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## Money and My Children

My dear children and grandchildren, each of these articles is designed to help you have a better life. If you take the time to learn from them, you can also teach your children and children's children.

No one knows when their life will end. The Bible tells us life is like a vapor and, as I watch the century mark draw closer, I promise you that it is true. God has granted me a longer life than almost all my friends. I thank Him for my life every day.

So, I am telling you some life lessons I have learned over many years.

Today, I will talk about money. You will be faced with the need for money all through your life. It is important to decide as early as possible how you will acquire and handle money.

### First, you will have to work for it!

Since I was born, *a long time ago in 1942*, people have moved from expecting to earn their way to the idea that someone owes them a living. The Apostle Paul speaks to this idea. It's not new. He says in [1 Thessalonians 3:10 NKJV](#), <sup>10</sup> *For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.*

I am proud of you, all of you are hard workers and provide for your families. The hard part is teaching each generation to continue to do the same. My prayer is that all my descendants continue this tradition of working and providing for their families.

### Second, you need to use money wisely!

I want to credit Brian Hughes, our Pastor, who preached a wonderful sermon, [A Rich Life](#), on money. If it is still available, you might take time to watch it. He used the same three points I will make but with a little different application.

Money can be both a blessing and a curse. You can have all the money you can imagine and still not have the happiness I have seen in one-room huts in poorer countries.

The old statement that says, "Money **can't** buy you happiness," is completely true. Money is a tool to do good or evil. If used wisely, it can bring you great joy and peace. When used for selfish purposes, it will always bring sadness.

### Money is neither evil nor good!

You may have heard this misquoted statement before, "money is the root of all evil." **This is not what the Bible says!** The Apostle Paul said in, [1 Timothy 6:10 NKJV](#). <sup>10</sup> *For the [love of money](#)*

*is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

The world we live in tells us that joy comes from owning things. This is one of the many lies that Satan uses to keep us from doing good. If he can keep us thinking of all the things we can do with money to satisfy our material wants, he can stop us from doing good with what we have.

Society encourages us to buy what we want. If God has not given us enough money to purchase those things, society tells us it is OK to buy them on credit. Why not enjoy them while you pay for them? Why not put yourself in debt and pay the cost of the product **and interest**? Why not?

**This idea is a trap that many fall into!**

I encourage you, my children not to fall into this trap. People who pay for things as they earn always have more than those who buy on credit. They are also able to do more good for those in real need.

One of the many Scriptures about money is [Proverbs 22:7 NKJV](#). It states, *“The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.”*

Over the years I have watched so many that God blessed with high-paying jobs end up broke.

It seems there is always a bigger house, newer car, or some other thing they want but do not need. Instead of using proper discipline and waiting until they had money and time to decide if they really needed the new item, they purchased it on [credit](#).

It does not take much debt to enslave you.

**Jesus makes it clear how we should look at money.**

Our Savior tells us in [Matthew 6:24 NKJV](#) <sup>24</sup> *“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”* Or money, in other words.

What does this mean to you? I hope I have been clear, your first priority should always be serving God. When you put God first, He will provide all you need to do what He wants you to do. This does not mean He will give you all you may think you need or want.

**What if you have approached money in the wrong way and you already have debt?**

Is it too late to get back in line with God’s blessings? NO! However, it does take commitment. You must make decisions to change how you look at money and the way you spend it. We must be good stewards of all God gives us. Our paycheck is not ours, it is given to us to use wisely in His service.

**So, how do you get back on track so God can pour out His blessings?**

**First, you must commit yourself to doing triage on our present finances.**

If you have already buried yourself in debt, the first step is to stop the bleeding.

What does this mean? Stop buying anything you don't have to have to sustain life.

Is this harsh?

Yes, but I have found that unless you, and if married, both of you, commit to a freeze on spending, you will never get out of debt. You will never be free to do what God wants or even what you want out of life.

You may need help at this point. Wise people always seek advice. Find someone living without debt and enjoying the freedom of debt-free living. They can advise you and help you make the changes you will need to make.

Dave Ramsey has helped many people get out of debt and their lives back on track. You can look up some of his training such as the [Debt Snowball](#). It explains a step-by-step method you can use to gain your freedom.

**However, a few of you may be part of an elite small group.**

Maybe, you are one of the few who have never put yourself in [debt](#). I hope this is true! In the meantime, let's get serious about what to do if you have a credit card or other forms of debt.

So you have stopped the bleeding; what's next?

**Second, you must start digging out of the debt prison.**

Children, I know this will not be easy. I made a lot of mistakes in my life and one of them was buying on credit. This was especially bad in my case. I knew better and I could have waited.

When I got married, my wife and I agreed that we should not buy anything on credit. We did OK on a very limited income until after our first baby was born. We had always had a foster baby in the house, but when ours was born our need to wash diapers doubled.

Most of you will not remember cloth diapers. It took a lot of diapers to keep one baby dry and we always had at least two. We had to go to the laundry at least twice a week. It took time and money.

We expected a tax refund in a few weeks and told ourselves that it was okay to purchase a washing machine. We planned to pay it off when our check came in.

Over the next few years, we racked up considerable debt. So we had to dig out just like you will have to.

## **The question is, how do you dig out?**

Remember how we talked about stopping the bleeding as the first step?

Stopping the bleeding is actually the easy, part. Digging out and getting yourself free of debt is the harder part. It takes discipline, time, and planning.

There are many ways to dig out, but you have to have a plan and you must stick to it.

I mentioned Dave Ramsey and his snowball plan because it has worked for tens of thousands over the years. It is simple and it works. You can be free of all debt including your home and car.

His plan to dig out and be free starts with selling everything you do not need to live. You take the money you get and you apply it to your smallest debt until it is paid off.

Now listen, this is important. Once you pay off the smallest debt, you take the amount you were paying on it and add it to the payment you make on the smallest remaining bill.

You continue doing this until you [owe no one](#) anything other than to love them.

## **For you to be free, you must change the way you think!**

Let's recap a little. You took the first step and committed to stop buying anything on credit. From this day on, you will question each purchase and be sure that it is necessary for life. If it is something that you can survive without, you wait until you are out of debt and pay cash for it.

Second, you make a plan to get out of debt. Totally out of debt. You sell what you don't need and put every penny toward your debt.

Finally, change the way you think forever. Think about things that have real value for now and eternity. Ask God what He wants before every purchase, especially if it is something you can live without. As you do this I want you to keep the following Scripture in mind.

**This Scripture contains two very important points.**

[1 Timothy 6:6-9 NKJV](#) *<sup>6</sup> Now godliness with contentment is great gain. <sup>7</sup> For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. <sup>8</sup> And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. <sup>9</sup> But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.*

First, living a godly life and being content with what God gives you is for your good. Always remember that you brought nothing into the world and you will take nothing with you.

If you can do this it will help change the way you look at life. It took me thirty years to understand that if I had food and clothing I could be content. You can still find contentment in

the Lord even if you are hungry and face hard times. When your joy comes from God it is not contingent on what you have or don't have.

Second, understand that the desire to be rich can lead you to fall away from your commitment to God and righteous living. I have seen good men and women destroy themselves seeking more money and things. They had good lives and loving families and yet they ended in misery.

I pray God will keep you from falling into the trap of seeking worldly pleasures and positions. They will only bring heartache and misery in the end.

One of the early Scriptures I learned was [Matthew 6:33 NKJV](#), ***"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."***

**Get your life priorities right and your life will be blessed by God.**

Don't fall into Satan's trap. He will tell you that it doesn't hurt anything, just go ahead and do or get what you want. Anytime you doubt that you should do something, you should heed that inner warning.

You must make your own choices in life. My goal is to guide you, as best I can, to live in a way that will bring you the greatest happiness. You must get [right with God](#).

As I close this message, I want to point you to others I wrote for you. [Created For A Purpose](#), [What is Your Source](#)