



MONEY

MASTER OR SERVANT?

“No one can serve two masters ...” Matthew 6:24

LET'S BE CLEAR



- “A person is justified not by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ.”
Galatians 2:16
- Faithful stewardship is not a set of rules we must obey to maintain our relationship with God. Instead, through God’s grace we are free to determine how best to manage and use the resources entrusted to us.
- Faithful stewardship is NOT just about the portion of those resources we give away.
- “We are to use *all of it* in ways that will please God, in ways that demonstrate our devotion to the rule of God, the lordship of Christ, and the direction of the Holy Spirit.”

Mark Allan Powell, Giving to God



PERSONAL MONEY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

- What experiences early in your life shaped your current feelings about money?



PERSONAL MONEY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

- How were your attitudes toward money shaped by the experiences and attitudes of your family?



PERSONAL MONEY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

- What have been the strongest influences on the way you manage money in your household today?



PERSONAL MONEY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

- How does your faith guide the use of your money?



PERSONAL MONEY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

- Are you trying to make significant changes in the way you manage now and for the future?



PERSONAL MONEY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

- How have your feelings and attitudes about giving money to the church and other charitable causes changed over time?



PERSONAL MONEY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

- Did any of your answers to the money autobiography questions surprise you?



- God's Word says a lot about our relationship with money (wealth, possessions).
- Why would God care how we regard, acquire, manage, and spend money?

HOW WE REGARD MONEY



A tool and resource to enable us to love and serve God and our neighbor.

A positive gift – received with gratitude.

Trust in God's continuing benevolence.

The danger of prosperity – abundance can cause us to lose our focus on God.

God does not value His children on the basis of their wealth – He stands with the poor.

QUESTIONS



- Can enjoyable material blessings that enrich our lives become necessities we cannot live without?
- Can we be tempted to shift from trusting that God will provide all we need to trusting our wealth to protect us from a diminishing “standard of living”?
- How can we avoid allowing income and wealth to become measures of a person’s worth or value – applied either to our neighbors or ourselves?

HOW WE ACQUIRE MONEY



Work is good -
God expects us
to work.

We are to deal
with our
neighbors
honestly.
(Who is our
neighbor?)

Our means of
acquiring
money should
not create
hardships for our
neighbors.

Our
employment is
a calling
through which
we can serve
and witness to
our neighbors.

Even those not
needing a
paycheck
should be
engaged in the
good of their
community.

QUESTIONS



- What makes a job a calling or vocation?
- Is it possible to tell someone who you are without referring to your current or former occupation?
- What would you tell a child, grandchild, or other young person asking for guidance about what to do with his or her life?

HOW WE MANAGE MONEY



Faithful
stewards of all
with which God
has entrusted
us.

A means of
furthering God's
purpose of
extending His
love and grace
to family, friends
and neighbors.

Beware of
hoarding – we
won't take it
with us.

Nor should we
waste or
squander the
resources God
has entrusted to
us.

Planning and
saving for future
needs is not
hoarding (within
reason!?).

QUESTIONS



- How would you define the line between wise and prudent planning for the future and hoarding wealth?
- What is a faithful guideline for choosing between a clear current need like providing for hungry families in your community and a possible future need like a longer than expected retirement?
- What constitutes faithful stewardship of wealth we have saved for legitimate future needs?

HOW WE SPEND MONEY



Our spending decisions should consider the impact on others as well as ourselves.

We have freedom to decide whether our spending is worthwhile for ourselves and our families.

With freedom comes the responsibility to use resources faithfully.

Faithful stewardship includes responsible self-care as well as caring for others.

Faithful spending involves giving up the love of possessing.

QUESTIONS



- Can our God-given freedom to discern what spending is truly faithful for ourselves and our families become a stumbling block for our neighbors?
- How does telling our children “We can’t afford that.” differ from “We don’t think that would be a good use of our money.”?
- Is it possible that spending more moderately (or frugally) could increase our enjoyment of life?

HOW DOES GIVING FIT INTO THIS FRAMEWORK?



- Generous giving is a key aspect of faithful stewardship.
- Giving is the way those to whom God has given the talent to make money and accumulate wealth can employ the fruit of that talent to God and neighbors.
- Giving helps release the hold money has on us as a competing source of hope, worth, and security – all of which really come through God's love and grace.

QUESTIONS



- Should we base our giving decisions on our feeling about the worthiness of the project (as directed by our hearts), or place a priority on meeting the ongoing month to month needs of our congregation (even when we find it hard to be cheerful about such routine giving)?
- As long as we give to our congregation or for another worthwhile purpose, does it make any difference why we give?
- Does paying our pledge to our congregation through a direct deposit program seem like as much of an act of worship as placing a contribution in the collection plate?



WHAT OTHER INSIGHTS ABOUT HOW OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD AFFECTS
OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH MONEY (AND VICE VERSA) COULD WE ADD?

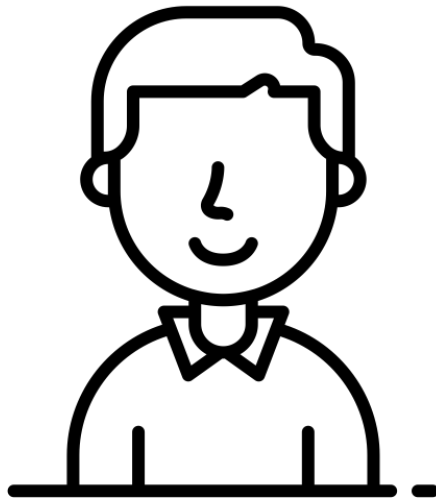


TRANSLATING FAITH-BASED VALUES INTO SPECIFIC FINANCIAL GOALS

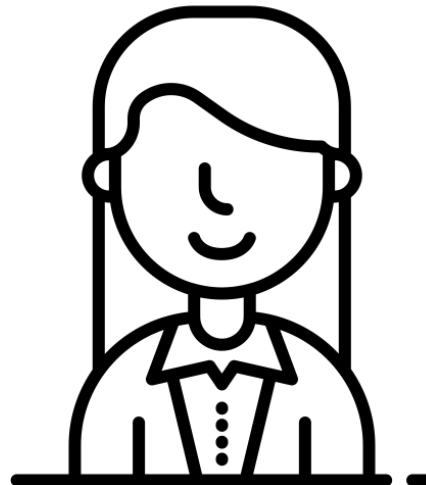
- A SMART financial goal is:



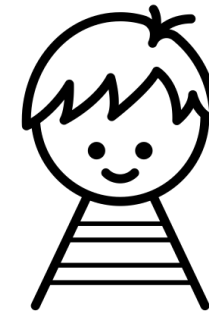
EXAMPLE



Bob (age 33)



Sue (age 31)



Chris (age 8)
Should graduate
from high school in
May, 2027

BOB & SUE



- My values and goals to enable me to live them out

VALUES THAT GUIDE MY LIFE DECISIONS

- We want Chris to have the opportunity to fully develop her talents and abilities.

BOB & SUE



- My values and goals to enable me to live them out

FINANCIAL DIMENSIONS OF MY VALUES

- Make it financially possible for Chris to go to college if she chooses to do so.

BOB & SUE



- My values and goals to enable me to live them out

MY GOALS TO ENABLE ME TO LIVE OUT MY VALUES

- Long Term: Save 50% of the cost of attending college by the fall of 2027

BOB & SUE



COST FOR ONE YEAR AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

(not a college choice – just a measuring tool)

2017-18 Undergraduate Costs for an Iowa Resident

Tuition & Fees, Room & Board, Books & Supplies, and Estimated Personal Expenses

\$20,606

BOB & SUE



AVERAGE ANNUAL INCREASE IN COLLEGE EXPENSES

Public 4-Year Colleges, In-State Students 2007-08 to 2017-18

4.31%

(2.69% Above Average Inflation Rate)

BOB & SUE



Projected Cost for One Year at Iowa State University

2027-2028

\$31,432

Projected Average Annual Cost over 4 Years

Beginning Fall, 2027

\$33,553

Goal: Save 2 Years of College Costs by Fall, 2027

\$67,106

BOB & SUE



HOW MUCH DO THEY NEED TO SAVE?

Average Annual Rate of Return

College Savings Iowa 529 Plan

Conservative Growth Portfolio – 10 Years Ending March, 31, 2018

5.49%

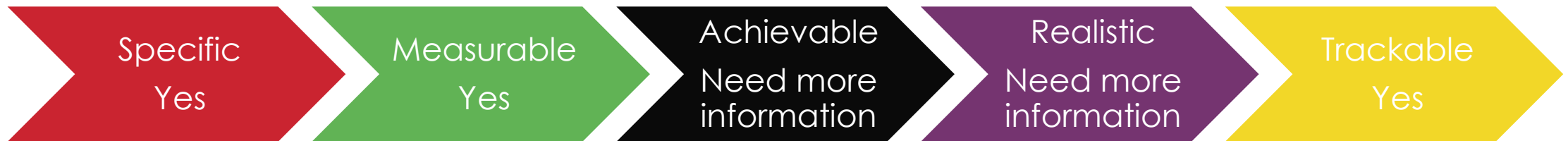
Monthly Savings to Save \$67,106 in 10 Years

\$420.93

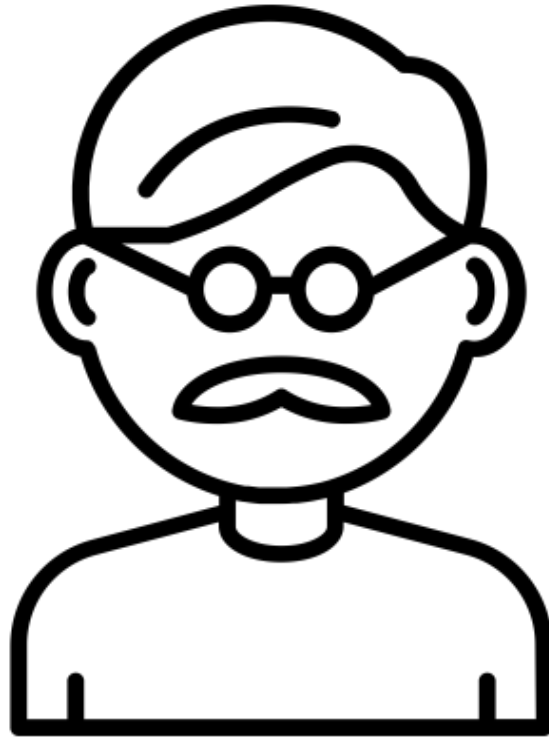
BOB & SUE



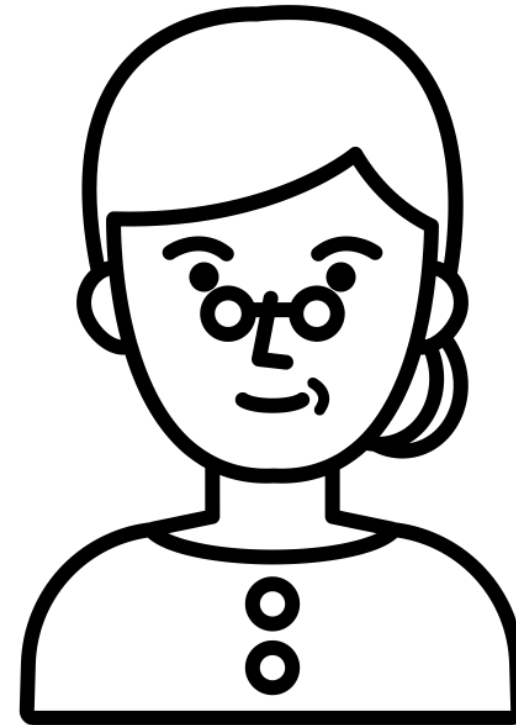
- Is their goal for saving for Chris' education?



EXAMPLE



Carl (age 73)



Jean (age 72)

CARL & JEAN



RETIRED

Projected 2018 Income:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|
| • Combined Social Security Benefits | \$36,000 |
| • IRA Required Minimum Distributions | \$18,000 |
| • Taxable Interest | \$10,000 |

Total	\$64,000
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CARL & JEAN



- My values and goals to enable me to live them out

VALUES THAT GUIDE MY LIFE DECISIONS

- We express our gratitude through generosity.

CARL & JEAN



- My values and goals to enable me to live them out

FINANCIAL DIMENSIONS OF MY VALUES

- We are grateful that we have been blessed with financial resources that enable us to tithe and we would like to stretch and help with a special project.

CARL & JEAN



- My values and goals to enable me to live them out

MY GOALS TO ENABLE ME TO LIVE OUT MY VALUES

- Short Term: Increase our annual giving from \$6,000 to \$7,000



SHOULD THEY MAKE THEIR CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS AS QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTIONS (QCD) FROM IRA'S?

	Giving Directly	QCD
Actual Income	\$64,000	\$64,000
Charitable Contributions	\$7,000	\$7,000
Taxable Portion of Social Security Benefits	\$7,000	\$3,500
Adjusted Gross Income	\$35,000	\$24,500
Taxable Income	\$9,100	\$0
Federal Income Tax	\$910	\$0

CARL & JEAN



- Is their goal of increasing their charitable giving by \$1,000 in 2018?

Specific
Yes

Measurable
Yes

Achievable
Yes

Realistic
Yes

Trackable
Yes

EVALUATION QUESTIONS



- Was the Money Autobiography an interesting and helpful exercise?
- Was the discussion of the Money Autobiography helpful? Was it too intrusive or uncomfortable?
- Was the “Some Guidance from God’s Word” discussion outline interesting and helpful? Did it present a faithful interpretation of the Biblical references used to support specific points?
- Could the combination of the Money Autobiography and the “Some Guidance from God’s Word” discussion outline be used as the basis for an adult forum without the practical application discussion?
- Is the “Values and Goals” worksheet a logical and helpful “connection” between the values based discussion and the practical application of putting those values into action?

EVALUATION QUESTIONS



- Were the “Bob and Sue” and “Carl and Jean” examples helpful in illustrating the connection between values and application to practical “real life” situations?
- How could we most effectively connect application of faith-based values to the practical financial management challenges that are most important to our audience?
- How can we most effectively structure the presentation of these materials?
- Overall, do the “Money: Master or Servant?” materials have potential as useful tools for congregations and their members?
- How could these materials be improved?



**A Project of the Generosity Network
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Graphics by Miranda Fober, Wartburg College Class of 2018

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