aren’t your possessions,” God reminds us. “They are mine.”

God’s foremost rule of finance is: We own nothing. We are managers, not owners. Stewards, not landlords. Maintenance people, not proprietors. Our money is not ours; it is His.

Considering this picture of the stewardship responsibility that we have with God’s money and everything that He has shown you this week as you spent time in His Word, what needs to change in the way that you make financial decisions?

Write a prayer of commitment to God and allow Him to take back His rightful place over the resources He has entrusted to you.

Engage the Context

This week’s scripture is an assortment of verses from the Book of Proverbs. Proverbs is a collection of wise sayings and teachings. Many believe King Solomon is the author of the book. While it may be the case that many of the sayings originate with him, it is also possible and very likely that the sayings are a collection from many different individuals over a period of time and were edited together sometime during the Old Testament period. Proverbs are short pithy sayings that are easily committed to memory.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember when interpreting Proverbs is to keep in mind the genre of literature you are dealing with. **Proverbs are not promises.** Proverbs are wise sayings about the way life usually goes. For example, Proverbs 19:8 says that, “he who cherishes understanding prospers.” If we see this as a promise from God, we would assume that if I cherish understanding, I will definitely prosper financially. We should be able to claim this promise. However, it is not a promise but a principle about the way things usually work.

Feedback

What is helpful?
What could be better?
What is missing?
Is it helping you be more prepared for Sunday?

Send your feedback to
engage@gccaz.org

Proverbs 18:12

Before his downfall a man's heart is proud, but humility comes before honor.

The connection between humility and honor is a common theme in Proverbs. Cross reference Proverbs 15:33 and 16:18.

Proverbs 18:15

The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge; the ears of the wise seek it out.

This verse is an example of beautiful Hebrew poetry. A more literal translation helps us see the parallelism and repetition:

*A heart of intelligence acquires knowledge.
(And) the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.*

The Hebrew word for knowledge which appears twice is *da'at* and can be defined as "a knowledge with focus on moral qualities and its application."¹

Proverbs 19:8

He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; he who cherishes understanding prospers.

"Prosper" is literally "discovers good."

Proverbs 21:20

In the house of the wise are stores of choice food and oil, but a foolish man devours all he has.

The perils of not saving are illustrated with a food metaphor.

Proverbs 22:7

The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.

When interpreting this verse, we must again be careful not to make a rule out of a principle. The author of the proverb states the fact that the rich rule over the poor but seems to be disapproving of this. In the same way, he seems to disapprove of the fact that the borrower is a servant to the lender.

Proverbs 22:26-27

Do not be a man who strikes hands in pledge or puts up security for debts; if you lack the means to pay, your very bed will be snatched from under you.

This proverb along with the previous one brings up the question of whether it is Biblical to take a loan or lend money to another. These verses come short of prohibiting surety; however, they do offer a strong warning against it. Also, cross reference the prohibition of lending to a poor Israelite in Leviticus 25:35-37.

Proverbs 24:3-4

By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures.

"House" is not just the physical abode but also the family. Notice the building and culminating effect of "wisdom," "understanding," and "knowledge."

Proverbs 6:6

Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise!

Proverbs 26:11

As a dog returns to its vomit, so a fool repeats his folly.

We are wise to learn lessons from nature. For many years, the church had the theological conviction that there is nothing we can learn from nature. Everything we need to know about wisdom can be found in the Bible and the teachings of the Church. These verses remind us that there is much we can learn about life from nature.

Swanson, J. (1997). *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains : Hebrew (Old Testament)* (electronic ed.) (HGK1981). Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc.