

EPILOGUE

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Our study opened in the first installment with a quotation from the Apostle Paul and has drawn heavily from his insights throughout. It seems befitting, then, to look to him again as we close. Consider his words to his young friend in the ministry (2 Timothy 3:16-17):

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

These words were among Paul's last recorded in Scripture and might well be considered *the* underpinning principle of his life: God's Word is a thorough furnisher to His children.

Clearly, God's Word is the believer's best resource. It is a revealer of truth, a prophet of things to come, and an intricately accurate historian. It teaches us how to rear children, how to make decisions, how to build relationships. It's a book about God, a book about life, a book about love. And it has a great deal to say about the subject of money.

Everything it says about money is profitable — profitable for learning and teaching (doctrine), profitable for convicting the hearts of God's people (reproof), profitable for the working of change (correction), and profitable for disciplinary training (instruction in righteousness). All these things work together for the perfecting — for the making complete — of the man or woman of God.

I invite you to make a careful evaluation of your personal finances in the light of God's Word. If you were to review your transactions over the past several years, what would you find?

- *Do you tend to follow man's reasoning or God's wisdom regarding financial decisions?*

Where is your security? Your happiness? How do you measure success?

- *Are there areas in your personal finances where you may be violating Biblical principles?* Does your handling of money evidence your belief in the sovereignty of God? Do your finances indicate that you are a man or woman of faith? Does your life demonstrate a desire to pursue God — even to the point of self-denial and self-sacrifice? Do your finances bear fruitful evidence of a godly life?
- *Are your finances in line with specific Bible teachings regarding money?* Are your attitudes right? Your earning methods above reproach? Are you a responsible steward of the money that God has entrusted to your care, or do you sometimes spend carelessly or foolishly?
- *Is your giving an adequate expression of your love and devotion to God?* Has your level of giving increased over the years in proportion to your income? Are you a conscious, cheerful, percentage-giver, or are you a spur-of-the-moment, whatever's-left-over, scramble-for-change giver?

If you are convicted by any of these questions, then I humbly encourage you to carefully consider the advice and recommendations presented, to weigh them against the Standard of God's Word, and to apply them, where appropriate, in your own life to the glory of God the Father.

I am confident that the truths and applications we have examined are among the most liberating you will ever experience. My prayer is that you can find in them a fraction of the joy I've discovered in applying them in my own life.

May God bless you as you seek to serve Him.