

Women and Money

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Money! Without question money is one of the top three topics that create conflict in families. Money is the language of our culture. In Bible times the language of the culture was agriculturally based. Since money is the language of our culture, the meaning we assign to money can be varied. Traditionally men managed the money. Now more than ever women are taking over or participating in the task. Because the possession and use of money carries so much meaning in our lives today, it is of use to note a few specific ideas that support our ability to manage money with increasing confidence.

1. Stop acting as if money doesn't mean much to you. Of course it does! Women especially try to be everything to everyone. Without money one is not able to provide the kind of healthcare they prefer, enjoy particular recreational activities, experience position that engenders respect or obtain the security that is desired. There is no shame in admitting these things carry great importance in our lives.

2. Identify your fears about money. Let's face facts: not all families teach children to feel confident about money. That means most of us don't know how or feel comfortable with negotiating money management. Most parents desire to provide their children with more than what they had. Giving too much tends to create tyrants and giving too little tends to create hearts filled with shame. The balancing act of knowing how much to give and when takes time, education and more importantly, prayer.

3. Do the emotional work required. Running from or denying your own greed, past deprivations, indulgent patterns or anxiety never benefits over the long run. If anything, it sabotages your future. Foundational in the healing process is the truth found in Deuteronomy 8. God told Moses to remind the people that it was He and He alone that gave them the strength and ability to obtain wealth. Studying God's principles around money coupled with information from well-respected authors is necessary. Here are a few: Dr. Judith Briles, Suze Orman, David Ramsay, and Crown Financial Services.

Whether or not you are the financial caregiver, you have a responsibility to yourself and to your family to know and understand how to manage money. Just as we spend time in our educational system teaching the English language, the same care in learning the language of our culture is needful.

Tips for Managing Money

From: *Money \$marts* by Dr. Judith Briles:

Identify any fears and concerns you have about handling and managing your finances.

Identify how money is spent in your family.

Become educated--take advantage of the internet to learn about all relevant financial matter that affects you.

Determine and assess your current financial situation. List all income, assets, equity, fixed and flexible expenses, and discretionary income.

Identify your objectives and develop a written financial plan (including your goals for education, family, and retirement).

Determine the types of investment most appropriate for your current situation and goals.

Calculate how much money you can save and invest monthly.

Consider speaking with a professional financial planner. Check out Websites, such as *MSMoney.com*, and take advantage of their financial tools and calculators to help analyze your current financial situation and plan for the future.

Create a realistic financial plan, budget your resources, and stick to it. Allow for mistakes--you're bound to make some, and take advantage of others' mistakes--you'll learn from them.

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