



Building a Financial House 2023: The 10 Building Blocks

July 2, 2023

Text: Matthew 6:24

Thoughts on this Text:

1. Jesus Christ is our Master. He is undisputed. He is LORD and LORD of all! (Rom 10:9; 1 Cor 12:3; Acts 10:36)
2. Mammon (a word that means riches or treasure personified) must never be served. Why?

1 Timothy 6:6-10 (KJV) *But godliness with contentment is great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. 8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. 9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

3. In context, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught not to lay up treasures upon earth, where moth and rust corrupt and thieves break in and steal. (Matt 6:19) In our view, this is a strong admonishment and rebuke against:

- Serving/worshipping money (or anything other than God). This is idolatry.
- A temporal rather than an eternal perspective. Jesus commands us to lay up treasures in heaven! (Matt 6:20)
- Hearts that desire money over the Master! Where our treasure is, our hearts will be also! (Matt 6:21)
- An inordinate focus (where your eyes are) on money or becoming wealthy. (Matt 6:22-23)
- Hoarding. This is different from stewardship and right uses of God's resources. Indeed, those with resources must use them wisely:

1 Timothy 6:17-19 (KJV) *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; 18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; 19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.*

4. In our view, Biblical Stewardship (the joyful and proper handling of resources) becomes a **tool** (not an idol) for Kingdom purposes.
5. Now, what would happen if the church, by God's grace, decided to apply the **Lordship of Christ** in the area of money? This is our motive! This area of life is yet another opportunity to worship the LORD!

The National "House" is in trouble! In 2020:

- The National Debt was \$27 Trillion. **It is now \$32 Trillion!**
- National unfunded liabilities (Social Security, Medicaid/Medicare) was \$155 Trillion! **It is now \$191.7 Trillion!**¹

¹ <https://www.usdebtclock.org/>

- U.S. Credit Card debt was \$930 Billion. **Now \$990 Billion.**²
- Student loans were at \$1.76 Trillion. **Now \$1.78 Trillion.**³
- Total household debt was \$14.27 Trillion. **Now \$17.05 Trillion.**⁴
- 57% of Americans live paycheck to paycheck.⁵
- The median savings for Americans is \$5300, with a personal savings rate of 3.4%.⁶
- At the same time, we remain of of the wealthiest nations in the world:

“If you're living in America and your household makes \$34,000 a year, you are in the top 1% of income earners in the world. If you have an annual household income of just \$11,000, you are in the top 14% of income earners in the world.” -Dave Ramsey, The Legacy Journey

Reminder: Jurisdictions and Stewardship

1. We live in a time of great usurpation jurisdictionally. God has created three PRIMARY jurisdictions or spheres of authority or government: the home, the church, and the state.

- Teaching and modeling Self-government
- Marriage and procreation
- Family business and industry....the concepts and principles of personal property and financial stewardship come from Scripture!
- Support for and submission to the church
- The protection, training and education of children

(Note: The Church is responsible for the equipping of the saints, the administration of the means of grace and ordinances, the care of widows and orphans, and discipline. The State is responsible for the punishment of the evil-doer and bearing the sword.)

2. We must *Build our Financial Houses* with these things in mind! This even more critical when we remember that we must do these things in Babylon; we live in Sodom! Our households must strive for *financial independence* (where your money works harder than you do), *financial freedom* (the ability to serve Christ with few hinderances), *and family inheritance*.
3. We should endeavor to live in such a way where our discipleship choices aren't limited. Don't underestimate the spiritual nature and generational importance of handling money God's ways!
 - Many families who begin to understand biblical Dominion and multigenerational faithfulness also begin to develop family businesses and industry from the home, or otherwise try to situate life in order to do Deuteronomy 6 and Matthew 28 more effectively.
 - Think about it: what kind of discipleship choices might a family make if money wasn't a constant hindrance?
4. **A strong and biblical Financial House applies the Lordship of Christ to every area for Christ's glory, especially in the areas of Gospel preaching and discipling children. Stewardship is a tool used to ensure these can be done!**

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² <https://www.marketplace.org/2023/06/09/americans-have-almost-990-billion-in-credit-card-debt/>

³ <https://www.nerdwallet.com/article/loans/student-loans/student-loan-debt>

⁴ <https://www.newyorkfed.org/microeconomics/hhdc>

⁵ <https://www.cnbc.com/2023/06/26/amid-falling-inflation-fewer-americans-live-paycheck-to-paycheck.html>

⁶ <https://www.moneygeek.com/financial-planning/analysis/average-american-savings-balance/>

1. **Pray, Work and Live as unto the LORD.** The Christian understands that this life is meant to be lived for God's glory. All belongs to Him. All is for Him. Our lives are to be a "sweet smelling savor" unto Him! (2 Cor 2:15)
 - **Psalms 24:1 (KJV) A Psalm of David.** *The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.*
 - **Romans 12:11 (KJV)** *Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;*
 - **Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 (KJV)** *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. 14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*
 - **Colossians 3:23-24 (KJV)** *And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; 24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.*
 - **1 Corinthians 10:31 (KJV)** *Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*

2. **Give 10% to the Local Church.** We believe NT giving is about Spirit-led generosity. Therefore, for CRC, the tithe is a *model*, not a *mandate*. Generosity is a critical part of any biblical Financial House.
 - We believe everything we have belongs to God. (Ps 24:1)
 - We believe in divine reciprocity, that God will give to us according to our giving. (Lk 6:38, 2 Cor 9:6)
 - We believe in giving our best in love because that is what Jesus did. (Jn 3:16)
 - We believe in giving to support our vision so that hurting people might be found, taught, and set free. (Matt 9:35-38, 28:18-20)
 - We believe in consistent giving to ensure a firm financial foundation for God's church. (2 Cor 9:10-15)
 - We believe in giving in faith, knowing that God will continually test us with money to ensure it has not become an idol. (Matt 6:21)
 - We believe (with respect to tithing) that every Christian should strive to give using the 10% model, but recognize that the New Testament biblical mandate is regular, cheerful giving as God has prospered you. (1 Cor 16:1-2)

3. **Save 10% of one year's income as a basic savings.** Our recommendation is to begin building up the house by laying a solid foundation. Part of that is having savings.
 - **Proverbs 21:20 (KJV)** *There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up.*

4. **Allot 10% to Insurance for Critical Areas.** Insurance is annoying, until you need it! It is designed to protect you against loss and liability for things you cannot afford to fund. We believe it is wise to have life, health, auto, and home/renters insurance.
 - **Proverbs 22:3 (KJV)** *A prudent man foreseeeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.*

5. **Eliminate Debt.** Kill the debt monster! In order to do this, you must 1) Create room in your budget. 2) Use the excess to pay down/off debt. 3) Consider the method you will use:

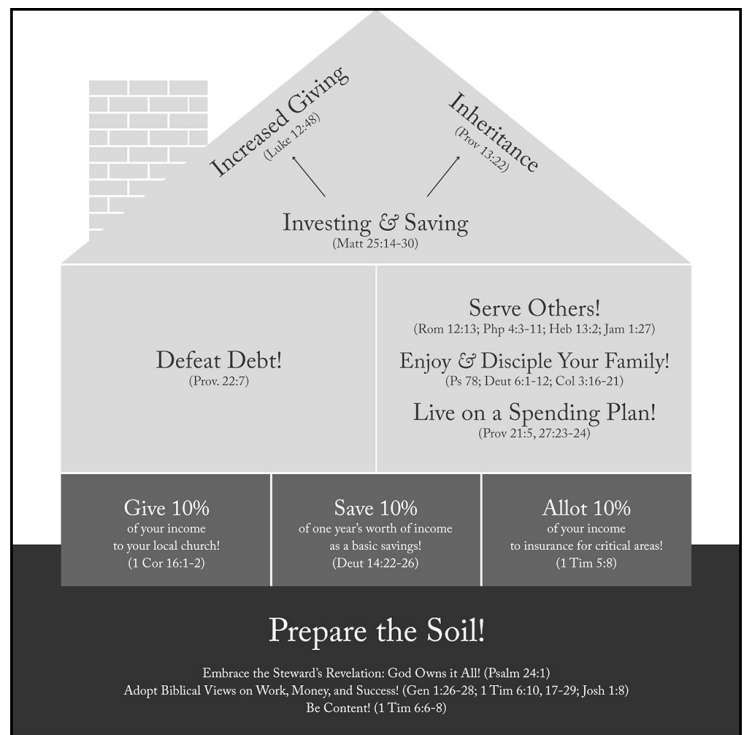
snowball (make minimum payments on all and use the excess to pay off lowest amounts first) or avalanche (highest interest rate first).

- **Proverbs 22:7 (KJV)** *The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.*
- **Psalms 37:21 (KJV)** *The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth.*
- **Proverbs 22:26-27 (KJV)** *Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts. 27 If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee?*
- **Romans 13:8 (KJV)** *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.*

6. **Live on a Prayerful Spending Plan.** Good stewardship demands good accounting. How can we manage well if you don't know what we're managing and prayerfully directing what we are managing?

- **Proverbs 27:23-24 (KJV)** *Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds. 24 For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation?*
- “A Spending Plan (or budget) is a written statement encompassing both knowledge (Prov 1:87) and wisdom (Prov 9:10) concerning money. It is based on the biblical principles that one should both know and wisely decide what must be done with God’s resources and take action on such.”⁷
- “Many Christians have preconceptions about budgeting, and most of them are negative. That’s unfortunate, because a godly, well-managed, balanced budget can bring more financial peace, security, and well-being than many people can imagine. How effective a time manager would you be without a calendar? Similarly, a healthy budget enables you to maximize your money for God’s glory.”⁸

7. **Disciple Family and Serve Others as we Build.** Money does not come before family. It is simply a tool with which to care for and protect family. We believe slower debt-repayment is a fair trade for time teaching our children the precepts of God. We don’t trade children for money! Likewise, we don’t wait to serve others until our debts are paid.



⁷ *Building a Financial House*, p.84, 2021.

⁸ Berg & Burgess, *The Debt-Free Church*, p.185, 1996.

8. **Invest Surpluses to Build Wealth.** A strong Financial House attempts to grow all God has given. After paying of consumer debts, we recommend raising reserves to six months to one years's worth. Then, seek out ways to grow household wealth (investing).

- **Proverbs 15:6 (KJV)** *In the house of the righteous is much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.*
- **Matthew 25:24-30 (NLT)** *“Then the servant with the one bag of silver came and said, ‘Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn’t plant and gathering crops you didn’t cultivate. 25 I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.’ 26 “But the master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy servant! If you knew I harvested crops I didn’t plant and gathered crops I didn’t cultivate, 27 why didn’t you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.’ 28 “Then he ordered, ‘Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver. 29 To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away. 30 Now throw this useless servant into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’*

9. **Leave an Inheritance to Family.** We believe, based on Scripture, Christians should strive to leave a spiritual, relational, physical, and financial inheritance to their children. Financially speaking, property and investments should be considered.

- **Proverbs 13:22 (KJV)** *A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children: and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.*
- **Deuteronomy 19:14 (KJV)** *Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmark, which they of old time have set in thine inheritance, which thou shalt inherit in the land that the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it.*
- **2 Corinthians 12:14 (KJV)** *Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.*

10. **Increase giving to Community and Missions.** Scripture gives many precepts and examples here.

- **1 Timothy 5:1-8 (KJV)** *Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; 2 The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity. 3 Honour widows that are widows indeed. 4 But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God. 5 Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. 6 But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth. 7 And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless. 8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.*
- **Acts 11:27-30 (KJV)** *And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. 28 And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. 29 Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to*

send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea: **30** Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

- This dearth, or famine, caused God's people to respond. People gave according to their ability. Collections were implemented in Corinth, Galatia, and Macedonia (Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea). Scripture records the generous giving of the Macedonian churches:⁹
- **2 Corinthians 8:1-5 (NLT)** Now I want you to know, dear brothers and sisters, what God in his kindness has done through the churches in Macedonia. **2** They are being tested by many troubles, and they are very poor. But they are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity. **3** For I can testify that they gave not only what they could afford, but far more. And they did it of their own free will. **4** They begged us again and again for the privilege of sharing in the gift for the believers in Jerusalem. **5** They even did more than we had hoped, for their first action was to give themselves to the Lord and to us, just as God wanted them to do.
- Despite affliction and extreme poverty, the churches gave to support their brothers and sisters! Now imagine with our wealth what we might do together! What would the world look like with a million more strong financial houses in it? Imagine how the church might be served, widows cared for, orphans given families, and hope reignited and restored for so many! Can you see it? I can!¹⁰

Our Heart for your Financial Home:

Most of these building block suggestions are just that: principle-based suggestions based on our current wisdom. There is room therein for individual and household preferences when it comes to particulars.

Our overall goals are increased financial peace, capacity, and sustainability for your households and unto the glory of God.

The key, as always, is to build EVERY part of our homes on the Rock of Christ! (Matt 7:24-27) Then, when the rains and floods come and winds blow, our homes will stand because they are build upon a sure foundation!

1 Corinthians 3:11 (KJV) For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2:6 (KJV) Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

CRC, you can trust God's Word in the area of money!

Amen!

⁹ Building a Financial House, p.126, 2021.

¹⁰ Building a Financial House, p.127, 2021.