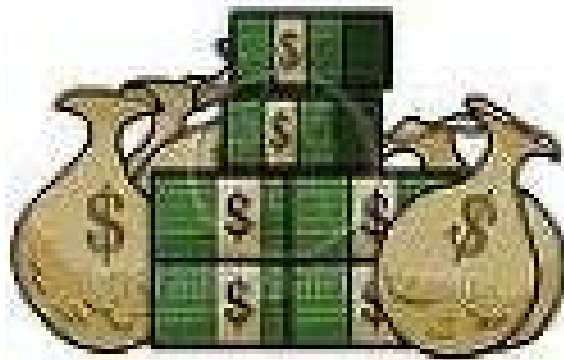


The Money Master Seminar



*Financial Counsel
Towards
Economic Sustainability*

by
G. E. Necemer,
B. Th., M. Div.

The Money Master Introduction:

A stewardship course towards responsible, accountable financial sustainability

I) PURPOSE OF SEMINAR

What It Is NOT:

- A) It is not going to condemn anyone
- B) It is not going to be 'market slamming' of any one product or service
- C) It is not going to be a 'methodology for keeping up with friends' financially
- D) It is not going to be a 'resource provider' for business propositions of immediate or future financial gains.
- E) It is not going to be a 'cure' for all financial woes or commitment/obligations
- F) It is not going to be 'conjecture for wealth making'.
- G) It is not going to be an 'affirmation of financial entitlement'.

What It Is:

A) A CONSIDERATION of the value of money

- it gives the power to do almost anything: purchase what we want, travel wherever we please, fulfill our pleasures of entertainment and satisfy our need for commodity identity. Money can act as the 'soul' of humans igniting in them a euphoric purpose of living. At times, money may project individuals into new levels 'highs' of power, prestige and position'. This, when uncontrolled may 'drug' the individual into losing sight of reality as related to his real worth. In short, when valued incorrectly, money can satiate a person to such a level that it can become his/her god. As this happens, and individual exchanges his God given human dignity for conjectured materialistic identity.

B) A DISCUSSION of the PURPOSE of Finances:

- a resource for the furnishing of essential basic life needs, those being giving back to God, food, clothing, shelter, and transportation.
- a resource for addendum life needs, those being home/car/medical insurance.
- a resource for gracing or blessing other - the poor, disenfranchised, social charities, the church and others which may not have financial resources, so that their essential life needs can be met.
- a resource of 'prudent management of resources' so that a surplus amount is set aside for uncertain difficult times which one may face at a later date.

C) A STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM as related to ACCOUNTABLE and RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- a declaration that, from a biblical point of view, everything that one possesses is on loan to him/her, and therefore he must show a caring, protective concern over them.
- a recognition that everyone is endowed with financial and material resources
- a recognition that everyone has responsibility how they care for these resources
- a recognition that stewardship includes 'mentored, prudent investment for honest, righteous gain or profit.
- a recognition that gifts, talents, ideas, and vocational opportunities are all 'avenues' for stewardship demonstration.
- a recognition that stewardship is based on cooperation with God empowering people to care for what they possess and it is not a competitive entity in which one sees if he can out do the other by amassing great wealth than his friend.

D) A Responsible, Accountable TEAM management approach of financial resources.

- a recognition by parties within the social group that individual gain comes second when if and when one wilfully decides to become part of a social group. This new relationship, based on trust that leads to credibility, necessitates a committed participation with others towards financial stability. If a husband and wife, for example, affirm that they have become 'one flesh' in marriage, then there is one bank account to which the couple contributes and takes financial resources on an equal basis.
- a projection towards full disclosure of financial management plans, goals, and dreams which is agreed upon by all members of the 'social context' in question
- a delineation, through sound business recording, of all expenditures within the social group
- a working together towards building a financial safety net by a collective agreement as related to banking, investing, and purchasing/selling goods which are held in common.

E) A PRIORITIZING of financial expenditures based upon godly, biblical instruction.

- an affirmation that we brought nothing into the world, and, most certainly, we will take absolutely nothing out of it.
- an affirmation that God has created everything, and that He sustains it by word of His might,
- an affirmation that God helps us increase in wealth through providing it as we labour, through unexpected gifts of others, through inheritances, or through government pensions as we age. If, and when we increase in wealth, we are not to say it was of our own doing; rather, we are to give God the praise, the glory, and adoration for providing all our needs according to His riches in glory through Christ Jesus.
- an affirmation that whatever we do with finances, we are called upon to realistically count the costs in doing the project, for no one goes to battle, and no one starts to build a castle, without ensuring that he has enough financial resources to complete the job. If he should and fail, those that hear of his dilemma will stand and laugh at him.
- an affirmation that material things are temporary and subject to deterioration, and to thieves breaking in and stealing them. Such being the case, we are to have a realistic appreciation of that which we possess. At no time are we to find our identity or worth in them, even though we are called to demonstrate diligent care over them.
- a recognition that as believers we are called to 'set our affections on things above, and not on things below.' With this in mind, we recall that a man's worth is not discovered in and with the things he possesses.

F) An expression of GRATITUDE for all the financial resources we possess.

- we now honour God, alone, as being the source of all resources
- we rest confident that God knows our needs before we ask Him, and that He has covenanted to provide all our needs if we walk uprightly before Him. This includes having a 'faith walk' which is founded on the faithfulness of God in the past to the Children of Israel as He provided all their needs for over forty years.
- we regularly, determinately, joyfully, give back to God out of the abundance of resources He has provided us.
- we now demonstrate caring appreciation over that which is in our hands
- we learn to lovingly and graciously share our resources with those that lack
- we happily pay our bills - whether it be hydro, medical, taxes - joyfully because the resources have been adequately provided to adequately cover our bills.
- we plan to leave a financial inheritance to our family as a testimony to God's faithful to us.

Why Present The Money Masters Seminar?

It is suggested that most Canadians, working from age twenty-five to age fifty-six, will earn between 2.8 to 3.7 million dollars during their lifetime, before paying any debts. This will occur through regular work, investing in RRSP's, through willed inheritances, through benefits gained because of annuities, savings bonds, and government guaranteed pensions. If, as many Canadians do, they win lotteries, or are given larger corporate severance packages at retirement, their life earnings could max out at 4.2 to 4.8 million dollars before expense are paid. **SOUNDS GREAT!**

BUT, the problem is this - despite the fact that this amount of money will be accrued to their account, ninety-five percent of Canadians will not maintain prudent and skilled management over their resources. Upon their death, therefore, most of them will not have adequate finances to demonstrate a **CARING DIGNITY** by paying for their own funeral, as they rightly should! **SOUNDS DISGUSTING!**

The following article affirms the above:

Ah, yes, the "Golden Years" dream up visions of endless days relaxing and enjoying the grandkids. But, what do we have to look forward to without the one commodity that will distinguish us from being old or elderly? That, my friend, is MONEY!

Remember when the kids were growing up; we did not have a care in the world because we never thought that those senior years would creep up on us so fast. Well, here we are, and our lives, for those that did not plan ahead, are days watching our friends spend their winter days in Florida, and we work part time because our pensions from the government and work just 'don't cut the mustard' I'm talking about the new retiree generation to come, and not the present retirees. Us present retirees knew the phrases, "a penny saved is a penny earned"; "save something for a rainy day"; "the buck stops here"; "life is only as good as you make it". That's why eighty percent of my clients over 65 vacation out of the country in winter, and eighty percent of the new generation will continue to scrape by.

So what happened?

I am sure that many of you could tell me, but here are a few reasons why I think it went sour.

- Children growing up in the late '70's and '80's had everything handed to them FREE (no work ethic). Hence, they expect to see a 'hand out' later on in life as well.
- Many felt that the 'hand over' of wealth from the present retiree generation will be their foundation for retirement. With this conjecture at the forefront, many of the now generation made no effort to save for the future.
- The break down of the traditional family values put a noose around the finances that now had to pay for the upkeep of two families instead of one.
- People of the 'Live For The Day Generation' spent every dime' (let me put it more correctly), borrowed every dime to satisfy their impulse desires today, while neglecting to consider such scenarios such as, "What if I lose my job, get sick, or gas goes up to a dollar fifty per litre.

Gloom and doom? Well, maybe, yes, but we can turn this around. We need to entrench some of the core values of sound financial planning to the next generation. This is necessary because the wealth that is going to come from today's estates is heading to the 'spenders' of the 70's and 80's. Unless we teach them management skills, we can be rest assured that it will quickly vanish as they spend it on the debts that they have foolishly accumulated thus far.¹

Canadian Federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty adds the following:

"A rash of recent reports paint a scary picture of Canadians a spending like drunken sailors, leading to the prickly question of whether we should be forced to save money. A recent StatsCan study pointed out that personal bankruptcies reached their highest level in four years during April, 2009 up 19.3 per cent over the previous month, and up 18.3 per cent over the previous April. But, when anyone suggests that people should be 'forced to save' more for retirement, the reaction

is a resounding “no”! However, we must resist the temptation to tax or claw back the benefits of the wealthiest people to provide the savings of those unwilling to save for themselves. There is another option; namely to reduce the people’s spending and make it tougher for them to go into debt. Don’t let people borrow for a house down payment. Restrict payday loan operations. Make credit cards tougher to get while offering debit card reward programs. Unless increases in spending and debt change, there will soon be a day of reckoning.²

From the above, and other articles possessed, it is most apparently clear that we need to TEACH money management skills NOW. Today it seems that the most “urgent issue is the condition of the Canadian economy’. In Newfoundland eighteen percent of the population state that the economy is their most pressing worry. In British Columbia, sixty-two percent of the population are concerned about the present economy, and over ninety-two percent state that they see little possibility of it getting better within the next two or three years.³ The overriding opinion of many, at this moment, is that the Canadian economy is “screwed”.

I do not go that far; throughout the seminar I will suggest, and attempt to prove, that the economy is **SKewed**, and can be brought back to its proper perspective if one purposely determines to follow all, or most, of the eighty-eight strategies presented.

The underlying **THESES** for the seminar is - We all, at heart, desire to be **MONEY MASTERS**. However, to accomplish this end need to become **RESPONSIBLE/ACCOUNTABLE** steward manager of all that is entrusted to us. Passing the buck is over; we need to change our attitude towards wealth. We are not called to live a life of **PROSPERITY**. Rather we are called to a life of **SUSTAINABILITY** attainable by honourable, credible, authentic management of resources as we firstly satisfy our needs, and then have adequate surplus to afford some of the amenities of **ENJOYMENT WE CRAVE!**

Structure of the Seminar:

The course is offered once per week for a duration of eleven weeks. Each session lasts for approximately one and one half hours with one hundred and five minutes of teaching. At approximately the middle of each session there is a fifteen minute ‘refreshment break’ for coffee and dessert/fellowship.

There is no charge for the seminar; however, each attendee is required to purchase the Student Manual at a cost of twenty dollars (\$20.00) Canadian. Weekly, to be added to the booklet, inserts, which have no additional charge, are provided. Along with the booklet, again at no cost, each participant will receive a piggy bank in which they will place money saved during the seminar. During the last week of the seminar, the banks will be brought so that we can gain a collective appreciation of the money saved because of the strategies presented.

The strategies presented throughout the seminar are founded upon Scriptural principles discovered in both the Old and New Testament. As these are proffered for consideration, opportunity for broader discussions and/or questions will be given. Every opinion offered will be graciously considered and examined; however, the biblical principal remains the source of practical advice for success. As we faithfully examine the principles given, we will become **MONEY MASTERS** and we will become empowered to **CURTAIN IMPULSE SPENDING** motivated by the **GLITTER**, the **GLAMOUR** and the **GLORY** of the moment, so that we can **TRANSFORMED INTO WISE, PRUDENT**, and **RESPONSIBLE STEWARDS** motivated by **GODLINESS, CONTENTMENT, THANKFULNESS AND MODERATION**.

The guidelines for success in stewardship will be faithfully presented; grab on to them, implement them, and benefit from them!