

## **Pastor Chris Session 1 Sermon notes**

Three major stumbling blocks for Pastors in the last 2000 years can be summarized by these three words;

### **1. The Gold**

### **2. The Girls**

### **3. The Glory**

My aim is to give you practical instruction about how to safeguard your ministry and finish your race well.

First, we will talk about the **Gold**--Money

"The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil." 2 Timothy 6:10

#### **1. Money reveals your heart and secret motivations**

Matthew 6:21 "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

#### **2. Money can pull you away from your calling**

2 Timothy 4:10 "Demas, because he has loved this world has forsaken me..."

#### **3. Money brings other temptations**

1 Timothy 6:9 Those who want to be rich, however, fall into temptation and become ensnared by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction.

10 For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. By craving it, some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.

11 But you, O man of God, flee from these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness....

So, with that in mind. Here are some important principles from the Bible:

### 1. Integrity and Transparency in Financial Matters

- **Big Idea:** Maintain transparency and integrity in the handling of church finances, following the practices of the early church.
- **Scriptural Basis:**
  - **Acts 4:34-35:** "There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need."
- **Best Practices:**
  - Implement a clear and transparent accounting system to track all contributions.
  - Regularly report on the church's financial status to the congregation, fostering trust and accountability.
  - Ensure multiple people oversee financial processes to avoid the appearance of impropriety, as Paul notes: **2 Corinthians 8:20-21:** "We take this course so that no one should blame us about this generous gift that is being administered by us, for we aim at what is honorable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of man."

### 2. Generosity and Cheerful Giving

- **Big Idea:** Encourage generosity and cheerful giving, recognizing that giving is an act of worship and should be done willingly.
- **Scriptural Basis:**

- **2 Corinthians 9:6-7:** "The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."
- **Best Practices:**
  - Teach the congregation about the importance of giving as a spiritual discipline and an expression of gratitude toward God.
  - Encourage giving that is voluntary and from the heart, avoiding pressure or manipulation.
  - Provide various avenues for giving (e.g., online, in-person, recurring donations) to make it accessible and convenient.

### 3. Stewardship and Wise Use of Resources

- **Big Idea:** Emphasize the importance of wise stewardship, ensuring that church funds are used effectively to further the mission of the church.
- **Scriptural Basis:**
  - **Matthew 25:14-30:** The Parable of the Talents illustrates the responsibility to wisely manage and multiply the resources God entrusts to us. "For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away."
- **Best Practices:**
  - Develop a budget that aligns with the church's mission and vision, prioritizing ministries that have the greatest impact.
  - Regularly review and assess the effectiveness of how funds are being used, making adjustments as needed.
  - Invest in long-term initiatives that promote sustainability and growth, rather than just short-term fixes.

#### 4. Accountability and Ethical Standards

- **Big Idea:** Establish strong accountability measures and ethical standards in handling offerings to prevent misuse and ensure that resources are used for their intended purposes.
- **Scriptural Basis:**
  - **1 Timothy 6:10:** "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs."
- **Best Practices:**
  - Set up financial committees or boards with diverse members who can provide oversight and ensure ethical handling of church funds.
  - Conduct regular audits by an external, independent auditor to verify that financial practices are sound.
  - Ensure that all church leaders involved in financial decisions adhere to high ethical standards, avoiding any conflicts of interest.

#### 5. Meeting the Needs of the Community

- **Big Idea:** Use offerings to meet the needs of both the church and the broader community, reflecting the New Testament model of caring for others.
- **Scriptural Basis:**
  - **Acts 2:44-45:** "And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need."
  - **Acts 4:32-35:** "Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common."

- **Best Practices:**

- Allocate a portion of the church's budget specifically for benevolence and outreach programs that support those in need.
- Involve the congregation in identifying needs within the community and deciding how best to address them.
- Foster partnerships with local organizations and ministries to maximize the impact of contributions on the community.

## 6. Teaching and Discipleship on Financial Stewardship

- **Big Idea:** Regularly teach on the biblical principles of financial stewardship, helping the congregation understand their role as stewards of God's resources.
- **Scriptural Basis:**
  - **Matthew 6:19-21:** "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."
- **Best Practices:**
  - Offer classes or workshops on biblical financial stewardship, covering topics like budgeting, debt management, and giving.
  - Integrate teachings on stewardship into regular sermons and small group discussions.
  - Encourage a lifestyle of simplicity and generosity, challenging the congregation to prioritize kingdom values over materialism.

By adhering to these New Testament principles and best practices, your church can cultivate a culture of faithful stewardship, integrity, and generosity that honors God and supports the mission of the church.

