

MONEY THROUGH THE AGES: Changing Our Generational Views

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Whatever our generational financial history is, be it extreme poverty, wealth, or working middle-class, we can ask God to be Lord over our finances in the here-and-now. Generational loyalty around money can be a blessing to us, or it can bring bondage. God can use past financial history to inform us and teach us. However, to use past family financial patterns or attitudes as our primary financial model for the present, can hinder our acceptance of God's fresh attitudes and habits in the area of money in our lives.

Some signs of generational financial bondage:

1. Power imbalance around money. A common sign: Money seemed to always be a part of every conversation, or—money was hardly ever mentioned.
2. Sin crept into money situations in the past, and now it is treated lightly or even humorously: “Uncle George cheated the IRS every year and never got caught.”
3. Money was a source of extreme shame or vulnerability. Families with a history of poverty or trauma: (i.e., a grandparent's farm being auctioned off, or a business failure resulting in bankruptcy) often experience these feelings.
4. Misuse of money. Past family patterns of extravagant spending or extreme consumer debt can influence current generations to accept irresponsible habits.
5. Priorities around spending were unhealthy or unbalanced, bringing feelings of confusion, shame, anger, or cynicism around money. (Grandma bought a mink coat and Grandpa stopped at the local tavern after work, but they borrowed money from the neighbor for school fees for the kids.)
6. Money and material gifts were used as a replacement for emotional intimacy and connection with others.

With these old, “ancient ruins” (Isaiah 61:4) God wants to do a new thing. He wants to “restore the former devastations” around money and give us new freedom and stability.

Some ways to make room for God's new roads in our finances are:

1. Ask God to help you view money within the larger perspective of His kingdom. As we view money as a necessary piece of the fabric of family life, but neither exalt it nor “push it under the rug”, God will honor our refusal to give money more power than it’s meant to have. “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matthew 6: 33). When we prioritize His kingdom, He has promised to meet all of our needs.
2. Ask Him for an attitude of generosity for your family and then the world. “Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality” (Romans 12: 13). God’s principles around tithing a tenth of our income (Deuteronomy 14: 22-28) honors Him and further releases blessings into our lives.
3. Replace past unhealthy patterns/attitudes around money with a sound, biblical spending and savings plan. Lack of knowledge can cause a loophole that the enemy uses to bring fear and keep our former generational financial bondages operating. Obtain information around money management from a financial planner who can guide you in Godly principles. (See article by Brenda Spina in this issue of PFL).

Beth Moore states: “Every generation has a new opportunity to exert positive influence.”¹ God bless you as you seek His plan for new, positive influences around money in you and your loved ones’ lives.

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