

Stewardship Series, pt.3, 5.14.06

*If you have a brief testimony of how God has been faithful to provide for you financially I'd like for you to share it (written or verbally)*

Many of the principles that success books contain come from the Bible. God wants us to be success (not necessarily the same as worldly standards), so there are many principles about living a successful life that are found in popular books that come straight from the Bible.

Here's a principle used across the board - Luke 6.38 "If you give, you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full measure, pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, and running over. Whatever measure you use in giving--large or small--it will be used to measure what is given back to you." I heard it in the book, Never Eat Alone.

The Law of Investment -

It works in the world but it is primarily motivated by greed/materialism; center at the motivation of most is desire for more money.

Illustration - Horha Rodriguez - meanest bandit & stole S TX banks blind; heard Rodriguez in bar; under arrest; little guy say Horha can't speak English; I'll translate; tell Horha give me the money; Horha told translator; Translator - Horha said go ahead & shoot he's not going to tell you anything.

Statistical questions - what would you do for a certain amount of money...70 out of 1000 said they would kill another person for a certain amount of money...money rules.

Money should be the servant...using that which God has given to us to serve God & our needs...

- A. God is my provider – Gen.22 – Abrah offering Isaac to God; hard to believe; he's about to take his son's life; 22.14 – from that day fwd the place called, "Jehovah Jireh." He's given a promise that he will provide...when you tithe He's promised to provide (Prov.3.9f – 9Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the best part of everything your land produces. 10Then he will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with the finest wine..)he won't ask you to do something that he won't provide for... He can take 90% and stretch it...your provider isn't your employer...I want you to take your trust out of your employer, pension, Social Security & put it in the Lord
- B. You have to invest in what you want in return – Gal.6.7. 7Don't be misled. Remember that you can't ignore God and get away with it. You will always reap what you sow! 8Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful desires will harvest the consequences of decay and death. But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit. 9So don't get tired of doing what is good. Don't get discouraged and give up, for we will reap a harvest of blessing at the appropriate time. Whatever you sow you will reap...you get back what you invest in...don't feel loved then love others...don't have friends then be a friend...he that would have a friend must show himself friendly ...do you believe that if I invest money with God I will get money back...yes (qualify it & address excesses of prosperity preachers)...you give Him the firstfruits and He promises to give back (Luke 6.38); I believe all believer who tithe have some type of testimony indicating God's bountiful favor on their life..III. –testimony...may not happen next week or next month...but you're putting yourself in the position of financial blessing...take God at His word.
- C. You have to invest on the front end – hard part...the farmer doesn't get his first crop and then sow seed...he sows first...builder doesn't get the lease payments first before he builds the apartment complex...III – 1 Kings 17 – investing on the front end; widow

woman will take care of him; didn't sound logical; she's the source during the drought; 17.12 - I don't have anything...Elijah must've thought, "This is it."; how did Elijah handle it, "Make some for me first and you guys have the rest and die."...the lady made the investment up front...God provided sovereignly...many people know truth of barrel of oil & box of meal that never runs out...challenge those who don't tithe to do so for 3 months and see what happens...there is a principle in Scripture that when we move towards God he acts on our behalf...God doesn't necessarily move first and then us.

- D. Your heart follows your money - Matt.6.19-21... 19"Don't store up treasures here on earth, where they can be eaten by moths and get rusty, and where thieves break in and steal. 20Store your treasures in heaven, where they will never become moth-eaten or rusty and where they will be safe from thieves. 21Wherever your treasure is, there your heart and thoughts will also be.this isn't about getting your heart right with God first & then giving...how do you get your heart into the things of God...when you start investing that is where your heart is...ILL. - people becoming Aggie fans b/c they send 1000's of \$ when their kids are in college...the people who are excited about their church/things of God are those that invest them...if you want to do something for your spiritual life then at least tithe to God's work...sometimes the people most critical of their church invest nothing into God's activity through that church...their feet may be in the church all the time, but their heart isn't.
- E. Expect results...you should look...He promises...we need to be alert...you aren't demanding you're just watching...Luke 6.38 says it's going to happen
- F. When God does it, give him the glory...you need to brag about what God has done...Some people give for all the wrong reasons...they

want others to notice; gain influence; elevated...anyone have a giving testimony of how God has provided for you and you want to give him the glory...

Summarize...begin tithing...giving above a tithe