

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE PART II FRUGALITY, AUSTERITY, DILIGENCE AND PROSPERING



WEEKLY
CHRISTIAN
FOCUS

Greetings! There may be people reading this who are rich, richer or poor, and poorer. There may be people who started poor and became richer. There may be people who began wealthy and ended up with little.

Whatever the case or situation you are, we can learn a lot from God about being frugal, practising frugality, not being wasteful and if we have a 'lot', we learn to be good stewards.

My parents were initially lower middle class, they became rich through a fortunate event in my father's life when he was 15 working in London after the last war. He worked in Fleet Street which was THE street where all the national newspapers were operating. He was in fact a 'tea boy' who served tea to the editors and senior staff. One



day an editor who wrote articles predicting what horses would win various horse races, was off sick, the other editor said: 'Wilf, you like

horses, right?, see if you can fill in for George, and write a few paragraphs about the races this week. Make a few predictions.'

The outcome was that my dad, 'Wilf' correctly predicted winners both that week and throughout his life! He became so famous, that people everywhere sought his views about horses, he even had an audience of some type with the Queen at the races. All such things were a big deal in those days, and still remain today in the UK and other countries.



Our family became wealthy from that small open door that God opened.

My parent's and grandparent's generations knew a lot about Austerity, and Frugality as they went through wars and rationing where food had to be portioned out among the populace. 'Money doesn't grow on trees!' was the main thing I remember my mother saying

to me in my childhood.

Unfortunately for me in a way, I grew up with my brother as quite spoiled, as far as we could be in that era.

When I was 18 I was suddenly thrust into missionary life and took vows to God to be thankful for whatever the Lord provided for me and fellow soldiers of the cross. It was a painful experience! I remember eating celery soup for breakfast lunch and dinner for months and months which a company had donated to our Bible College. This was powdered celery and you added water! We ate stale bread and sometimes very stale like a brick! We also got Kipling's cakes, which was a luxury and stale croissants and out of date other things from local supermarkets or fruit and veg merchants. Occasionally real Christian merchants or other kind people would bring all kinds of food of better quality. **But like the Apostle Paul said,**

"I have learned both to abase (have very little) and to abound' (have abundance). In every state I am content, Paul said.

I actually didn't have any of 'my own' personal money after I became a Christian until 4 years later! It was amazing to hold a few pounds or Belgium Francs in my hands and think, 'what on earth could I buy with this Mammon?!'

Why am I telling you all this?, because there are two major things in life you have to handle wisely, if you don't you will have all kinds of trouble and they are :

1. Women and
2. Money. We'll just take the second one today!

So as a missionary and even today I have not graduated by any means, I am not wealthy, yet neither am I poor, as these things are comparative aren't they? but the truth is for all of us as we face and prepare for the future, is that we must have some knowledge about money and how God wants us to use it for His Glory.

Here are a couple of verses that Have helped me considerably over the years.

Deuteronomy 8:18

But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

I have always tried to remember this, just like Wisdom, that I have got to ask God for wealth and He has to teach me how to 'get it'.

Malachi 3: 9

Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall

your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

Whatever wealth you get you must tithe it to God. So ask God for it and then tithe it to His work.



To face the future, I believe we should do the following:

- take stock of our wealth with our wives, if we have one, (One wife for each man that is)
- agree together and in prayer what to do with it.
- **Ask God to help us see into the future**, like Joseph and Pharaoh and see if we should be putting funds/ items/ food, water and other things aside for the 'famine'.
- be generous to God
- help the poor, especially 'they of the household of faith' (Galatians 6:10)
- get into the habit of knowing carefully your family's and ministry's financial situation each end of the week. This is really helpful to do.
- Don't waste your God-given funds, practice some form of frugality or austerity.
- Resist all impulse to buy on impulse. Pray earnestly first.

I believe if we do these things and are faithful, then it is a principle of the Lord to wish to help and increase this. There are oodles of

parables and verses about this. **I pray you enjoy this wonderful Bible study below. Pray over it, meditate on it and see what God will do for you as you obey its principles.** God bless you..

Until Next week, Lord willing!
Jerry for the WCF Team

AUSTERITY

Definition: In the context of Lord's service austerity is a manner of life characterized by simplicity, moderation and restraint in material concerns.

1. Austerity-mindedness means valuing what the Lord provides and not being wasteful.

* **Proverbs 12:27** The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting: but the substance of a diligent man is precious.

* **Proverbs 21:20** [It is wise to be saving, foolish to be wasteful.] There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up.

* **Proverbs 29:3** Whoso loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father: but he that keepeth company with harlots spendeth his substance.

* **Luke 15:11-13** [The parable of the Prodigal Son:] And He said, A certain man had two sons: 12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. 13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

* **John 6:12** [Jesus set the example by not being wasteful with material things.] When they were filled, He said

unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

* **1 Corinthians 7:31a**
And they that use this world, as not abusing [misusing] it.

2. Being austerity-minded helps you to be prepared for difficult times.

* **Genesis 41:29,30,34,36**
[Joseph instructs Pharaoh to prepare for coming drought and consequent famine at a time when things are going well:] Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt: 30 And there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land; 34 Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years. 36 And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine. [See Genesis 41: all.]

* **Proverbs 6:6-8** Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: 7 Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, 8 Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.

* **Proverbs 21:20** There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up.

* **Proverbs 22:3** A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished [suffer for it].

3. Austerity is part of good stewardship.

* **Proverbs 10:4** He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.

* **Matthew 24:45,46**
[God blesses faithfulness with material things.] Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over His household, to give them meat in due season? 46 Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when He cometh shall find so doing.

* **Matthew 25:21,29**
His lord said unto him, 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. 29 For unto every one that hath [things gained through faithfulness and good stewardship.] shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not [through laziness and waste.] shall be taken away even that which he hath.

* **Genesis 41:38-41**
[When Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dream, and warned him of hard times ahead and advised him to appoint a faithful steward as economic czar:] Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is? 39 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art: 40 Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. 41 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. [See Genesis 41: all.]

* **Luke 16:1,2** [Those who are wasteful lose God's blessings.] And He said also unto His disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. 2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? Give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be

no longer steward.

* **Luke 16:10-12** He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. 11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? 12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

* **1 Corinthians 4:2**
Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

4. Austerity-mindedness requires a sense of moderation.

* **Proverbs 25:16** Hast thou found honey? Eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.

* **Proverbs 30:7-9**
[Solomon prayed:] Two things have I required of Thee; deny me them not before I die: 8 Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: 9 Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? Or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the Name of my God in vain. Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me.

* **Romans 13:14** But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

* **Philippians 4:5** Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

5. To be austerity-minded, it helps to be content with what the Lord supplies.

* **Matthew 6:11** Give us this day our daily bread.

* **Philippians 4:11,12**

Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. 12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

* **1 Timothy 6:6-8** But Godliness with contentment is great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. 8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

* **Hebrews 13:5** Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

6. In the Lord's service, putting His work above our own material needs comes naturally.

* **Matthew 6:24,25** No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. 25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? ... 33 But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

* **John 4:34** Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work.

* **Acts 20:24** But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God.

* **Philippians 3:8** Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.

7. Time is our most valuable resource, so redeeming the time is also part of austerity.

* **Proverbs 18:9** He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.

* **John 9:4** I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

* **1 Corinthians 7:29a** But this I say, brethren, the time is short.

* **Ephesians 5:15,16** See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

* **Colossians 4:5** Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.

* **James 4:14-15** Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. 15 For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

* **Romans 13:11-12** And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our Salvation nearer than when we

believed. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

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Genesis 48:48-49 And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same.

49 And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number.



FOR I KNOW THE THOUGHTS THAT I THINK TOWARD YOU,
SAITH THE LORD, THOUGHTS OF PEACE, AND NOT OF EVIL,
TO GIVE YOU AN EXPECTED END.

JEREMIAH 29:11

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They also deal with many of the spiritual and physical things that are happening in the world today. The majority are serious or fascinating and also have some element of humour in some of them!

They are written by Jerry Finch for the most part and graphic designed by Andreas Ortiz in his own unique and inspiring way!

These articles are not your usual half a page Christian devotional, but rather are usually 4 to 8 pages long and also often contain supporting links to other articles or videos on the internet for deeper research.

These articles are getting such a good reception globally, that they are also being translated into other languages! We thank God! Our goal as a ministry is to glorify God and point people to the Word of God which can be applied to every aspect of our lives in our relationship with Him and others and with the world in general.

These are both exciting and challenging times we live in, and the WCF tends to keep up with what is going on in every sense, spiritually and mentally and Biblically.

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