

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLE: Obedience Brings Blessings

Ponder: How is obedience connected to self-Reliance?

Watch: Obedience Brings Blessings

Discuss: What blessings have you received by obeying God's laws?

Ponder: JOSHUA 3:5

Sanctify yourselves: for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you."

BECOME A WISE AND FAITHFUL STEWARD

Ponder: How Confident am I about my financial future?

Read: In the parable of the talents, Christ teaches us that we must take care of what we have been given. **The Lord allows us to be caretakers—or stewards—over His gifts to us.** To those who are faithful with His gifts, Christ promises, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord"

Discuss: What does it mean to you that all things belong to the Lord? How do you show that you understand that principle?

Read:. President Gordon B. Hinckley taught: "I urge you to be modest in your expenditures; discipline yourselves in your purchases to avoid debt to the extent possible. Pay off debt as quickly as you can, and free yourselves from bondage.

Discuss: How does managing your finances make you a better steward?

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP SUCCESS MAP

Activity: Build Financial Success – Match the levels - **DISCUSS**

Foundation: Eliminate Debt

Walls: Budget/Work

Level One: Continue to Give and Bless Others

Level Two: Pay Tithes and Offerings

Level Three: Save and Invest for the Future

Level Four: Faith in Jesus Christ – Commitment to Self-Reliance

Roof/Level Five: Protect Yourself/Family from Hardship (1 month emergency fund, 3-6 month savings, insurance)

COUNSEL WITH THE LORD ABOUT YOUR FINANCES

Read: Challenges will undoubtedly arise as you apply these principles of successful financial stewardship. As you continually seek the Lord's help, you will be strengthened to overcome those difficulties. Remember, the Lord always provides a way to fulfill His commandments (see 1 Nephi 3:7). Amulek taught the poor among the Zoramites to "cry unto [the Lord] over the crops of your fields, that ye may prosper in them. Cry over the flocks of your fields, that they may increase". As you counsel with the Lord about your temporal needs and challenges and work toward financial self-reliance, He will bless and strengthen you.

TRACK YOUR INCOME AND EXPENSES:

Ponder:

- Do I know where I spend my money each month?
- Do I feel in control of where my money goes?

Read: The first step to successful financial stewardship is understanding your current financial situation. When you gain a better understanding of where your money is being spent, you can better plan where you want it to go. You will begin by tracking your income and expenses for the next few weeks.

ACTIVITY:

Step 1: Individually, think about all of the ways you spend money. Below are common categories where people spend money. Circle the areas where you spend money often, and write down additional categories as appropriate. The miscellaneous category is for expenses that do not fit neatly into other categories.

Tithes/Offerings	Transportation	Entertainment	
Savings	Restaurants	Cell Phones	
Clothes	School Activities	Miscellaneous	

Step 2: Discuss with the group additional categories you created

Step 3: Throughout the next few weeks, write down each time you receive or spend money. On a spreadsheet, in a notebook, or on your phone, create a table that looks like the following example. Fill out the table each day. When you receive money, record the amount in the income column; when you spend money, record the amount in the expense column.

DATE	DESCRIPTION	CATEGORY	INCOME	EXPENSE
9/23	Lunch at Chick Filet	Restaurants		\$15.00

Discuss:

- **Why track your expenses???**
- What challenges might you have tracking your expenses? How will you overcome those challenges?

CHANGE YOUR APPROACH TO MANAGING MONEY

COMMON APPROACH

1---We receive \$\$\$\$

2---We pay our current needs and wants

3&4--- We pay tithing or save a little, but only if we have money left over

SELF RELIANT APPROACH

1---We receive \$\$\$\$

2---We pay the Lord first

3---We pay our future selves second

4---Then we pay our current needs/wants

Discuss: What are some of the differences between these two approaches? Why do so many people end up taking the more common approach to financial stewardship?

PAY TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Read: Elder David A. Bednar taught, “The imagery of the ‘windows’ of heaven used by Malachi is most instructive. Windows allow natural light to enter into a building. In like manner, spiritual illumination and perspective are poured out through the windows of heaven and into our lives as we honor the law of tithing.

Discuss:

- How have you seen the “windows of heaven” “open” and “pour you out a blessing”?
- How can those blessings help you as you try and become financially self-reliant?
- How can paying tithing and saving money first change your life?

COMMITMENTS:

- I will ponder and record at the end of each day something I am grateful for.
- I will track my income and expenses for the next two to four weeks.
- I will teach the Financial Stewardship Map/House to someone.

