

Financial Breakthroughs and Testimonies From Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus Focus Group Participants

"After completing the *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* focus group, our marriage and our lives were forever changed. We realized we had allowed certain strongholds to take root in our marriage and family. But our premier breakthrough came during the homework from Chapter 1. We made a one-flesh decision to implement the three pronged giving plan of tithing, giving above the tithe, and the sowing of alms. We had been tithing for years, but we discovered that unforgiveness had been blocking our financial blessing. When we purposed to give above the tithe, and put our written plan into action, God put His plan into action. We are now giving more than we've ever given—and we're living Malachi 3:8-10! We are continually being blessed and being groomed to be **lean, mean, blessing machines!** God is no respector of persons, and what He's done for us, He can do for you! He owns it all and we obediently give a percentage of our combined income to fund His Kingdom glory! We've been able to increase that percentage annually.

Another huge breakthrough came when we read Chapter 9. We discovered we were being vexed through our kids who had exhibited such bad behavioral problems that we had become consumed with their care and with bailing them out of trouble by financing their foolishness. Needless to say, we have made changes in this area and we have fully embraced the Spiritual Warfare challenge on behalf of our adult children, grandchildren, and future generations to come!

We so appreciate the uncompromising teaching, love, prayer, and guidance of Bill and Maureen Sitter – they have laid the groundwork for us to follow. We are debt-free, working at paying off our mortgage and will never be in debt-bondage again! Thank you, thank you, thank you, Bill and Maureen for being that example for us, and others, to follow!"

-- **Dave and Joyce Shoemaker**

Focus Group Leaders and www.debtfreelegacy.com Core Leadership Team Members

"After going through *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus*, our lives have not been the same. Unfortunately, we were living the statistic where 90% of our discussions were about finances and it affected our marriage negatively. Throughout the course our marriage experienced healing. Each week we rediscovered who we were and where God wanted us to be in the areas of our relationship and finances. The chapter on breaking curses and strongholds helped us become stronger. As our marriage was being restored, so were our finances. Now that we are being obedient to the Word and putting into practice what we have learned, we have experienced many breakthroughs and blessings. We give God all the glory and we thank Him that He gave Bill and Maureen the vision to help others achieve financial victories and become debt free."

-- **Joe and Rosa Dominguez**

(Now excellent small group leaders and members of the Core Leadership Team)

"I am so excited because this class has changed my life. I was at a place where I was very dissatisfied with the way I was spending my money and could sense it was not the way God wanted me to handle it. I continued to do wrong things with my money simply because I knew no other way.

When I took the class and began to grab hold of biblical principles, every area of my life began to change. I started tithing correctly, giving freewill offerings, and sowing alms. I immediately began to feel better about my life. I put a debt repayment plan and a *Flexible Spending Plan* into action and was able to decrease my debt by 90% within the first six months. I was able to

save more and invest more and, having paid off credit cards, I was able to do what my heart's desire really was: give more to the church building fund to help leave a legacy for the next generation.

I have been able to help my friends grasp the principles this course taught me because they can actually see the way my life has changed. One friend in particular decided to take the course after talking to me and her personal testimony is incredible.

I thank God for my small group leaders, Dave and Joyce Shoemaker, because they helped me see what God has planned for me in His Word. When I apply the principles of His Word, God simply honors that. I now have an inner peace that really does surpass all understanding."

-- **Kawanda Dixon**

Sergeant Major US Army

"*Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* is a great program that helped us identify and change bad behaviors and thinking regarding our finances, and we've seen significant results. This biblically based course enabled us to work together, change those wrong thoughts and habits, and focus on being biblically based stewards. Financial planning is not solely Krishna's or Bret's job – it's a joint (one-flesh) responsibility for establishing and monitoring our monthly spending habits and goals. It hasn't been easy, but the tools we've learned to use through this program have given us peace of mind and a greater sense of financial security. By following God's plan, we are definitely believing the promise of Matthew 25:21, that as we are faithful in a few things, God will put us in charge of many things. We desire to hear Jesus say, 'Well done good and faithful servants.'"

-- **Bret and Krishna Stevens**

"We've been married thirteen years and have had bad spending habits and could not agree on many expenditures. Before this 7-week course, we tried budget programs but without success. We began the class and immediately began seeing breakthroughs: new career opportunities, bonuses, and even an exceptional car purchase deal. We found a new level of agreement in our marriage and began moving towards freedom from debt and a road to living financially in a godly manner. The adversary, the devil, fought us all the way but the spiritual warfare training (Chapter 9) showed us how to deal with Satan. We now have good goals for the future that include giving to God. We see where the money is going. We feel the power of a couple in agreement and we know that all financial decisions are really spiritual decisions. Thanks to this book, course, and our focus group leaders, we have the tools to build a solid financial and spiritual legacy for our kids."

-- **Robert and Abril Herald**

"As a direct result of the *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* course, we have a new mindset that will no longer allow the past to rob our future. God's financial plan is now our priority. We realize that the 'stinkin thinkin' of the world's system (easy credit rip-offs and debt) is an absolute lie. The redeemed of the Lord can and should live like it."

-- **Tim and Patricia Nichols**

"This 7-week small group program was awesome! Before this course, my husband James and I were never on the same page concerning our spending. We now have a true understanding of what it is that God has purposed for us. Knowing His Word regarding money, spending, building,

saving, and applying the principles of this program will help us be in agreement, and stay focused, on how to handle God's money."

-- **T. Smith**

"Dear Bill and Maureen, When we attended your finance focus group we didn't really know what to expect. Our finances were in bad shape. Frankly, it was embarrassing to share. Thank you for being so compassionate and caring. The small group environment made it easy to be transparent. Thank you for showing us God's never changing principles. This has definitely helped us gain control of our finances. In addition, your course has been very effective in teaching us how to deal with debt. We are on the road to becoming DEBT FREE! We know where we stand, and we have a plan, thanks to you. In the name of JESUS we declare, in faith, that we are debt free! Thank you and may God bless you both."

--- **Mike and Kathie Maloney**

"Before the course, my husband Bill and I were not on the same page. I was the one who did everything regarding our finances. I tried to give the financial responsibility to my husband, but he didn't want it. Now, we make financial decisions as a team."

--- **Irene Rinehardt**

"For about three years, my wife and I have been discussing/planning for my retirement from my second career. The *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* course helped us finalize this plan in an organized manner. We had been exposed, at one time or another, to most of the principles, but never in a neat package. The course forced us to accurately list all our liabilities and assets. Thus, giving us a true picture of our financial position. It also helped us formulate a family *Flexible Spending Plan* that will allow us to succeed with our plan. At first we were overwhelmed, but as we neared the end of the 7-week course all the pieces of the puzzle started to fall into place. The greatest impact on us was that our hearts were forever changed towards finances (God's money). The course made Psalm 37:4 a reality in our lives: 'Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.'"

--- **Tony and Blanca Chapa**

"The *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* course was a major blessing to us. We are now applying the principles we learned in our daily lives. Before attending the class, Percy managed the finances. Now, we take time to plan short and long-term financial goals. This course taught us to work together as a one-flesh team regarding our finances. As we were participating in the course, we received a great breakthrough. God revealed to us that we were sowing good seed into bad ground. We repented and God brought about a great financial blessing, within days. Praise God!"

--- **Percy and Daynelle Kimbrough**

"The *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* course gave us the tools to be better stewards of our money. We now pay more attention to small financial details. We've learned that it's not how much money we make that's important, but how we manage it. We now know where our money is being spent and how to better plan. Instead of ignoring a difficult situation, we face it. The weekly lessons taught us a great deal. We made a slight adjustment to our mortgage payment (it cut 5 years off the loan). We now pay it (half of a full monthly payment) every two weeks instead of once a month. Also as a result, we will save \$20,000 in interest payments. Anyone who has

self-employment income will definitely be blessed by the Guidelines for the Self Employed in Chapter 2. We really appreciate the Sitters' willingness to teach and train others."

--- **Larry and Maria Dahlstein**

(Note: The Dahlsteins served as leaders in training and progressed to lead a 7-week focus group. They have eight children, home school, and both spouses work multiple jobs — so what's your excuse?)

"Most importantly, I learned that Satan really does not want Christians to have this financial freedom information. He fights you in whatever area of weakness you have - for me it was "This is too hard!!" Prayer and spiritual warfare are both absolutely necessary for true financial success. Thanks to this program, I now know how to use both."

--- **N. Comstock**

"This *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* course showed me that God wants to be a part of my life and my finances. Buying this book is a great step financially and spiritually. Any thoughts of fear, stress, shame, and not having enough time are clearly thoughts from the devil. The devil wants to keep God out of your financial life. The strongest and brightest light is from our Father. So, turn on the light, and let God govern your finances. He is ready to bless you and your family! In the 7-week focus group study, you will find faith, fellowship, and love. You will also receive an understanding of how to keep God in your bank account and the devil out. You will learn practical financial applications based on biblical truths. These truths are essential for the rest of your life. The joy that comes from this class will elevate your spirit and strengthen your faith. Tithe to your Father, pray for guidance, share with your class, and do your homework. I thank God for His many blessings, for this class, and for the incredible focus group leaders called to faithfully teach this life changing material."

--- **Amelia Hartzel**

"This course provided financial principles that we found are easy to both understand and apply in our daily lives. The small focus group (meeting in a friendly home environment) put us at ease. We are both self-employed, and we especially benefited from the Guidelines for the Self-Employed (Chapter 2). We learned how to calculate "increase" and our tithe, even though our income was very irregular."

--- **Ed and Margaret Marotta**

"Dave and I have been married for 4 years. Dave is active duty Air Force and we both had quite a bit of debt when we got married: student loans, personal loans, car loans, credit cards, etc. We constructed a budget while trying to figure out what to do with one income. I searched for a job until we received the news that I was pregnant with our first child. We got things under control on our own, but didn't feel we were making any progress on our debts. They just kept getting bigger, although we were paying the monthly minimums. Then our second child came along and the Air Force moved us from NC to TX.

We were praying for God to guide us in our finances, wanting desperately to have the financial means to bless our church and the ministries that had blessed us, but instead it felt as though we were continuing to drown in debt.

We heard about the "Building a Financial Legacy" seminar by Bill and Maureen Sitter, and the Finance Team. Some of the things we had heard before, but some of it, especially hearing it in

the context of Scripture, was very eye opening for us. We desperately wanted to join a small focus group, but the military was sending us to Alabama and we would not be in town for the 7-week group. We bought the book and resolved to go ahead and work through it on our own.

God has richly blessed us for being faithful to Him and applying the principles of the workbook. You can learn what God has for you in working through the 7-weeks of material! We had been tithing before the course, but the area of giving above the tithe was new to us. Since that time, we have increased our giving, increased the amount we are paying on our debts and still have plenty to meet our needs each month. We have tightened our belt on non-essentials and wants, and have focused on our savings, debt payment and sowing into God's Kingdom.

We have already paid off two debts and rolled that money over to the next one. We will have all of our credit card and personal loans paid off in about one year, and then we'll be down to the mortgage, car, and student loans.

We want to encourage everyone who needs guidance or is looking for hope in their finances to get involved in a 7-week group. We also want to encourage those who for whatever reason cannot commit to the small group to buy the book, commit to prayer, do the work, apply the principles, and just see what the Lord can do in your finances!

It takes diligence but you can succeed using this workbook even without the blessings of being in a 7-week focus group."

--- **David and Jessica Ham**

"After finishing the *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* course, the Lord gave us a new understanding of how to steward our finances. The course also gave us hope and a vision of one day being totally debt-free!"

--- **Richard and Sandra Martinez**

(Note: Richard and Sandra have led a focus group and they taught these principles both in English and Spanish-speaking churches. Before becoming leaders in training, they had no background knowledge in finances. We are so proud of what God is doing through their faithfulness. Their progress and growth proves the importance of the mentoring role that leaders play when discipling and training leaders in training.)

Testimonies from Fiji

The beautiful country of Fiji is made up of several islands and is located to the east of Australia. Through Marriage Ministries International, Bill and Maureen forged an incredible friendship with Matai and Mei Niumataiwalu. He works at a radio station and she is a homemaker and mother of three fine sons. In addition to serving as National Married for Life (2=1) Leaders, Matai and Mei started and led a *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* focus group. The group was comprised of pastors, a fisherman, a businessman, and their spouses. The results were excellent and we are encouraged that more focus groups are planned for the future. The following statements are some of the encouraging testimonies from Fiji:

"We have been tremendously blessed because finance was an area we did not often discuss as a family. Sitting down and planning financially is a major breakthrough for us. Traditionally, we gave to the extreme extent believing that 'tomorrow takes care of itself.' As a result, our family was occasionally deprived of their basic needs. We thank God that we can now pass on to our children, and to future generations, a godly financial legacy. As we prepared to teach the 'paradigm shift' concept, God showed us that a married couple must unite as one flesh, and renew their minds with His Word, in order to receive His promises.

Exodus 20:2 gave us insight into the Lord's will for us. Egypt was a house of bondage because Pharaoh had enslaved and mistreated God's people. We, too, have been brought out of a house of debt bondage through Christ and the renewing of our minds. Like the Israelites, we have to enlarge and expand our thinking to be ready for God's plans to come to pass. We're excited at what God is doing. We pray for continuous breakthroughs in the *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* project because we believe many families around the world will be blessed by it."

--- **Matai and Mei Niumataiwalu**

"We own a small fishing business. The 7-week focus group, led by Matai and Mei, taught us a great deal by using God's Word as the standard. We now communicate better, pray better, pray together, and love one another more intensely. After undertaking this course, we are now working together on our daily *Flexible Spending Plan*, which has enabled us to pay off some of our debt. We foresee big financial breakthroughs in our home. The course, as a whole, has helped us to become much better stewards at home and in church."

--- **Tony and Joanna Kean**

"Bula (greetings), we have had the special privilege of serving as leaders in training to Matai and Mei. This was the first time the *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* course was taught in Fiji. The course has been a huge blessing to our family. We went into it expecting to be blessed in the area of finance and came out blessed in all areas. We realized that in the area of finances, we had excluded God. Once we acknowledged this and allowed Him to start ministering to us in this area, it became a spiritual stepping-stone. Through this course we have learned to be faithful, not only with finances, but with all the wonderful blessings from Abba Father. It has also brought about a spiritual revival in our lives. We thankfully praise God for taking us up to another level. Bill and Maureen, we thank God for you and your continuous commitment to give of what He has given you. We pray that as you continue to sow into the lives of others, our Heavenly Father will bless you abundantly."

--- **Wade & Janelle Gibson & family**

Recommendations and Endorsements

"I highly recommend *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* as a powerful and proven resource to help smash the bondage of debt and empower people with abundance and a spirit of generosity. Plain and simple - it works! It has worked in our church, and it will work in yours.

Bill and Maureen Sitter are faithful members of this ministry and people of proven character. They are a precious resource to our church, having liberated hundreds of people from crushing debt into generous givers. I urge you to get this book and I urge you to contact Bill and Maureen to come to your church. You won't be disappointed."

--- **Rick Godwin,**
Sr. Pastor Summit Christian Center, San Antonio, Texas

"Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus is an excellent tool to move individuals from the burden of debt and poverty into sufficiency and giving! It not only deals with the practical aspects of budgeting, planning, and assessing personal finances, but it addresses the wrong actions and motives that brought the problems in the first place. *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* provides both spiritual training and hands-on detailed financial advice.

It is perfect for small group workshops or individuals and couples seeking to rid themselves of the cycle of dept and lack. I recommend it and look forward to hearing of its impact in the Kingdom."

--- **Alan Vincent**
Founder Outpouring Ministries, www.outpouringministries.org

"I believe a person's life should validate their teaching. Therefore, I highly recommend Bill and Maureen Sitter and the *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* book, seminar, & small group course. Their life and ministry is an example of the awesome freedom found in wisely managing one's finances and bringing them in line with God's Word. Their teaching makes getting out of debt a realistic goal."

--- **Ron Corzine**
Consultant & Pastor, Christian Fellowship International

"Most of us have very little preparation or teaching regarding making decisions that lead to prosperity rather than to financial doom. This reality is reflected by the record amount of consumer debt and the massive number of personal bankruptcies. You can find help! The Bible is full of answers that can help you be free to do what God has called you to do. Bill and Maureen Sitter have organized many of the scriptures and Biblical concepts in a step-by-step set of instructions that all of us can follow to escape the financial rat race and live a purpose filled life. Their focus group course, *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* also identifies factors creating financial bondage and shows how to break that cycle. This course should be a part of the ministry of every church in America and around the world."

--- **Dr. A. Clyde Vollmers,**
Prof. Emeritus MN St. University & Prof. of Business Northwestern College

"Taking the course (or reading the book) *Financial Freedom in 7 weeks Plus* is like sitting at the feet of Bill and Maureen Sitter. We would direct you to Proverbs that would exhort you to heed their words of (financial) wisdom which will lead you to the understanding of the Lord's principles of prosperity. Their wisdom comes from studying the Word and applying it in their life with great success. Their heart for the Lord's prosperity, along with a heart of giving, has given them a personal goal of giving from their abundance \$1,000,000 into the Kingdom in their lifetime. Their heart for you who want to sit at their feet is that you will learn the "ways of the Lord" and grow abundantly in the Lord's prosperity. They believe that those who will learn from them will personally prosper so much that they (and you) will give \$1,000,000,000 (One Billion) into the advancement of the Kingdom of the Lord. There is no better place to learn."

--- **Mike and Marilyn Phillips**

Founders, 2=1 International

The combined ministry of Nova Shalom Ministries, Marriage Ministries International and University of the Family

"I've known Bill and Maureen for over twenty years. They are a rock-solid couple – pursuing excellence in every part of their lives. *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* is a down-to-earth, workable program designed to liberate families from financial bondage. With this new freedom, a family can rise above the fray, catch a bigger vision for their lives, and begin pursuing the noble cause that God is calling them to. The book breaks the bondage then releases a family toward victorious living."

--- **Carl Caton**

Caton Development and Founder of Christian website www.PeopleofFaith.com

Member Board of Directors www.debtfreelegacy.com

"As an executive in a large retail company employing thousands of people I have witnessed firsthand the devastation caused by uncontrolled debt in the lives of our employees. Being overwhelmed by debt is a major cause of marital stress. It also has a significant impact on employee productivity. Miracles happen in marriages and jobs when this debt is eliminated for good. *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* has been the generator of these types of miracles. I strongly recommend this course."

--- **Harvey Mabry**

President of Retailing (retired), HEB Food Stores

Member Board of Directors www.debtfreelegacy.com

"It is the plan of God that we would make practical application of biblical truth to affect our lives and the world around us. This book provides the tools to do both by our first achieving a debt free lifestyle. It is written in a very easy to read, user-friendly format to remove all fears and hindrances to tackling debt. It is highly recommended."

--- **Natalie Hardy**

Executive Director, City Reachers, and the San Antonio Apostolic Prayer Center

Member Board of Directors www.debtfreelegacy.com

"Bill and Maureen have presented their Financial Freedom course on my radio program *Christian Investors Daily* several times and have also presented it to the National Association of Christian Financial Consultants at the National Convention in Virginia. I have gotten to know both of them personally and financially. They teach what they live. My family knows their family. This is a couple who loves the Lord and lives by what they preach and teach. Listen to what they teach, because it is not them speaking, but God speaking through them."

--- **Bob Barber**

President, National Association of Christian Financial Consultants; Owner, Christian Investment Services

"*Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* is a powerful tool to teach and manage your finances in line with God's Word. Bill and Maureen Sitter's lives demonstrate the truth of the Scriptural principles that they teach. These principles will change your life. I highly recommend the Sitter's *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* book."

--- **Dorcas Rogers**

*Station Manager, KHCE TV-23 San Antonio, Texas
(Affiliate of Trinity Broadcasting Network)*

"We have known Bill and Maureen for over 13 years and at our very first meeting with them we saw and heard their heart for Debt Free Legacy. We have watched as their vision took shape and became their first edition and now their second edition. We are in complete agreement that to advance the Kingdom people must be debt free and know God's Word concerning finances. We have seen people set free from debt bondage through their ministry and wholeheartedly recommend it to everyone and every church."

--- **Steve & Karen Elliott**

*Steve is a successful Financial Executive
Member Board of Directors www.debtfreelegacy.com*

"Bill and Maureen Sitter have prepared a thoughtful, Scriptural, and thoroughly practical book entitled *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus*. Hundreds of people have already read and applied the principles. Their testimonies are the best possible endorsement of this material.

I would add this promise: if you examine the main points and prayerfully apply them, your finances will be blessed and you will experience freedom from oppression, confusion, and debt. Beyond that, their 7-week focus groups offer a hands-on opportunity to move from theory to life-giving experiences. It's more than a book and a follow-up class. It actually is an invitation to a life of financial freedom."

--- **Pastor Louie Kaupp**

Summit Christian Center, San Antonio, Texas

"As Pastor, I have personally taken advantage of the Financial Freedom course along with my Catholic Congregation these past few years. It has proven to be a great blessing both to the participants and the congregation. Teaching about stewardship and tithing is sometimes difficult but the format makes it practical and easier for the congregation to comprehend and practice."

--- **Father Enda McKenna**

Pastor St. Mary's Catholic Church, Fredericksburg, Texas

"My wife Laurie and I would love to personally thank you both for a successful Financial Freedom course. We would first like to express our gratitude for your vision of financial freedom from debt bondage that you both have taken and shared with so many. Your close relationship with the Father sprang forth a vision that is now multiplying in fruition. Thank you for our focus group leaders and leaders in training who taught by example. Seeing them already living debt free, allowed us both to see this life was possible. We enjoyed their breakthroughs and their determination to see us succeed. It means the world when people are behind you, praying for you, and never letting you give-in or give-up.

Sometimes our debt is created by our own inability to change what is keeping us from financial freedom. Our changes have brought forth a great increase. We are proud to announce that we have already dropped five of our outstanding debts and are working on the last few, before we begin saving for a new home and debt free future. I started a new full-time job, and we have begun saving for our future family legacy. Our numbers have moved from a negative to a positive in just over two months. We have so much to be thankful for. We eliminated strongholds by beginning to biblically tithe on our gross income. We also began giving freewill offerings and alms. After a year and a half of unemployment, my wife and I are beginning to see increase, due first of all to God's grace, and also to the 7-week financial freedom steps, and the fantastic leadership of our focus group.

We wholeheartedly recommend *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* as we wish couples the joy we shared as we tore down strongholds and began the road to financial freedom. A million thanks."

--- **Reverend Jason Cobb and Mrs. Laurie Cobb**

FINANCIAL FREEDOM IN 7 WEEKS PLUS

Legacy Edition

A Bible-Based Course for Financial Breakthrough

By Bill & Maureen Sitter

Published By Bill & Maureen Sitter

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Scripture quotations are from several versions of the Bible, and are designated with appropriate abbreviations.

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HOW GOD LED THE AUTHORS INTO THE MINISTRY

Bill and Maureen Sitter have been married for over forty years. As one flesh, they have shared a strong desire to help people become debt free. This 7-week course *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* is the outgrowth of several years of training, counseling, and mentoring adults.

The focus of their efforts has always been to show others that the Bible provides clear instructions that will ensure true financial freedom.

The course clearly acknowledges that God wants His people to prosper (3 John:2), while the devil only desires to kill, steal, and destroy (John 10:10). Based on these two key truths, the course provides Christians with God-given instructions on how to use God's weapons in order to attack and defeat the devil. Prayer, praise, spiritual warfare, and a biblical *Flexible Spending Plan* are key ingredients in every chapter.

User-friendly forms and examples are clearly woven throughout the course in order to equip all course graduates with the practical financial tools needed to develop a *Flexible Family Spending Plan* and a personal cash flow control system.

Back to our authors. Maureen and Bill met at Western Maryland College (now McDaniel College) where they received their undergraduate degrees. They have two children, Chris and Cassidy. Bill served in the US Army Infantry and achieved the rank of Captain. He went on to build a successful business career in the U.S., Europe, and the Middle East. In addition, he has served as President, Chief Operating Officer, and General Manager of companies in the Midwest and in Texas. At the age of 50, Bill was the honor graduate of his MBA class at Our Lady of the Lake University, in San Antonio, Texas. Since 1990, Bill has owned a successful business, Jordan-Sitter Associates (www.jordansitter.com). The vision statement expresses the firm's commitment to honoring Jesus Christ and to godly stewardship principles.

In the past several years, Bill and Maureen have had the privilege of conducting a number of small *Financial Freedom Focus Groups* using the material presented in this book. They have also trained group leaders in various churches and have provided oversight to groups in the U.S. and overseas. The Sitters are no strangers to Christian radio and local TV and have presented many "Building a Financial Legacy" seminars.

Because the Word of God is absolute and true, those who have sincerely and genuinely applied the material in the book have achieved success. (See the financial breakthroughs and testimonies from recent students in the front of this book.)

For several years, the Sitters have encountered people who are desperate for godly practical financial instruction. Demand from the U.S. and other countries like Fiji, left Bill and Maureen with no option but to publish the material.

Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus serves as a workbook (manual) for the Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus course. It may be used by individuals on their own, but it is ideally presented in small *focus groups*.

PREFACE

Ministry Vision and Survey Results

NOTES TO THE READER

If you or your family are feeling the bondage of heavy debt, and if you have a desire to be financially free God's way, then we believe this book and the 7-week focus group study will be a blessing. We have witnessed lives being changed as the light of hope and truth from God's Word is applied. Your life can be changed too. The book equips you with user-friendly practical forms and simple methods that require only a pencil, a basic calculator, and a commitment to change.

DISCLAIMER

There are not enough pages in one book, or enough time in a 7-week small group course, to include everything about personal finances or even scratch the surface regarding business financial management issues. This book and the 7-week course are not intended to provide any specific accounting or legal advice regarding investments, tax regulations, insurance, or otherwise. As you advance on the exciting road to financial freedom, we encourage you to seek wise council regarding specific financial transactions and to pray for guidance from God's Holy Spirit.

Focus group leaders are instructed not to allow any group members to engage in sales activities or provide specific investment or other financial advice. This course is designed to highlight what God's Word says about financial matters and to provide practical techniques for the development of a total family financial freedom plan. Once these basic principles are understood, and when a positive monthly cash flow is achieved, then (and only then) can an individual, or couple, be ready to pursue specific financial opportunities.

VERSIONS OF THE BIBLE

This workbook draws upon several versions or translations of the Holy Bible. Readers are encouraged to use their favorite translation and to dig deeply into related Scriptures for discernment.

- AMP – Amplified Bible
- LB – Living Bible
- KJV – King James Version
- NAS – New American Standard Version
- NIV – New International Version
- NKJV – New King James Version
- RSV – Revised Standard Version

WWW.DEBTFREELEGACY.COM - THE MINISTRY

www.debtfreelegacy.com is now the official corporate name of this not for profit ministry. The workbook, *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* was first published in 2002 and is now provided in this Legacy Edition. Now, with the support and guidance of an excellent board of directors, the ministry is committed to the following mission and vision statement.

OUR MISSION

We believe that true financial freedom means having all the resources needed—skills, time, and money—to accomplish all that God has called His people (us) to do on this earth. Our mission is to provide user-friendly and relevant Bible-based financial training and material to help men and women, couples and singles achieve this goal.

OUR VISION

This ministry purposes to provide godly, Bible-based financial training and material for training everywhere, in every language - starting in English, then in Spanish, and then wherever God leads.

WHAT'S UNIQUE ABOUT WWW.DEBTFREELEGACY.COM?

There are many financial training programs out there, and we have no interest in reinventing or reproducing someone else's programs. So, let's examine the core principles of *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus*.

- We provide a clear Bible-based workbook with many Scriptures for reinforcement.
- Biblical giving is one of the keys to financial freedom. Our *Biblical Giving Plan* includes tithes, freewill offerings, and alms for the poor.
- Spiritual warfare is one of the weekly foundations. We believe that the devil's job description in John 10:10 is valid and we teach principles and tactics to defeat him and break curses and strongholds.
- User-friendly forms are part of each of the 7 weekly lessons and homework. Because many readers have no prior understanding of basic financial principles, easy to understand (before and after) examples are provided.
- Freedom from debt is one of the goals so people can move deeper into real financial freedom.
- Goal setting exercises are included.
- The program is all included in one workbook, making it easy for leaders and for churches and ministries to adopt and use this 7-week small group course.
- Reading the exciting testimonies, survey results, and endorsements validates the fact that this material really works. We repeatedly see marriages restored, debt bondage broken, tithing and giving dramatically increasing, hope restored, salvations, and incredible spiritual warfare breakthroughs.

SURVEY RESULTS

In 2005, the ministry conducted an anonymous survey of students completing the *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* focus groups. The results speak volumes.

- ❖ 100% are now committed tithers.
- ❖ 92% now give freewill offerings beyond the 10% first fruits tithe.
- ❖ 100% report that this program has produced positive life-changing results.

OUR CHALLENGE

Based on the above facts, what can we do together to spread this program to churches, other ministries, states, and nations? The need is huge and we need prayers, resources, ideas, and action plans. We ask each of you to prayerfully consider being part of this dynamic worldwide ministry by contacting us. It will be an exciting adventure to live and lead others toward a legacy of financial freedom.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Mike and Marilyn Phillipps head a powerful worldwide ministry now called 2=1 International (www.marriage.org) which has wonderfully impacted our marriage of 46 years. A few years ago, Mike and I (Bill) were engaged in a long conversation in which I confidentially shared our goal for giving a very large amount of money to God's work during our lifetime. The amount seemed big to me, but Michael did not flinch. He remarked that it was a good goal, but he could see us doing something that would lead many others to true financial freedom so that they could cumulatively give a hundred, a thousand, or even more times the figure I had mentioned.

Maureen and I would like to express our thanks for the Married for Life 14-week course (Now 2=1 International), the principles we learned, and the constant encouragement we received to continue our teaching and training of others to be financially free. Additionally, we found the small weekly group format to be very effective. We encourage our *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* focus group leaders to incorporate the leaders-in-training (LIT) concept. The "Focus Group Leaders' Instructions" (Chapter 10) recommends several meeting guidelines which are patterned after the Married for Life protocol.

Through Married for Life, we met many wonderful leaders. Dr. Clyde and Kathy Vollmers have been faithful friends and a constant encouragement to this project. We hope to collaborate with them on future projects.

Rick Faulk, Ph.D., has been a key contributor (we also met via Married for Life). We are forever indebted to him. Thanks Rick for allowing us to edit and utilize the material regarding breaking curses, blockages, and strongholds (Chapter 9).

Ron and Sherry Torbert have blessed us with powerful teaching on judgments and how to break their power (also in Chapter 9).

We would like to thank our church, Summit Christian Center of San Antonio, for providing the avenue we so greatly needed in our teaching and training of hundreds of students and many small group leaders. We would also like to express our thanks personally to Pastors Rick and Cindy Godwin and to many of the senior staff for supporting this ministry. We would also like to thank our dear friend Alan Vincent who provided encouragement, suggestions for content, and advice at an important phase of this project.

Dr. Wayne Gordon is a good friend, Church Elder, and a member of our ministry board of directors. It was his initiation of a Kingdom Finance Class that jump-started our desire to teach and train people to live debt free. The seminar was based on Ron Blue's excellent Master Your Money Workbook. We encourage you to search for a copy and utilize it as a reference.

We would also like to express our deep appreciation to the many volunteer leaders that have used this material to lead focus groups in their homes. Not only have they been a blessing to the individuals who have completed the focus groups, but they have also helped us refine the material and the forms in our ongoing quest in creating the ultimate, user-friendly, financial book and course.

WWW.DEBTFREELEGACY.COM is now the official name of this non-profit corporation, as well as our web address. We are also blessed and highly favored to have a dedicated volunteer board of directors on whom we lean for godly wisdom.

We also pay tribute to the scores of authors and teachers who have influenced our lives, and to the individuals who ignited the initial spark that led to this book and course. (In the reference section, Chapter 11, we name just a few of the many excellent sources of information.) To the following, thanks and may God richly bless you in your efforts: Billy Graham; Randy Alcorn;

Dr. Mike Murdock; Larry Burkett (now deceased) and Crown Ministries; Ron Blue; Kenneth Copeland Ministries; Mary Hunt; T.D. Jakes, Sr.; Marilyn Hickey Ministries; and Terry Savage. Additionally, there are many excellent authors who provide practical financial advice from a secular perspective. We find their books helpful, especially when filtered through the Word of God. Robert Kiyosaki, Dave Ramsey, and David Bach are a few such authors.

Julie Larson has been a blessing by providing excellent editorial support, as has our dear friend Joyce L. Shoemaker who produced the cover and all graphics. Thanks to Glen Becker, one of our learned focus group leaders, for his content input. And thanks to Lisa Duke and Dr. Gail Taylor for special help on electronic versions of the forms, which we plan to post on our website.

Finally, a special thanks to our family and our associates at Jordan-Sitter Associates. Thank you for your support and for understanding how very important this project is to us and to others.

INTRODUCTION & COURSE OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

We are excited for you and your family as you embark on the road to debt-free living and as you seek God's way to true financial freedom.

This book can be used as a personal study guide if you have self-discipline and commit to faithfully completing the seven weekly homework assignments. However, we strongly recommend that the material be used in a small *focus group* setting with seven consecutive weekly sessions of 2 - 2½ hours each. Ideally, these groups are led by trained leaders with leaders-in-training (LITs) serving as assistants.

Chapter 10 provides several guidelines for effective leadership. We encourage local churches and ministries to implement this course with their members. The church covering provides proper headship authority, accountability, and presents an opportunity for the church to train and authorize small group leaders. We further recommend that the church designate a Financial Freedom Coordinator who will receive weekly reports and periodically visit groups, in order to monitor teaching effectiveness, to provide a measure of financial leadership accountability, and to encourage all participants and the group leadership teams.

COURSE OVERVIEW



LEADERS' NOTE — This overview material is covered in more detail in Chapter 1.

THERE WILL BE SEVEN WEEKLY SMALL FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS with the leadership of dedicated and caring volunteer leaders and assistant leaders. Ideally, the leaders should be trained and covered by (and accountable to) a church or ministry.

PRAISE, PRAYER, & SPIRITUAL WARFARE will be taught and employed in each session. The intimacy of a small group provides prayer support and comfort in a secure environment. A home setting is ideal but another private meeting place is acceptable.

WEEKLY HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS are designed to lead group members, step by step, in understanding what God means by prosperity and how to achieve true financial freedom. Practical exercises are shared weekly (during homework sharing time), but no one has to share confidential specifics with the group. You will especially enjoy the weekly BREAKTHROUGH sharing time because God always does amazing things.

A SERIES OF USER-FRIENDLY FORMS are provided. There are easy to understand examples of how Bob and Mary Jones "did it wrong" and eventually "got it right." These examples are great tools to help you complete your own forms each week.

A PRIVATE ACCOUNTABILITY SESSION is held with the leadership team about 7 to 21 days after Week 7. (This is when each student or couple meets privately with the leaders for a full review.) At this time, the leaders hold the student/couple accountable for completing all forms, which are individually reviewed and discussed. The accountability session lasts approximately

90 minutes and is strictly confidential. Successful completion of the accountability session is a course graduation requirement.

APPROXIMATELY 200 SCRIPTURE REFERENCES ARE CITED in this book using several different translations of the Bible. Dig deep into God's precious Word and seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

THERE IS A HUGE NEED FOR FOCUS GROUP LEADERS and those who feel called to this role will be encouraged to step forward for future training.

A LEGACY OF FINANCIAL FREEDOM IS THE GOAL. We believe that God is a generational God and He expects us to pass on a legacy of true financial freedom to our family and many others in the years to come.

WWW.DEBTFREELEGACY.COM is available to provide a host of helpful and encouraging information: testimonies and endorsements, current events and upcoming seminars, powerful articles, and additional tools that will help others achieve true financial freedom and pass on that legacy.

“PLUS” DEFINED

According to the World Book Dictionary “plus” is defined as: “added to, more than, and in addition to.” So what does “plus” mean in our *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* course? **There are seven “pluses” involved in this course, especially for those who participate in a 7-week focus group.** We pray you will fully employ the following seven “pluses” (or tools) to achieve all of God’s blessings.

1. **God’s Word** provides the foundation for this program. The deeper you dig into Scripture, the bigger your “plus” will be. And, the closer you will be to living a victorious life for Christ.
2. **Prayer** is a part of every focus group (opening and closing) and should be integrated into the start of every homework session. Married couples learn the incredible power of prayer in agreement. Singles are advised to seek a godly prayer partner.
3. **Praise and Worship** is critical to the course. Even though time is short for each weekly session, every focus group opens with praise and worship that sets the tone and invites the Holy Spirit to lead us.
4. **Spiritual Warfare** is taught and is used in every session. You will learn that the devil is the enemy and his mission is to kill, steal, and destroy. You will learn how to fight and defeat the devil in the power of Jesus’ name. This type of warfare should be employed in every financial planning and homework session. Spiritual warfare will set in place a positive life-changing pattern!
5. **Pastoral and Group Covering** is strongly encouraged. It is recommended that this material be taught in a 7-week focus group format with the blessing and covering of a local church or ministry. This establishes order and provides covering by a spiritual authority. Additionally, it is vitally important that the focus group leaders and leaders-in-training form a support and prayer covering team. The leadership team also encourages the entire focus group to cover each other in prayer.
6. **Accountability** is built into the course by requiring all focus group members to report/share during weekly homework sharing time. In order to graduate, each group member must

also successfully complete a follow-up session with the leadership team, (approximately 7 to 21 days after Week 7).

7. **Effort and Discipline.** Ultimately, you will receive results in proportion to the effort and discipline you apply to this course. We know that a legacy of true financial freedom is worth your very best. So, we encourage you to give this book and course all your effort. It is worth it!

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

We strongly recommend that you consistently practice spiritual warfare as you proceed through this workbook. To aid you in this, Chapter 9: Breaking Curses, Blockages, Strongholds, & Judgments has been divided into 7 sections – one for each week of the 7-week course. The practical application exercises are a vital part of each week's homework assignment. If you are using the workbook on your own, we still recommend doing the corresponding spiritual warfare section with each of the first seven chapters. For many people, Chapter 9 contains the instructions needed to finally achieve true freedom; not only financial freedom, but true freedom to live, breathe, work, play, love and be loved as our Lord and Savior intended.

For some readers spiritual warfare may seem a bit "far out" or spooky, but we believe that one of the key ingredients of this course is the instruction from God's Word on prayer; spiritual warfare; and breaking curses, blockages, strongholds, and judgments. Before you skip past these important pages, please ask the Holy Spirit to show you how to grasp and apply this information. We encourage you to dig deep into the powerful Scripture references then pray and meditate over areas of special need.

WHY START SPIRITUAL WARFARE NOW?

Our experience has shown that most individuals really need to put this powerful teaching to work as soon as possible. After all, if the devil has been standing on your neck, don't you want to kick him off? And right now!

We encourage you to dive into the practical application exercises each week and begin making spiritual warfare a permanent life pattern.

Before you start these exercises each week:

- Pray.
- Do Spiritual Warfare. Bind the enemy from interfering, hiding truth, and perpetuating lies. Loose the blessing of financial freedom. Claim the mind of Christ and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal strongholds, blockages, judgments and any lies that you have believed. Declare that you are a new creation and that ALL THINGS ARE MADE NEW!
- If married, work as a One Flesh Team. Singles, consider a strong and trusted prayer partner.
- Consider taking communion after repenting of any unconfessed sins.

Congratulations

You just embarked on God's path to
true financial freedom.
We wish you Godspeed.

— Bill and Maureen Sitter



CHAPTER 1

(WEEK 1)



**"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health,
even as thy soul prospereth."**
(3 John 2 KJV)

Foundation Principles For Finance

CHAPTER 1 (WEEK 1)

FOUNDATION PRINCIPLES FOR FINANCE

Welcome to Chapter 1 and Week 1 of the *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* course. By arriving at this point, you have taken a gigantic step towards financial freedom. Congratulations!

We have prepared this book primarily as a guide or workbook for a 7-week focus group study. If you do not have access to a group, you still have a right to expect success if you are diligent in applying this Bible-based material.

If you are not in a focus group, please disregard the Leaders' Notes throughout this book. These notes are specific instructions for those leading small groups.



LEADERS' NOTE — Before proceeding introduce the Focus Group Leaders and Leaders in Training. Warmly welcome the participants to the group. They've made a big step by getting this far.

I. **WHY WILL THIS COURSE WORK FOR YOU?**

You may have tried other financial courses without lasting results. If you commit to this *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* course, you will reap good fruit because:

- ◆ **EXCITEMENT, HOPE, & BREAKTHROUGH** are the key thoughts for the entire course. By being here you are taking a huge step toward building the godly legacy spoken of in Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" (NIV). Jeremiah wrote this in a time of disaster. No matter how bad your finances are, God plans to give you a hope and a future.
- ◆ **GOD'S WORD** provides clear instructions for us concerning finances. His Word will not return void if we speak, believe, and act on it.
- ◆ **PRAYER & SPIRITUAL WARFARE** are absolutely vital elements of this course and set the pattern for future financial planning and action steps. As strongholds are broken and you pray for wisdom and courage to change, the Holy Spirit will guide you to freedom.



LEADERS' NOTE — We recommend that you select an appropriate (not too long) praise song to sing at the beginning of each session. Create a handout with the lyrics (in large type) for each participant. Have the music ready and play it fairly loud. Exhort all to participate.



After the song, lead the group directly into prayer and then spiritual warfare. **Follow this pattern at each weekly session.**

II. SUCCESS ESSENTIALS

To receive God's blessing in your finances, it is essential that you open each session with:

- ◆ **A SONG OF PRAISE** as instructed in Psalm 100:4: "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him and bless His name" (KJV).
- ◆ **PRAYER** (*with group joining hands*) — Pray for **God's blessing** and the **leading of His Holy Spirit**.
- ◆ **SPIRITUAL WARFARE** — The devil uses "money problems" to destroy marriages. In fact, financial pressure is the #1 cause of divorce and marital stress. Because spiritual warfare is so important to financial breakthrough, we strongly recommend that you do the spiritual warfare portion of your homework first each week. God has given believers clear authority to defeat our enemy the devil. "And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven" (Matthew 16:19, NKJV). Therefore, right now, in Jesus' mighty name, bind Satan and his demons from hindering this course. Proclaim victory! Keep up your warfare; make it a lifestyle!



LEADERS' NOTE — At this point, please ask all participants to introduce themselves. Take only one to two minutes per individual or couple. As part of their introduction, participants should share what they expect to accomplish as a result of this course.

III. WHERE ARE WE HEADED IN THIS 7-WEEK COURSE?

- ◆ **FINANCIAL FREEDOM GOD'S WAY** is the ultimate aim.
- ◆ **A COMPLETE FAMILY SPENDING PLAN** concept is incorporated in this course. It emphasizes: 1) goal setting, 2) biblical giving, 3) debt elimination, 4) living expense projections, 5) monthly cash flow, and 6) cash control techniques. This **Flexible Spending Plan** approach puts you in control and is far superior to a budget plan imposed on you by others.
- ◆ **A GODLY LEGACY** is perhaps the most exciting aspect of this course. Imagine being able to model, teach, and pass on a legacy of true financial freedom to future generations. The thought of changing your world should provide more than enough motivation for you to diligently complete every lesson, homework assignment, and your own *Flexible Spending Plan* forms.

3 John 2: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth" (KJV). **God wants us and future generations to prosper.**

IV. WEEKLY MEETING GUIDELINES



LEADERS' NOTE — Now is a good time to highlight the protocol for your weekly meetings. Include any special house rules such as parking areas etc.

We encourage you to write a letter to each participant at least two weeks prior to Week 1 of your group to confirm date, time, directions, address, phone number, email contacts, and any special instructions.

- ◆ **STEWARSHIP** is a critical key to this course. Time is short for each session, so all group members must strive to be excellent stewards of their time and talents. If you do not have a clear understanding of the times, dates, directions, how to obtain a *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* Workbook, the weekly offering, or other details concerning this course, please ask your leaders. Groups should start on time and never exceed the maximum allotted time of 2-2½ hours.
- ◆ **CONFIDENTIALITY** is essential. You should only disclose what you desire to share. Group members should never discuss each other's situations outside of the sessions.
- ◆ **PRAYER SUPPORT** is absolutely vital. Please pray for each group member and for your leadership team. Your leaders will be praying for you.
- ◆ **MINIMIZE DISTRACTIONS** by turning off cell phones, pagers, and beepers. Also, please note that childcare is normally not provided. Please do not bring children (including infants), visitors, or guests to the meetings. 100% focus is essential.
- ◆ **WEEKLY OFFERING.** We strongly encourage the group's church or ministry covering to authorize a weekly offering. These offerings provide an excellent opportunity to develop good habits of Biblical giving. We suggest the offering be in the form of "sowing alms" as taught in Chapter 2. Proverbs 19:17 says, "He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord, and He will pay back what he has given" (NKJV). Many focus groups have had great success with alms being designated for the benevolence fund of the sponsoring church. We suggest using checks for offerings so there is no cash to handle. To provide accountability for handling money, a weekly report should be signed by one of the leaders and one of the LITs. (A sample form can be found in Chapter 10.)
- ◆ **FULL 7-WEEK COMMITMENT.** Normally, no make-up sessions are planned. This course compresses a great deal of information into seven weeks and volunteer leaders' lead busy lives. We are counting on your complete commitment and are confident that God will honor your faithfulness. Make this course a priority!
- ◆ **FOLLOW-UP ACCOUNTABILITY SESSION ONE TO THREE WEEKS AFTER COURSE COMPLETION.** To help make sure you understand and begin to implement financial freedom principles, your leaders will meet with you for a private 90-minute "follow-up" session 7 to 21 days after the completion of the course. **We recommend that leaders schedule ALL accountability sessions during the Week 7 focus group meeting.** This meeting will give you a measure of accountability as you press on towards financial freedom. (See Chapter 8 for details.)
- ◆ **HOMEWORK.** There will be homework for each week. Married couples must do homework together. The devil will try hard to put up blockages, so plan a time early in the week and keep up your prayers and spiritual warfare. This is essential!

- ◆ **BREAKTHROUGHS.** You will have breakthroughs! (Examples include unexpected gifts, coming to class, paying bills on time, completing your homework, promotions, debt forgiveness, and working together as a one flesh couple.) Look for them each week and write them down to share during homework sharing time.
- ◆ **WHAT SHOULD YOU BRING TO EACH FOCUS GROUP?** Please bring: 1) your *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* book, 2) a Bible, 3) pencils and pens, 4) highlighters, 5) a small cordless calculator, and 6) your completed forms and homework. Also, **remember your checkbook for the offering!**
- ◆ **ORDER OF MEETINGS.** This course consists of seven weekly focus group meetings, averaging 2-2½ hours per session. There will be one short break for beverages only. Group leaders are responsible to provide a weekly meeting/attendance report and a report of weekly offerings to the church or ministry coordinator. (Leaders see Chapter 10.)

RECOMMENDED SCHEDULE of activities for each weekly focus group:

1. **Praise God!** Open promptly at the scheduled time with one hope-filled praise and worship song. Leaders will select the song and provide typed lyrics to each group member each week.
2. **Prayer**
3. **Spiritual Warfare**
4. **Announcements**
5. **Homework Sharing** — Led by leaders or LITs (normally by the part of the leadership team that is not teaching the week's lesson). Limit sharing to two minutes per individual or four minutes per couple. If married, both spouses should comment. No preaching! No criticism! Emphasize what God did. Be ready to report on your breakthroughs.
6. **Offering** — Various group members may be asked to pray earnestly over the offering. This offering time is vital as giving opens new doors. PLEASE do not allow offering time to become a casual pre-break activity.
7. **Break** — 10 to 15 minutes maximum. We suggest a restroom and beverages only break.
8. **Lesson** — Taught by group leaders or leaders in training (LITs). No interruptions! Your leaders will answer questions after the teaching. (Please limit questions to clarification of the lesson.) Avoid outside material; stick to the workbook.
9. **Preview Homework**
10. **Prayer and Dismissal** — by Leaders
11. **Special Prayer** — If you would like special prayer, you may meet briefly with your leaders after the session. However, please be respectful of your leaders' time. They have post session reports to complete.

HELPFUL TIPS

COPY BLANK FORMS (located in Chapter 15)



- Recommend 6 complete sets of forms.
- Keep original forms for future use.
- Use highlighters and take lots of notes.

V. FINANCIAL BATTLE SPIRITUAL PREREQUISITES

You may have already experienced Salvation, Baptism, and Baptism of the Holy Spirit. You may also already practice powerful principles of covenant with God and, if married, with your one-flesh mate. However, since our desire is for you to have access to God's very best, we will briefly touch on these vital principles before going deeper into the course.



LEADERS' NOTE — If you are teaching these financial principles to those who have not experienced Salvation, Baptism, and/or Baptism of the Holy Spirit, we encourage you to include these essential steps so your students will be fully armed for victory. Leaders should be ready with Scripture and God-given boldness.

♦ **SALVATION**

1. Admit you are a sinner (Romans 3:23).
2. Repent and turn away from sin and submit to God (Luke 13:5 and Acts 3:19).
3. Believe and confess aloud that Jesus died for you and paid the price for your sins (John 3:16).
4. Ask God to save you (Romans 10:9-10 and Romans 10:13).
5. Ask Jesus Christ to be Lord of your life.
6. Give Him thanks, praise, and glory for your new birth.
7. Pray a prayer of salvation.



Leaders may wish to lead the following type of prayer for focus group members to receive or reaffirm their faith in Jesus Christ. (This should be done out-loud by everyone during this first week's session.)

Heavenly Father, I confess that I am a sinner and I repent of all my sins. I know that Jesus Christ died for my sins and was raised from the dead. Jesus is my only source of eternal life and I ask Him to come into my life and to be my Savior and the Lord of my life. Thank you God for now I am a new creature. I ask for your powerful grace to help me live for you. Amen!

♦ **BAPTISM**

1. God's Word gives a clear command for new believers to be baptized. Acts 2:38 says, "Then Peter said to them, Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (NKJV).
2. Leaders may wish to recommend baptism by the covering church or ministry. However, we believe that any true believer can baptize another.

- ♦ **BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND BEING FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT** In his book, The Holy Spirit, the Reverend Billy Graham provides a powerful teaching on how the Baptism of the Holy Spirit activates God's power in our lives. (See reference in Chapter 11 for details.) On page 67, the author reinforces the Scripture in Acts 2:38:

"I have become convinced that there is only one baptism with the Holy Spirit in the life of every believer, and that takes place at the moment of conversion. This baptism with the Holy Spirit was initiated at Pentecost, and all who come to know Jesus Christ as Savior share in that experience and are baptized with the Spirit the moment they are regenerated. In addition, they may be filled with the Holy Spirit; if not, they need to be."

1. God wants to give the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Luke 11:13)
2. Sin can block our receipt of this powerful gift. Repentance can unclog the blockage.
3. Billy Graham encourages believers to submit to God and walk in faith with the knowledge that we have the amazing power of the Holy Spirit living inside us.
4. Now that we are baptized with and filled with the Holy Spirit, we should confidently pursue God's will for our lives and expect to receive His promises as we obey His Word.

- ♦ **POWER OF PRAYER IN AGREEMENT**

Matthew 18:19 — "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them by my Father, which is in Heaven" (KJV).

Amos 3:3 — "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (KJV)

- ♦ **SPIRITUAL WARFARE**

Ephesians 6:12 — "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (KJV).

Put on the Whole Armor of God as described in Ephesians 6:10-18.

- ♦ **COVENANT**

1. Covenant with God means living with Jesus Christ, not apart from Him, and this covenant entitles believers to receive God's covenant blessings. (See or read aloud Ephesians 2:1-22 NAS.)
2. Covenant with your spouse must be restored or God will not hear your prayers. Malachi 2:13-14 says:

"Another thing you do: You flood the Lord's altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer pays attention to your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands. You ask, 'Why?' It is because the Lord is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant" (NIV).

3. Singles cannot be in an illegal covenant with someone who is not their spouse and expect the blessings of the Lord to flow through their lives (Psalm 1).

♦ **OBEDIENCE**

Remember God does forgive and He gives abundant grace. However, we must never fool ourselves because obedience to God is required if we expect to receive His covenant blessings.

Galatians 6:7 — “Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (KJV).



LEADERS' NOTE — Now is a great time to put the gift of giving into practice with the weekly offering. Please keep the following tips in mind:

- Choose a powerful giving Scripture and have someone read it aloud.
- Explain where the offering will go and how checks should be prepared.
- Have someone who is seriously prepared pray over the offering and ask God for a 100-fold (10,000%) increase, as described in Matthew 13:23.
- Collect the offering. (Count and record money after the group dismisses.)
- After the offering, take a 10 to 15 minute restroom and beverage break.
- Reconvene promptly! (Limit session to 2 ½ hours max.)

Remember, God loves a cheerful giver! (2 Corinthians 9:7)

VI. BIBLICAL BUILDING BLOCKS FOR FINANCIAL VICTORY

The following principles from God's Word will serve as invaluable building blocks as you continue to pursue financial victory. Time restraints allow only a brief mention and each principle merits further study.



For Singles Accountability is a must. Find an accountability partner you can trust: someone who is living the principles of the Bible. Give them permission to hold your feet to the fire.

♦ **HOPE** is exemplified in Jeremiah 29:11 where God promises a good plan for us. 3 John 2 clearly tells us that God means for His covenant people to prosper and be in health: “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth” (KJV).

♦ **CONVICTION IS GOOD BUT CONDEMNATION IS EVIL.** Romans 8:1 says, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (KJV).

For Married Couples – Protect your one flesh and war against division - Always support and edify each other.



Satan will try to heap shame and guilt on you to keep you from financial victory. Acknowledge that such condemnation is from the devil and refuse to accept any part of it, especially condemnation about past financial failures.

- ◆ **PROSPERITY.** As we saw in 3 John 2, God wants us to prosper. **In this course, prosperity is defined as having ample resources (money, time, talent and health) to accomplish everything God has called us to do.** In contrast, the world's view of prosperity is often "the one who dies with the most toys wins."
- ◆ **WE HAVE A MANDATE TO FUND GOD'S WORK (EVANGELISM).** God wants us, as members of the body of Christ (His church), to prosper so we can fund the Great Commission given to all believers in Matthew 28:19-20: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (NIV).
- ◆ **GOD OWNS EVERYTHING.** "Everything in the heavens and the earth..." (1 Chronicles 29:1, LB). "The cattle on a thousand hills," which means all of the cattle and everything else (Psalm 50:10, NIV).
- ◆ **THE POWER AND ABILITY TO GET WEALTH COME FROM GOD.** Deuteronomy 8:18 says, "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" (KJV). This leaves no place for pride or greed. Instead, we should humbly thank God for all we have or will ever have.
- ◆ **WE ARE REQUIRED TO BE FAITHFUL STEWARDS** of the resources God entrusted to us (money, skills, abilities, and time). Matthew 25, the parable of the talents, clearly demonstrates this principle. In it, we learn that the amount we are given is not what counts. Instead, our faithfulness with the resources entrusted to us is the key. We encourage you to read this parable out loud and reflect on what you should do, with His grace, in order to hear the wonderful words of Jesus Christ: "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, enter into the joy of thy Lord" (Matthew 25:23, KJV).
- ◆ **BRANCH MANAGER CONCEPT.** **God expects us to be excellent stewards of the "three Ts": our time, our God-given talent, and our treasure.** Just as a bank branch manager must give account to the bank president, we are accountable to God for our stewardship. Good stewardship requires us to: 1) give cheerfully of our tithes, offerings, and alms; 2) save; and 3) faithfully provide for our families. These subjects will be covered in depth in the following weeks. For immediate references, you can study Malachi 3:8-12, Matthew 23:23, and 2 Corinthians 9:6-11 (on giving); Proverbs 6:6-8 and Proverbs 21:20 (on saving); and 1 Timothy 5:8 (on providing for a family).
- ◆ **GOD INSTRUCTS HIS PEOPLE TO PLAN.** Planning is not presumption and we are foolish if we fail to plan. Proverbs 21:5 says: "The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty" (NIV). This course will teach you how to write clear and godly goals (Habakkuk 2:2). We see in Proverbs 29:18, "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (KJV).
- ◆ **WE MUST LEARN TO TRUST HIM WITH OUR (HIS) RESOURCES,** especially money. As we trust Him with our physical and our eternal lives, we must trust Him with our finances. Matthew 6:24 tells us: "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money" (NIV).

- ◆ **HONESTY IS ABSOLUTELY REQUIRED** in order to walk with God and to receive the blessings He wants to give us as covenant believers. If we cheat, steal, and lie, we act foolishly and have no right to expect to receive from God. In Matthew 5:23-24, Jesus tells us that “if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift” (RSV).

Earlier, we saw that “God is not mocked.” So we better not make Him angry by expecting answers to prayer while flaunting sin in His face.

EXAMPLE: Shortly after Bill (co-author of this course) got saved, God gently began to expose his past sins, as if peeling off layers of an onion. As Bill dealt with these past transgressions, it provided him with a good testimony of honesty, repentance, seeking and receiving forgiveness. It also provided him the opportunity to witness for Jesus. The key is, when God reveals your transgressions, repent and take action to admit and correct them. Then, move forward with His amazing grace.

- ◆ **THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S TRUTH WILL SET US FREE**, free from the bondage of debt, free from the curse of poverty, and free to prosper God's way. John 8:32 — “And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free” (NKJV).
- ◆ **A DEEP RESPECT FOR THE ALMIGHTY GOD** is often referred to as “fear of the Lord.” Deuteronomy 5:29: “Oh that they had such a heart in them, that they would fear Me, and keep all My commandments always, that it may be well with them and with their sons forever!” (NAS)
- ◆ **DEBT IS NOT SIN**, but God's Word says only bad things about debt. It is a sin not to repay debts. Those who pay their debts enjoy great peace and freedom. In Chapters 3 and 4, you will learn how to realize God's plan for debt-free living.
- ◆ **MONEY IS NOT THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL**, nor is it evil at all. Greed is evil and is based on the love of money. 1 Timothy 6:10: “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs” (NIV).

In Hebrews 13:5 we are told: “Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you’” (NIV).

- ◆ **IT'S OKAY TO NEED STUFF.** God made us that way! “For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them” (Matt. 6:32, NIV).
- ◆ **GOD DOES NOT NEED “OUR MONEY.”** What He longs for is a right heart attitude. If we have a right attitude towards God then we will have a right attitude towards money.



We must never try to use money to manipulate God into giving us what we want. He wants us to love Him deeply. So deeply that we would desire to learn His instructions and be fully obedient to His Word! (Over 1,000 Scriptures relate to financial instructions.)

- ◆ **ALL FINANCIAL DECISIONS ARE SPIRITUAL DECISIONS** if God is at the center of our hearts and at the center of all our planning. For these seven weeks, we will seek Him, find Him, and draw on His biblical wisdom.



VII. BREAKING FINANCIAL CURSES & STRONGHOLDS

Many born-again, spirit-filled believers are struggling in the area of finances and do not know why. They may even be tithing, giving offerings, and sowing alms, and still not achieving anything that resembles godly prosperity. There are many evil spiritual curses, hexes, and vexes that often attack in the area of finance. These could be keeping believers from victory. We will briefly discuss strongholds and negative life patterns. We will also learn that spiritual warfare is the key to victory.

- ◆ **CURSES** may be brought on by negative words spoken about us by others, or even by ourselves. Some other sources of curses are:

1. Belief in false gods
2. Involvement in idolatry, witchcraft and the occult
3. Withholding tithes and freewill offerings
4. General sin, sexual sin, and marital unfaithfulness
5. Not honoring parents
6. Generational curses

- ◆ **OTHER FINANCIAL BLOCKAGES** result from:

7. Not being sensitive to (cherishing) our spouse
8. Not forgiving others or ourselves
9. Strongholds and negative life patterns

FIVE ESSENTIAL STEPS FOR BREAKING CURSES & STRONGHOLDS

1. Renounce involvement. We urge you to identify and name curses or strongholds and confess them to God (and if you are married, also confess them to your one-flesh mate). Lean on Jesus for strength. See John 14:6 where our Lord tells us, “I am the way, the truth and the life” (KJV).
2. Repent and confess your sin. 1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (NAS).
3. Ask Jesus to take back the ground you gave to the enemy, the devil. In Psalm 23:3, we see that: “He restoreth my soul” (KJV). GOD IS A GOD OF RESTORATION.
4. Bind the enemy in Jesus' name then loose God's blessings by faith in the power of His Word and in Jesus' name. Matthew 16:19: “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven” (NIV).

5. Now boldly proclaim that you are a new creation. Declare that 2 Corinthians 5:17 is true and that you are “a new creature: old things have passed away; behold all things are become new” (KJV).
6. Walk as a child of light, a child of God. Practice Romans 12:9-13, which exhorts us to display genuine (godly) love, and to hold fast to what is good. If we do fail then we need to dust ourselves off, repeat the process, and thank God for His abundant grace and mercy.



LEADERS' NOTE — Breaking curses and strongholds are vital parts of the journey to achieving true financial freedom. Take time to show students the material in Chapter 9 and encourage them to study it this week and every week. Part of each week's homework includes practical exercises from Chapter 9. Reinforce the idea that doing these spiritual warfare exercises is just as important to financial freedom as the rest of the homework. Make sure to go over this part of the homework each week before continuing on to the rest of the homework..

VIII. PREVIEW OF FORMS & EXAMPLES



LEADERS' NOTE — Now take about 10 minutes to briefly show the forms and examples that will be used during this course. This will help each person grasp where the “mechanics” of the *Flexible Spending Plan* are headed. Please follow the order indicated below.

Your goal should be to briefly orient the participants to the examples and forms. Take care not to go too deep. Provide assurance that this material will be gradually introduced in future sessions.

- ◆ **EXAMPLE #1 – Chapter 12:** The forms marked Example #1 feature a fictitious couple, Bob and Mary Jones. Example #1 is their situation prior to their completion of the *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* course. As you will learn in the next several weeks, Bob and Mary needed to make several changes.
- ◆ **EXAMPLE #2 – Chapter 13:** A quick look at Example #2 (one full year after course completion), shows what Bob and Mary were able to accomplish without an increase in income after applying God’s wisdom to their family’s financial plan. Both examples will prove helpful as you prepare your own forms.
- ◆ **CASH FLOW** – In Chapter 7 you will learn to use several cash flow techniques to help you keep track of God’s money. We have learned that students benefit greatly from using the CF1 form starting now. Please refer to Chapter 7 and see the CF1 example in Chapter 14. Keep it real simple, only using the 31 days to track expenses daily and monthly. Do not be concerned with the rest of CF1. Be sure to make copies of the blank CF1 form and please do not record your data in this workbook.
- ◆ **BLANK FORMS** – Each of you will learn how to use every form (that is why there are blank forms for you to copy and use in Chapter 15). You will start working on these forms as the weeks progress. For now, we just want you to have this brief overview. The forms are user-friendly and they will work if you use them correctly.

- ◆ **GOD DESIRES US TO DEVELOP RIGHT ATTITUDES ABOUT FINANCES.** This course will stress proper heart attitudes. As important as the mechanics are, please remember the key lies in our willingness to seek, learn, and apply God's wisdom to our own finances.



HELPFUL TIPS

To complete each of these forms in the coming weeks, you will need some financial records. Now is a great time to start organizing files and records. We also encourage you to pay by check, whenever possible, to create a record of your spending using the CASH FLOW CONTROL form (CF1) as explained in this week's homework section. Saving receipts will also be very beneficial.

IX. BASIC VALUES & GOAL SETTING

It has been stated that only 5% of adults have written goals, and those who do generally achieve much higher levels of success in life. We have also observed that many goals are not based on, or linked to, the core values that should be guiding goal-setters' lives. In this course, you will have two opportunities to establish goals. This first exercise, which will be part of your homework, starts by having you list your top five values. Then, you will establish goals which correspond to each core value. This approach came from a popular book *Smart Couples Finish Rich* by David Bach. At the end of this chapter, you will see a simple example of Bob and Mary Jones' first Basic Values and Goal Setting experience. Please observe the five top values they selected (A-E) and then examine the five corresponding goals and the action dates for each goal. It is essential that goals be written, measurable, and have specific action timetables.

After studying Bob and Mary's example, complete your own Basic Values and Goal Setting form, which is provided in Chapter 15. Be sure to make multiple copies of blank forms. DO NOT WRITE IN THIS BOOK.

X. WEEK 1 CONCLUSION

We have covered a great deal of biblical truths in this week's session. For some, this can be compared to drinking water from an open fire hydrant! For others, this may be a good review.

**We know you are dedicated to success, and we are counting
on you to do four things:**

1. Extra study coupled with prayer and spiritual warfare.
2. Completion of all of your homework each week.
3. Breakthroughs will come, small and large; record them weekly and enthusiastically share them during your homework sharing time.
4. Ask your leaders questions before or after class so the pace of the meeting can be maintained. Call them for help if you get stuck or confused.

PLEASE PRAYERFULLY DO YOUR HOMEWORK!



LEADERS' NOTE — Please acquaint group members with the Chapter One Homework and explain that there will be a brief time for homework sharing, including breakthroughs, every week by each group member.

Close the group in a 3-part prayer including:

- Thanksgiving
- Binding the devil and loosing blessings (Spiritual Warfare)
- Jabez Prayer - "*Jabez cried to the God of Israel, saying, Oh that You would bless me and enlarge my border, and that Your hand might be with me, and You would keep me from evil so it might not hurt me! And God granted his request.*" (1 Chronicles 4:10, AMP)

(Read the powerful book *The Prayer of Jabez* by Bruce Wilkinson, for excellent insight into being all God wants you to be.)

CHAPTER 1 HOMEWORK

FOUNDATION PRINCIPLES FOR FINANCE

1. **COMMIT TO SUCCESS.** Start by reading, signing, and dating the one-page form entitled *Commitment Statement*, which reinforces your promise to complete this 7-week program. There is real power in making a written commitment so please complete this form before continuing on to the rest of the homework.
2. **PRAAYERFULLY CONSIDER TAKING COMMUNION** to reinforce your commitment. Prior to communion, repent of any lingering sins (we recommend you read 1 Corinthians 11:23-30) and prepare yourself to remember Jesus' beautiful sacrifice. This will make any future financial sacrifices seem insignificant by comparison. Communion is a way to reinforce your covenant with God and with your spouse if you are married.

****Note:** The Commitment Statement form is on the page following the homework. Please do **not** skip this step.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE HOMEWORK:

Experience has taught us that spiritual warfare is such a key factor in setting people free financially that we have incorporated a section of Chapter 9 into each week's homework. We recommend doing the spiritual warfare homework before doing the rest of your homework. You may need to do some sections in Chapter 9 more than once in order to fully comprehend the material and truly be victorious in that area. Revisit each section as many times as necessary in order to break every stronghold.

This week's spiritual warfare section is on breaking curses, hexes, and vexes.

3. **READ THE INTRODUCTION** to Chapter 9.
4. **READ SPIRITUAL WARFARE SECTION #1.**
5. **DO PRACTICAL APPLICATION EXERCISE #1.** At the end of each Spiritual Warfare section, you will find Practical Application Exercises. These exercises are included as part of your homework. Please do not rush through them. Take time to prayerfully consider the teaching and do the exercises in a spirit of prayer and submission. The Holy Spirit will bring many things to your attention if you will give Him the opportunity to speak to you during these times.
6. **REVIEW THE LESSON.** This course is very compressed. In Week 1, we established several key biblical principles. We encourage you to review any principles that need clarification. Use your Bible (a concordance will help), and look up specific references. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal its true meaning. James 1:5 instructs us to ask God if we lack wisdom (understanding), and God will give it to us.
7. **PAY BY CHECK.** Soon you will be developing a complete *Flexible Spending Plan*. It is generally easier to construct spending history records if bills are paid by check. Consider using checks for all possible expenditures — at least for a few months. (This is not absolutely required, but good records are very important, so start now.) Also, begin saving receipts.
8. **MONTHLY CASH FLOW CONTROL FORM (CF1).** Keeping track – daily – of how you spend God's money is a vital step on the road to true financial freedom. The CF1 form is fully explained in Chapter 7 and there is a full-size example in Chapter 14. Starting with this week, and for the rest of the course, you are to record your daily expenditures in the appropriate living expense categories until Week 7. You do not have to use the boxes at

the top or bottom of the form. Just record the daily expenses and total the columns for daily and monthly total expenditures. Be diligent; you may need to carry a small pocket notebook. Couples need to record their combined spending for each category. Years of teaching this material has proven that this is an easy but vitally important habit to develop – especially in the early years of the journey to financial freedom.

9. **BREAKTHROUGHS.** Each weekly homework assignment will include a breakthrough form. You WILL have breakthroughs! You are expected to record all (small and large) breakthroughs and report them in next week's homework sharing time. All group members will celebrate your breakthroughs... so don't forget to give God the credit!
10. **LIST YOUR VALUES & SET GOALS.** In his popular book, *Smart Couples Finish Rich*, David Bach suggests that couples should start the goal-setting process by listing five key values and then developing goals and subsequent action steps with completion dates. This process works equally well for individuals. His book makes very good reading, but for now, we ask you to pray and list your top five values. Examples might be security, making a difference, spirituality, fun, health, power, family, independence, growth, adventure, friends, and creativity, etc. See Bob and Mary's example and use copies of the forms from Chapter 15.
11. **REJOICE!** Pat yourselves on the back. You have already taken a huge step in ensuring a godly financial legacy. This is a big step. Way to go!

COMMITMENT STATEMENT

Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus

Written commitments are powerful. So, we now encourage you to make a written, dated, and signed promise to faithfully complete this *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* course. Furthermore, we ask that you be accountable for the completion of your private accountability session with your focus group leaders, 7-21 days after Week 7. We are absolutely confident that faithful completion of this program will get you started on the path to true financial freedom. This plan is built upon God's own instructions, from His Holy Bible! You will be equipped to pass on a legacy of freedom from debt to your family, friends, and future generations.

You would not sign-up for sports lessons, cooking classes, or a university program, and then take on conflicting obligations. This 7-week program will consume 2 – 2½ hours of focus group time each week, plus some travel time and an average of two or more hours each week for homework. So, clear your schedule and commit to this life-changing 7-week program. You'll be glad you did.

Good news. Once you have mastered the *Flexible Spending Plan* concept, you can probably keep your financial management up to date by spending only 60 minutes a week on your records. Eventually, this process will become routine. Do not delay! Read, sign, and date the commitment form below.

Note to Married Couples –

You must both complete and sign this form to work as a one-flesh couple.



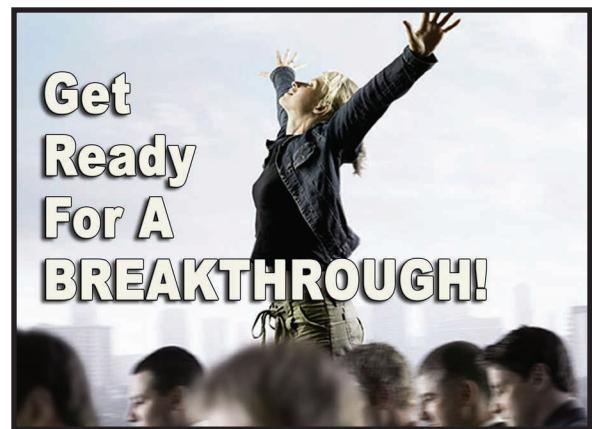
I (we) _____ & _____, really desire to seek God's wisdom regarding how to properly steward His resources: time, talent, and money. By promising to faithfully complete these lessons, homework assignments, and the post-course (private) review/accountability session, I (or we) commit to completing this course by investing effort, prayer, and spiritual warfare throughout this learning process.

Signed: _____ & _____

Date: _____

BREAKTHROUGHS!

FINANCIAL FREEDOM COURSE
RECORD YOUR WEEKLY TESTIMONIES



NAME: _____

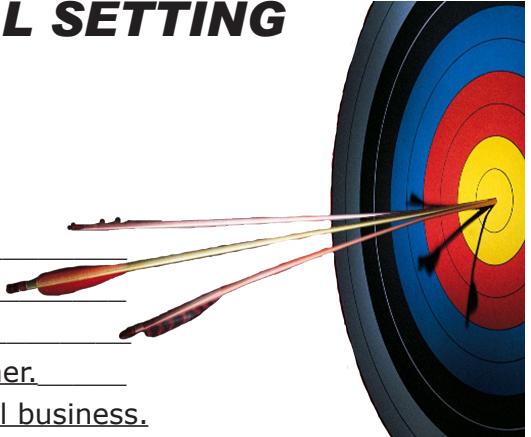
DATE: **MONEY, CAREER, GIFTS/INHERITANCE, & OTHER**

BASIC VALUES & GOAL SETTING

EXAMPLE

FIVE TOP VALUES (BOB & MARY JONES)

- A. Financial Peace – No debt pressure.
- B. Better health for our whole family.
- C. Spirituality – to develop a closer walk with God.
- D. Family – to find activities that draw us closer together.
- E. Financial Independence – to own our own successful business.



Bob and Mary listed their top five values (A-E) above. Now they are ready to list at least five goals they would like to achieve in the next one to five years. It is okay to dream — these are faith goals. Below, are the goals that Bob and Mary set for themselves. You will observe that they set a timetable for each goal. It is OKAY to have different timetables (dates) for each goal.

BOB AND MARY'S GOALS AS OF JUNE 30, 2007

GOAL A Get current on all debts (on past dues or late charges) and maintain only one credit card, for which we pay the bill in full each month. Explain our goals to our children and get their support.

by (date) June 30, 2008

GOAL B Join and use our local YMCA or Health and Fitness Club for our family.

by (date) September 2007 (3 months from now)

GOAL C Find a Christian, Bible believing Church that will minister to our whole family, join it, and get involved.

by (date) July 2007 (ASAP)

GOAL D We will meet as a family each month to agree on activities (sports, clubs, hobbies, and vacation plans) that we can afford and where we can support each other and have fun without spending plan overload.

by (date) December 2007 (or sooner)

GOAL E We will use the next two years to study and evaluate lawn & maintenance business possibilities. If the numbers make sense, we will start our business after getting wise council and after prayer.

by (date) June 30, 2009

Note: Be prepared to share 1 or 2 key values & related goals with next week's focus group during homework sharing.

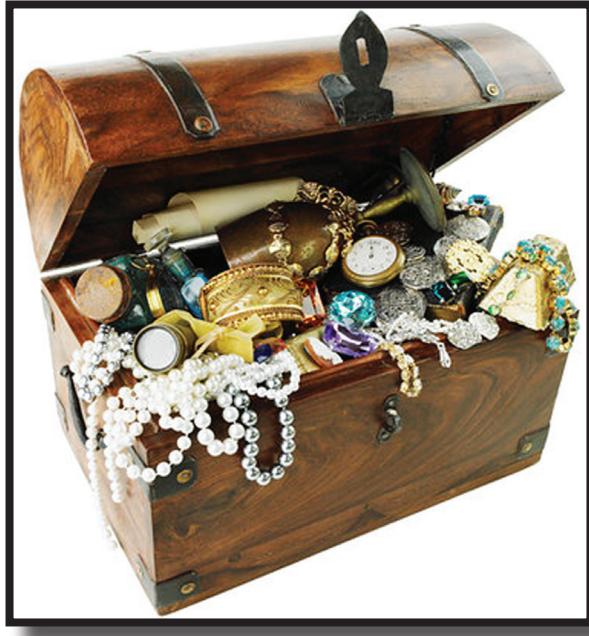
Congratulations!

**Once you have finished this week's homework,
you have completed one seventh of the course.**

WAY TO GO!

CHAPTER 2

(WEEK 2)



"Now this I say, he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully. Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed."

(2 Corinthians 9:6-8, NAS)

Biblical Giving



LEADERS' NOTES – WEEKLY PROTOCOL

- ❖ **Praise Song** – A great way to start!
Suggest typed lyrics and upbeat music.
Have the tape or CD ready so you can just hit play.
- ❖ **Prayer** – Led by a Leader or LIT.
Recommend group holding hands.
- ❖ **Spiritual Warfare** – in Jesus' mighty name!
(According to Luke 10:19)
- ❖ **Homework Sharing** – Normally led by LITs.
Led by leaders if LITs are teaching this week.
Time control and equal sharing are important.
- ❖ **Share Breakthroughs** – Celebrate!
Brief but builds hope. Can be combined with
homework sharing.
- ❖ **Offering Time** – Opportunity to Sow!
Have a focus group member pray first.
Put faith into action!
- ❖ **10 Minute Break** - Beverages & restroom.
- ❖ **Weekly Lesson** – Taught by both leaders and LITs.
- ❖ **Homework Preview**
- ❖ **Dismiss with Prayer and Spiritual Warfare**
- holding hands. Entire session should average 2
to 2 ½ Hours.
- ❖ **Leaders and LITs complete weekly report**

CHAPTER 2 (WEEK 2)

BIBLICAL GIVING

I. WHAT GOD'S WORD SAYS

As covenant-keeping Christians, we need to learn what God's Word says about resources, tithing, and giving beyond the tithe. Here are some basic principles from His Word that will help us to participate in His work here on earth.

- ◆ **GOD OWNS EVERYTHING** and He is our only source of resources.
 1. Psalm 50:10-11 – "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains, and the wild beasts of the field are mine" (KJV).
 2. 1 Corinthians 10:26 and Psalm 24:1 – "The earth is the Lord's and all it contains" (NAS).
 3. Deuteronomy 8:18 – "But remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms His covenant" (NIV).
- ◆ **THE TITHE IS TEN PERCENT OF OUR INCREASE** and is commanded (of believers) as a minimum to be consecrated to the Lord. Tithing is a key part of managing God's resources. It is to be the first ten percent of our income, or increase, which represents the first fruit of what God has given us. This first fruit honors God. Christians pay their tithes and cannot tithe more or less than ten percent. We will also examine giving freewill offerings and sowing alms.
 1. Believers who give God their tithe payment of ten percent have a right (a promise) to expect God to open heaven's windows, pour out blessings, and rebuke the devourer on their behalf.
 2. Malachi 3:8-12 is so powerful that we encourage you to read several Bible versions of it. The following is from the NAS translation under the heading "You have robbed God":

"Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing me! But you say, 'How have we robbed thee?' In tithes and offerings. 'You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you! Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this,' says the Lord of hosts, 'if I will not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows. Then I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it may not destroy the fruits of the ground; nor will your vine in the field cast its grapes,' says the Lord of hosts. 'And all the nations will call you blessed, for you shall be a delightful land,' says the Lord of hosts." (Malachi 3:8-12, NAS)

Malachi said this to returning exiles who were flat broke. They were trying and failing to rebuild their ruined country (see Nehemiah 1:3). It was in a time of distress and lack that God chose to stress tithing. The point is, we are never too poor to tithe.

1. When Abraham won the great victory (with God on his side), he immediately tithed ten percent of everything to Melchizedek, the High Priest of God:

"For This Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually. Now

consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils." (Hebrews 7:1-4, KJV)

2. When we consider that Abraham's tithing was prior to the laws of Moses we see that tithing does not depend on the law. Tithing is not a legalistic demand; it was part of Abraham's relationship with God.
3. Proverbs 3:5 tells us that if we acknowledge God, He shall direct our paths. In Proverbs 3:8-10, we see the blessings we can receive by this dependence on God: "This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones. Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine" (NIV).
4. In Malachi 3:10, God actually tells us to "test Him" or "prove Him" with our tithing. This is incredible — our Lord God instructs us to test Him by paying our tithes. This verse should absolutely convince us of His promise to deliver the blessings that tithing produces for God's followers.

JESUS COMMANDS BELIEVERS TO TITHE (NEW TESTAMENT)

1. Jesus reinforced the tithing principle in the New Testament, thus eliminating the notion that tithing was just an Old Testament concept or practice. Matthew 23:23 says, "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices — mint, dill, and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law — justice, mercy, and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former" (NIV).

Luke 11:42 provides another reference of Jesus reinforcing the ten percent tithe.

2. Jesus used agricultural explanations in His teachings because His audience was made up of farmers and shepherds. Today, most of us earn the majority of our income from jobs or businesses that are not directly related to agriculture. However, just as the farmer traded his hard work for "increase," we trade hours at work for our "increase." So, the concept of paying a ten percent tithe on our increase is the same. We pay our tithes in money, while the farmer used grain, fruits, or cattle. The bottom line is that God gives us our increase and the paying of tithes is a timeless requirement for all believers.

FAILING TO TITHE IS PLANNING TO FAIL

When God gives believers His promises, they are typically double edged. By paying our full ten percent tithes, we are in line for the promised blessings. Failure to be obedient puts us under a curse and opens us and our family to attacks from the devourer.

FUNDING THE SALVATION MESSAGE. It should be clear to the 21st century Christian that it takes large amounts of money to fund the salvation message to all the world via missionaries, evangelists, satellite TV or translated Bibles. You are obliged to pray about your freewill offerings so you can participate in such endeavors. Seek good soil and invest in spreading the gospel as part of your *Biblical Giving Plan*.

WE SHOULD GIVE FREEWILL OFFERINGS. Freewill Offerings are beyond our payment of the ten percent first fruits tithe. It is important to grasp this concept, so let us explore Scripture.

1. Matthew 28:18-20 says:

"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age'" (NIV).

Jesus' command to His first disciples was a clear command to all believers that comprise the body of Christ. As we give freewill offerings to evangelistic ministries who teach the gospel, we invest in the Great Commission. In his book, *The Laws of Prosperity*, Kenneth Copeland talks about Investing in the Gospel. He is referring to Christians funding the Great Commission.

2. In Mark 10:29-30, Jesus also promised His disciples that if they sacrificed for Him and for the spreading of the gospel, they would reap a hundredfold return in this present age and in the age to come.
3. In 1 Corinthians 9:14, the Apostle Paul tells believers that God intends for them to support those who preach the gospel. "Even so the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (KJV). In the Amplified version, the word "live" is translated "get their maintenance."
4. Romans 10:15 says that God wants us to send preachers to spread His gospel. Sending means paying the bills.

WE SHOULD SOW ALMS TO THE POOR. Alms, today is more commonly known as charity. It is defined as sowing monies to those who are in real need (the poor, widows, and orphans).

1. Proverbs 19:17 – "He who is gracious to a poor man lends to the Lord, and He will repay him for his good deed" (NAS).
2. 2 Corinthians 9:6 tells us about sowing generously (or sparingly) and reaping abundantly (or sparingly). In verses 8-15, we see that God promises rich blessings for those who distribute their gifts to the poor. By sowing alms, we put powerful words into action. These godly deeds touch the hearts of hurting people. As a product of our sowing, God also promises to multiply our seed and make us prosperous so we can sow more. What a blessing! He blesses us so we can faithfully bless His children, not just believers, but all in real need. All of 2 Corinthians 8 & 9 focuses on this important topic.
3. Luke 12:33-34: "Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves purses which do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near, nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (NAS).
4. Proverbs 22:9: "A generous man will himself be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor" (NIV).
5. God's church and God's people are also instructed to support widows and help the poor (1 Timothy 5:16).

WE ARE TO GIVE CHEERFULLY and He promises an excellent reward. Paying tithes, giving offerings, and sowing alms should all be times of excitement, joy, and thanksgiving for us.

WHERE SHOULD YOU SOW ALMS?

There are many places to sow alms. The benevolence fund at your church merits consideration and the Holy Spirit will show you others.

1. 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 – “But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.” (KJV).
2. In Matthew 6:1-2, God warns us to give our alms secretly (anonymously) because if we trumpet or boast about our giving before men, we will get no reward from God.

GOD CALLS US TO EXCEL IN THE GRACE OF GIVING.

In 2 Corinthians 8:7, we see that God actually provides grace for giving, and believers are called to excel in using this gift. “But just as you excel in everything — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in love for us — see that you also excel in this grace of giving” (NIV).

Our respected friend, Alan Vincent, has produced two excellent audio series that provide powerful, biblical, financial foundations, including teaching on “the grace of giving.” They are entitled *Money Talks and Prosperity*. See the reference section, Chapter 11, for instructions on how to obtain these via Outpouring Ministries.



II. MAINTAINING A GOOD ATTITUDE

How we handle paying our tithes, giving freewill offerings, and sowing alms clearly reflects the attitude of our heart. Here are some ways to help you develop and maintain a good heart attitude.

- ◆ **A GOOD ATTITUDE IS A GIFT OF GOD.** Believers have a perfect right to ask for this gift. Then God will lead you away from greed, selfishness, and disobedience.
- ◆ **DECIDE TO TRUST GOD.** We have to decide to faithfully trust God and not to put our faith in things or money or self. Because, as Luke says:

“He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. If therefore you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous mammon (money), who will entrust the true riches to you?... No servant can serve two masters... You cannot serve God and Mammon.” (Luke 16:10, 11, 13, NAS)

In their book *Wealth, Riches and Money*, Craig Hill and Earl Pitts explain that the spirit of mammon, or greed, is very real. This ungodly spirit must be fought by Christians who are in bondage to it.

- ◆ **UNDERSTAND THAT GOD DOES NOT NEED YOUR MONEY.** All money belongs to God, and it is His divine plan to use His covenant people as instruments to bless others. He wants us to serve as His conduit so that as He blesses us, we faithfully and cheerfully bless others.

- ◆ **GIVE YOUR BEST.** We need to seek God and show our obedience to Him by faithfully tithing, giving of our freewill offerings, and sowing alms. After all, it is absolutely impossible to outgive God! Luke 6:38 says, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (KJV). This is only one of the many reminders of sowing and reaping.
- ◆ **GIVE CHEERFULLY.** As we see in 2 Corinthians 9:6-11, the pattern is for us to be generous and cheerful givers. We cannot fake this because the Lord knows our heart. Verse 11 is a powerful promise: "You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion" (NIV).
- ◆ **PUT FAITH INTO ACTION.** Faith in the Bible's accuracy/truth is critical. Even more importantly, God wants us to put that faith into action. In James 2:14-17, we are instructed to put faith into action by providing food and clothing to our brothers and sisters that are in need. Kind words do not feed or clothe the needy of this world.



In Matthew 25:34-40, Jesus promises a "Kingdom" inheritance for those who feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, provide shelter to strangers, give clothes to the needy, and visit the sick and the imprisoned. Action is an essential key. It shows that our heart is seeking to please God by giving our time, resources, and money to God's people.

- ◆ **ASK GOD TO SEARCH YOUR HEART.** If you are willing to submit to God and really desire to be led by the Holy Spirit, you should pray this prayer from Psalm 139:23-24: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (NIV).
- ◆ **BE THANKFUL.** We need to be thankful and excited about the opportunity that God has given us to pay tithes, give offerings, and sow alms. We need to be thankful at having been blessed by God with resources and excited about what we expect God to do as He multiplies our seed.
- ◆ **BE JOYFUL.** There is no greater joy than to discover that you have been selected by God to provide the answer to someone else's prayer.

WATCH IT GROW!

Pray to God, water the seed with His Word and He will multiply your gifts. Using Scripture, ask the Lord to supernaturally bless the church, the needy, the evangelists who spread the gospel and the missions where you have sown in faith. Then, step back and see what God will do with seed that was sown in faith and in obedience — the seed that is represented by your tithes, freewill offerings, and alms.

Remember, He is the same God - yesterday, today, and forever - who fed the thousands with just a few fish and loaves of bread (Matthew 15:32-38).

III. WHERE DO OUR TITHES, OFFERINGS, AND ALMS GO?

- ◆ **TITHES GO TO THE LOCAL CHURCH.** Your ten percent tithe is paid (as a first fruits obligation to God) to the church where you are spiritually nourished. Malachi 3:10 says, "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." (KJV) God goes on to promise that for our obedience, He will rebuke the devourer and protect our crops.

If your local church is fulfilling God's action plans for the body of Christ, then you need to be a reliable supporter by paying your tithes. Of course, you are also to give of your time, your talents, and your material goods (which all come from God).

You may also feel led by the Holy Spirit to give additional offerings to your church for special needs like missions or building projects.

- ♦ **FREEWILL OFFERINGS GO TO THOSE MINISTRIES THAT SPREAD THE GOSPEL.** This may be through your local church and/or through evangelistic ministries or foreign missions.
- ♦ **ALMS GO TO THE POOR AND NEEDY.** There are many ways to help the poor. You could give to your church benevolence fund, or you could give to organizations such as the Salvation Army, Red Cross, or other homeless or inner city ministries. Let God lead you.



SOW IN GOOD SOIL...EXPECT HEAVENLY MATH

In Matthew 13:23, the parable of the sower, we are told that seed sown in good soil produces crops at a rate of 30, 60, or even 100 fold. This is supernaturally fantastic because it equates to a 3,000%, 6,000%, or 10,000% increase. Therefore, you should diligently evaluate the places where you intend to give offerings and sow alms. Prayer and wise counsel will result in God's Holy Spirit leading you to commit to a *Biblical Giving Plan*. Then, with an attitude of thanksgiving, you can put the plan into action by cheerfully, purposely, and abundantly giving out of your resources.

God expects us to be good soil, and He expects us to give and sow into good soil. We would not knowingly invest our savings into faulty banks or bad stocks or in corporations that support anti-Christian causes. Likewise, we should investigate any ministry's fruit before investing God's offerings and alms. Many charitable organizations provide financial accountability statements. We urge you to check-out the organization and pray about your giving. Avoid emotion as the basis for giving. Seek God's wisdom and godly counsel to get the 100-fold return. Then when you sow, expect a huge return as God multiplies your seed in His kingdom.

**** Covenant couples need to pray together and reach agreement on where these additional offerings and alms should be sown.**

IV. DEVELOPING A GIVING PLAN

Later on in this course, we will discuss spending and savings plans. Now, we will concentrate on a giving plan in order to plan for tithes, offerings, and alms. To simplify the *Projected Income and Biblical Giving* form, we have provided one blank line for the tithe, one line for freewill offerings, and another line for alms.

- ♦ **TITHES MUST BE GIVEN WHEN YOU RECEIVE THE INCREASE.** This may mean weekly, twice a month or monthly. But it should not be delayed, for example, until the end of the year or at tax time.
 1. We need to remember that gifts, inheritances and other pleasant financial surprises are also part of the "increase" and are very much subject to tithing.

2. Interest earned is also an "increase" and is subject to the tithe.
 3. If we accept the fact that all we receive comes from God, then we are obliged to tithe from the full amount (the gross amount) of our pay. Yes, your employer will deduct for income taxes, social security, and perhaps for health insurance and retirement. And, yes, the paycheck you cash is your take-home pay (net pay). However, if we only give to God from our net pay, are we not clearly putting Him after the government, and after our health insurance and other benefits and taxes?
 4. A tax refund is not an increase. In fact, the government is simply returning some of your money without interest. Sadly, consistent large tax refunds reflect poor stewardship!
 5. **Caution:** If you do experience a financial crisis, we urge you not to even think about refraining from tithing. It is at these very moments that we especially need to have God right in the center of our finances! Remember Malachi 3, God's strongest giving statement, was written in a time of severe financial crisis.
- ♦ **PLAN IN ADVANCE TO GIVE OFFERINGS & ALMS.** Beyond the tithe, our plan should also include the giving of freewill offerings and the sowing of alms. Thus, a giving plan means that we plan in advance to give versus "looking in our pockets for some extra cash."

GIVING EXAMPLE

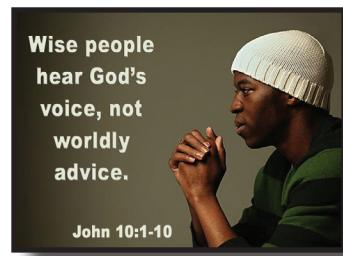
A simple example can be demonstrated by our fictional couple, Bob and Mary. Their combined gross monthly income is \$4,000. If they have prayed and agreed to tithe (10%) and to give an additional amount of offerings and alms equal to 2% of their gross, then the calculations are as shown below. Remember, this is just an example:

Gross monthly pay.....	\$ 4,000
Less all payroll deductions.....	\$ 500
Net (take-home) pay.....	\$ 3,500
Tithes to church (10% of gross)	\$ 400
Offerings and Alms (2% of gross)	\$ 80
Total Tithes, Offerings & Alms.....	\$ 480

- ♦ **BE OPEN TO GIVE FOR SPECIAL URGENT NEEDS.** Since God intends for us to be conduits to bless others, we need to be available (as the Holy Spirit leads) to give for special urgent needs. 1 John 3:17-18 tells us that "If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth" (NIV). This Scripture reminds us that we can give possessions as well as money.
- ♦ **USE ALL LEGAL TAX DEDUCTIONS.** In America, the federal income tax code allows certain deductions for charitable giving. It is definitely prudent to use all legal tax deductions. In fact, doing so indicates good stewardship of God's resources. However, there may be times when God leads you to give to people in need who are not connected to a tax-exempt charity. This gives you a great opportunity to pray and to seek God's wisdom. If you feel led to give, then you should give, regardless of tax benefits.
- ♦ **BE CREATIVE.** You can address the act of giving and sowing alms in many creative ways. For example, a large "blessing box" can be used for family members to deposit used items that are in good shape (such as clothes, toys, and school supplies). A special savings or

checking account can also be opened just for offerings and alms. As you pray, the Holy Spirit will guide you regarding the best place and time for these gifts. Regular additions to this fund will ensure ample resources are available when the family is ready to bless someone.

- ♦ **ALWAYS REMEMBER GOD'S INSTRUCTIONS.** You should not be surprised if a non-believing accountant, CPA, or budget counselor advises you against tithing and giving beyond the tithe. We need to seek God's instructions, not worldly counsel or the popular opinions of the world. Jesus gave us a model to follow in the parable of the good shepherd, John 10:1-10. Our Lord tells us that if we are His sheep, we will hear His voice and follow Him. We will not follow the thief (devil) who wants to steal, kill, and destroy. (Also see John 10:27-28.)



LEADERS' NOTE – For a visual aid, use a small piece of flexible pipe to demonstrate a conduit. The conduit should be plugged up with papers labeled: “not tithing,” “curse of poverty,” “greed,” and “disobedience.” As you put paper money in the conduit, make sure you clearly demonstrate the blockage that “greed” and “disobedience” have caused. Then, slowly remove each piece of paper. At the same time, please read the specific cause of the blockage. Then, once again, demonstrate how the removal of the blockages has allowed the money to flow through the conduit.

- ♦ **PRAY AND AGREE.** For married couples, praying together and coming into agreement regarding tithes, offerings, and alms will please God. It will therefore provide a firm foundation like that of the house built upon the rock in Luke 6:48. Singles find a believing prayer partner. There is great power when praying in agreement in faith.
- ♦ **PLEDGES – BE GUIDED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, NOT MANIPULATED BY MAN OR THE DEVIL.** The discussion of pledges to churches, ministries, or missions is a sensitive topic. We recommend that before you commit to a pledge, you pray and seek the Holy Spirit's guidance.

Below, we provide some thoughtful suggestions regarding pledges:

1. Remember, pledges are a serious matter because you are committing to a financial obligation.
2. Couples must agree on all major financial obligations. This definitely includes pledges.
3. Do not submit to manipulation or any kind of pressure. Rather, be led by God. Ask Him and patiently listen. You may need to wait on His timing before rendering a decision. The devil pressures, but God gently leads.
4. Remember, pledges are not part of the tithe. They are freewill offerings.
5. We agree with Alan Vincent that it is best to pledge only what you can actually give within one week's time. So, fulfill the pledge immediately, in full, or as soon as funds can be transferred from one of your accounts to a checking account. It is not prudent to presume on the future by promising to give (pledging) funds you do not have. You can always give more, beyond your initial pledge, as God leads you and as funds are available.

- Never write post-dated checks and avoid using credit cards (high interest debt) as part of your giving plan.

CAN'T AFFORD TO GIVE?

If the whole concept of paying tithes, giving offerings, and sowing alms is brand new to you, your first reaction may be, "I simply cannot afford this." In the natural, in your own strength, you are correct. However, if you sincerely seek God's wisdom regarding the "increase" He has so graciously given you, then trust God and act in faith. Remember that He does not call us to do things without providing the necessary resources. Purposeful and sacrificial giving shows that you truly seek after God's own heart.

Philippians 4:19 —"And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus" (NIV).

- Fulfill your obligations. If you made a pledge in good faith (not through manipulation) then fulfill your promise.
- Some churches ask for an "estimate of giving." Providing this estimate is not a pledge, but it does provide an opportunity to pray and ask God to help you plan your annual giving.

V. MAKE A FAITH STATEMENT

Our willingness to pay tithes, give offerings, and sow alms (freely and cheerfully) into God's kingdom makes a strong statement of faith to the world. It lets believers reflect the true light that God wants the world to see.

GOD CONSIDERS MONEY IMPORTANT, AND THAT IS WHY THERE ARE MORE THAN TWO THOUSAND OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES ON MONEY, WEALTH, STEWARDSHIP, AND OTHER RELATED TOPICS.

- TEACH & TRAIN YOUR CHILDREN. God plans for parents to teach and train their children in the Word of God. Since there are so many Scriptures devoted to finances, it is important for us to teach them to our family. Proverbs 22:6-7,9 says, "Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it. The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower becomes the lender's slave.... He who is generous will be blessed, for he gives some of his food to the poor" (NAS).



1. What better way to train our children to be good stewards than to involve them in the family tithe and giving plan! We can also show them how to apply God's financial principles with their allowance and financial gifts. Don't we all wish that we had learned these godly habits as children?

- Larry Burkett founded an excellent ministry called Christian Financial Concepts. It subsequently merged with Crown Ministries. The new Crown Financial Ministries (www.cfm.org)

crown.org) provides resources for children: "My Giving Bank" (a three compartment bank to teach children three and older how to separate giving, saving, and spending), and a host of training books and workbooks for teens. Call 866-424-4000 to request a resource catalog, or to receive a free newsletter. As always, we encourage you to filter and test any teaching with God's Word.

- ♦ **BE FAITHFUL STEWARDS.** Earlier, we defined prosperity as "having enough resources to accomplish everything that God has called us to do." If we use our God-given resources wisely then we have a right to expect Him to be pleased with us — as seen in the parable of the talents. Matthew 25:21: "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!" (NIV)

VI. DEVELOPING YOUR OWN PROJECTED INCOME AND BIBLICAL GIVING PLAN

This week's homework is to complete a two-part form labeled: *Projected Income and Biblical Giving*. This is a vital step because it directly involves God in your plans for financial freedom.

Throughout the upcoming weeks, you will be studying Examples #1 and #2 from Bob and Mary Jones, our fictional couple. Bob works while Mary has chosen to stay at home and raise their two children.

The Example #1 form is dated June 30, 2007. It represents Bob and Mary's financial situation before they started the *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* group course. As you might suspect, Bob and Mary needed some help. However, they were eager to learn and improve their finances.

Example #2 represents Bob and Mary's financial picture on August 31, 2008 (this is approximately one full year after they completed the course). As you study Example #2, you will see the changes made by Bob & Mary Jones in order to get on the road to financial freedom.

Remember, these are just examples. Everyone's financial situation is unique. However, it is helpful to study examples in order to learn how to develop a financial freedom plan.



LEADERS' NOTE – Take time to let your focus group digest Examples #1 and #2. Show how all columns are filled out and take time to clarify any questions regarding the forms.

PROJECTED INCOME AND BIBLICAL GIVING - EXAMPLE #1

NAME(S): Bob & Mary Jones

Date: June 20, 2007

Projected Income

INCOME SOURCES:	Amount Paid Monthly	(Mo. x 12) Subtotal for Year	Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Average Monthly Amount
Gross wages: husband	\$ 4,000	\$ 48,000		\$ 48,000	\$ 4,000
Gross wages: wife					
Dividends					
Interest					
Rent (Income less expenses)					
Business Income/"Increase"					
Retirement Funds					
Other					
TOTAL GROSS INCOME:	\$ 4,000	\$ 48,000	\$	\$ 48,000	\$ 4,000

Projected Giving

	Organization	Amount Paid Monthly	(Mo. x 12) Subtotal for Year	Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Average Monthly Amount
10% Tithe	Church	\$ 350	\$ 4,200		\$ 4,200	\$ 350
Freewill Offerings	Missions	\$ 10	\$ 120		\$ 120	\$ 10
Alms (Poor)						
Other Charities	Misc. Charities			\$ 600	\$ 600	\$ 50
Other Charities	United Way	\$ 5	\$ 60		\$ 60	\$ 5
Other Giving						
TOTAL GIVING:		\$ 365	\$ 1,380	\$	\$ 4,980	\$ 415

Once the income is calculated, the next step is to determine where it goes. Begin with giving. Project your giving for the year by considering each organization you support. This can be from specific giving goals, percentages of income, or past giving records. You may want to check your actual giving to date and then project what you plan to give for the rest of the year.

NOTE ON USING THIS FORM: This form will help you arrive at an average monthly amount which is crucial for your spending plan and cash flow management. Record the monthly amount in the first column and then multiply by 12 months for a yearly subtotal. In the third column, record amounts that do not occur every month. Add columns 2 and 3 together to get the total annual amount for column 4. Finally, divide the total annual amount by 12 to get the average monthly amount. Do this for each line item

EXAMPLE #1 – BEFORE COURSE

Let's study Example #1. At the top of the form, the Jones family projected their income for the next 12 months. Bob gets paid \$4,000 once a month so the form is easy to follow. His

annual income ($\$4,000 \times 12$ months) equals $\$48,000$. Since he has no other income beyond the monthly paycheck, the monthly average ($\$48,000 \div 12$ months) equals $\$4,000$. If there were any other sources of family income, it would have been added in a different place on the form.

Projected Giving (the bottom half of Example #1) depicts the normal giving pattern of the family on a monthly and a yearly basis. You can follow the math and see that their average monthly giving was $\$415$. Some of the giving was done on a consistent monthly basis, and some giving was placed in the "other than monthly" column.

- ◆ **WHY MONTHLY CALCULATIONS?** We know that not everyone is paid, gives, or pays bills monthly. However, experience has shown that a monthly *Flexible Spending Plan* works. A weekly plan is too short; quarterly or annual periods are too long to control. **MONTHLY PLANS WORK!**
- ◆ **WHAT IF I GET PAID 26 TIMES A YEAR?** Many people receive paychecks every two weeks: 26 pay periods per year. We strongly recommend that you arrive at an annual amount (bi-weekly check \times 26) and divide the annual income by 12 months, so you can plug it into the monthly calculations of all forms used in this course.

Let's return to Bob and Mary's giving in Example #1. You will see that their "tithes" of $\$350$ do not represent a true ten percent tithe of Bob's gross income or "increase." Remember, this was the Jones' situation before they took this course. Example #2 will properly depict their corrected tithing.



LEADERS' NOTE – Take time to let your focus group digest Examples #1 and #2. Show how all columns are filled out and take time to clarify any questions regarding the forms.

PROJECTED INCOME AND BIBLICAL GIVING - EXAMPLE #2

NAME(S): Bob & Mary Jones

Date: August 31, 2008

Projected Income

INCOME SOURCES:	Amount Paid Monthly	(Mo. x 12) Subtotal for Year	Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Average Monthly Amount
Gross wages: husband	\$ 4,000	\$ 48,000		\$ 48,000	\$ 4,000
Gross wages: wife					
Dividends					
Interest					
Rent (Income less expenses)					
Business Income/"Increase"					
Retirement Funds					
Other					
TOTAL GROSS INCOME:	\$ 4,000	\$ 48,000	\$	\$ 48,000	\$ 4,000

Projected Giving

	Organization	Amount Paid Monthly	(Mo. x 12) Subtotal for Year	Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Average Monthly Amount
10% Tithe	Church	\$ 400	\$ 4,800		\$ 4,800	\$ 400
Freewill Offerings	Missions	\$ 5	\$ 60		\$ 60	\$ 5
Alms (Poor)	Benevolence	\$ 5	\$ 60		\$ 60	\$ 5
Other Charities	United Way	\$ 5	\$ 60		\$ 60	\$ 5
Other Charities			\$ 60			
Other Giving						
TOTAL GIVING:		\$ 415	\$ 4,980	\$	\$ 4,980	\$ 415

Once the income is calculated, the next step is to determine where it goes. Begin with giving. Project your giving for the year by considering each organization you support. This can be from specific giving goals, percentages of income or past giving records. You may want to check your actual giving to date and then project what you plan to give for the rest of the year.

NOTE ON USING THIS FORM: This form will help you arrive at an average monthly amount which is crucial for your spending plan and cash flow management. Record the monthly amount in the first column and then multiply by 12 months for a yearly subtotal. In the third column, record amounts that do not occur every month. Add columns 2 and 3 together to get the total annual amount for column 4. Finally, divide the total annual amount by 12 to get the average monthly amount. Do this for each line item

EXAMPLE #2 – 1 YEAR AFTER COURSE

Notice: Example #2 shows no change in Bob and Mary's income, but now their giving plan reflects a proper ten percent tithe of \$400 per month. This is the first check they write each

payday. They rearranged their giving plan in order to ensure that they give additional freewill offerings and sow alms. The family, as a whole, discussed the allocation of all offerings, alms, and any other charitable donations. Now, with a *Biblical Giving Plan*, they have every right to expect God to lead the way to financial freedom.

VII. SUMMARY – BIBLICAL GIVING

- ◆ **GOD'S WORD IS CLEAR** about paying our tithes (ten percent of our "increase"), giving additional freewill offerings (to spread the gospel), and sowing alms (for the needy).
- ◆ **GOD DOES NOT NEED OUR MONEY**, but He calls us to be good stewards.
- ◆ **EVERYTHING WE HAVE AND ALL WE WILL EVER EARN IS NOT OURS.** It all belongs to God, who is our only provider.
- ◆ **GOD APPOINTS US MANAGERS OVER THE RESOURCES HE PROVIDES.**
- ◆ **ALL FINANCIAL DECISIONS ARE SPIRITUAL DECISIONS.**
- ◆ **BIBLICAL GIVING IS EXCITING AND ENJOYABLE** when we get our hearts right with God. We have never met a person who regrets tithing! We have known many who regret not tithing sooner.
- ◆ **CHEERFUL GIVING BY COVENANT BELIEVERS** demonstrates God's power to the world, and blesses believers and non-believers alike.
- ◆ **WE WILL SEE OTHERS MOVE TO A LEVEL OF FINANCIAL VICTORY.** As Christians teach God's wisdom on giving and demonstrate these very principles in their own families and businesses, we will see others move to a level of financial victory. God is a BIG GOD, and He wants us to be abundantly blessed.
- ◆ **PUT GOD IN THE CENTER OF YOUR FINANCES.** Your *Biblical Giving Plan* allows you to put God in the center of your hearts and your *plans for Financial Freedom*.



LEADERS' NOTE –

- **Self-Employed** group members need to read the next pages in order to understand the basics of revenue, increase, and calculation of tithes. Leaders should assess the group's needs and decide whether to present this material to the whole group or privately to those who need it.
- **Homework** for Week 2 follows the *Special Guidelines for the Self-Employed*. Please preview the homework prior to dismissing the group.

Special Guidelines For The Self-Employed

(Optional but recommended for all)

These special instructions are provided for individuals or families who earn some or all of their income from self-employment.

The primary purpose is to help individuals understand what is income or "increase" due to self-employment. Once the amount of the income or increase is determined, then it is easy to calculate the ten percent tithe.

Our experience, to date, has shown that this information has helped many individuals learn more than just the calculation of their tithe. They gain a basic understanding of revenue, costs, and income from a business activity.

This basic material can also be used to train and bless young entrepreneurs.



LEADERS' NOTE – Leaders, you need to decide whether this material will be covered during the study of the course. This information has been very well received. However, you may need to allow additional time for class and homework discussion in order to properly teach and discuss the material presented.

I. KEY TERMS

- ◆ **GROSS REVENUE** — This is the total dollar volume produced by the business. Think of it as total sales, gross sales, or gross receipts for a given time period, whether it be weekly, monthly, or annually.
- ◆ **BUSINESS EXPENSES** — These are various expenses related to the self-employment activity. Examples of expenses might be the cost of products, supplies, advertising, postage, business calls, business transportation, depreciation expense relating to business equipment, special uniforms, safety equipment, accounting services, childcare, and so on.



LEADERS' NOTE – In order to explain these concepts, prepare yourself by reviewing Examples #3 and #4 in the following pages. Exclude the following: salary to the owner, or spouse of the owner, of a family-owned business, personal cost of health insurance, income taxes, and retirement account deductions.

- ◆ **INCOME OR INCREASE** — For this course, income or increase is determined by subtracting business expenses from gross revenue.

Gross revenue	\$ _____
Less business expenses	\$ _____
Income or Increase	\$ _____

- ◆ **TITHE** — This is a ten percent first fruits offering given to God and is determined by multiplying any income or increase by ten percent. It is to be the first ten percent of a Christian's increase and should therefore be the first check of the week or month. In other words, the tithe should be paid as soon as possible after the increase is received from God, who is the giver of all increase.

Income or increase	\$ _____
x 10% or 0.10	\$ _____
Equals the tithe	\$ _____

- ◆ **RATIO OF INCOME OR INCREASE TO GROSS REVENUE** — This percentage ratio is determined by dividing last year's income or increase by last year's total gross revenue.

Annual income or increase ÷ annual gross revenue = _____ % ratio.

This percentage ratio is easily converted to a numerical decimal value by placing a decimal point in front of the first digit. For example, 50% = .50 or 0.50. Some people prefer using percentages while others like doing math with numerical decimal values.

This ratio of income to gross revenue shows you how much of the prior year's gross revenue resulted in income or increase. For example, if the ratio was 70% or 0.70, then for every \$1,000 of gross sales, the business produced \$700 of income or increase. If the ratio was 30% or 0.30, then for every \$1,000 of sales, the business reaped a \$300 increase.

WHY DO WE NEED LAST YEAR'S RATIO OF INCOME TO GROSS REVENUE?

A self-employed person can use this ratio (from last year) to estimate the increase for the new year. It is easy to estimate the amount of increase as revenue is received during the new year, and this makes it easy to estimate and pay the tithe each week or each month as the money comes in.

II. EXAMPLES

Let us study two examples of self-employed businesses. Remember that your group leaders can help with questions after you have reviewed both examples. Because of time constraints, this may require extra homework time and effort. However, if you are self-employed, it is completely worth the effort to seek God's instructions on stewardship.

EXAMPLE #3 — A SELF-EMPLOYED COUPLE'S LAWN & TREE SERVICE

If all or part of your income is derived from self-employment, then the two key questions are: "What is your real increase?" and "How do you calculate your tithes?"

Since these questions are very common, let us examine a family-owned business scenario that involves George and Jane Smith. Their sole source of income is a family owned and operated lawn and tree service. The business is run from their residence and occasionally employs part-time or seasonal employees. We will keep the example basic in order to convey key principles.

This type of business has seasonal fluctuations in revenue, so we will take a look back at the year 2007 in order to help the Smiths develop a *Biblical Giving Plan* for the new year, 2008. Their total gross revenue (gross receipts) for 2007 added up to \$95,000. In the following calculations, we will look at their business expenses in order to determine their actual income or "increase" for the year.

Total Business Revenue (Gross Receipts):	\$95,000
Less Business Expenses:	
Salaries paid to helpers (employees)	\$30,100
Cost of mowing and trimming equipment (depreciation)	\$ 4,300
Gas, oil, and consumable supplies for mowers, etc.	\$ 1,700
Business use of 2 pickups and trailers	\$10,000
Business phone line in home	\$ 400
Postage, stationary and business cards	\$ 250
Total Expenses	- <u>\$47,000</u>
The Smith's income (increase) for 2007:	\$48,000

Now, we have current data to help the Smiths determine a ratio of income, which will be used to estimate their "increase" and their titling for the year 2008.

Their gross business revenue was \$95,000. But after deducting legitimate expenses paid to run the business (\$47,000), we see that their actual income or "increase" was \$48,000. So, we divide the gross revenue of \$95,000 into the income or increase of \$48,000 and the result is:

$$\mathbf{\$48,000 \div \$95,000 = 50.5\%}$$

For this example, let's be conservative (favor God) and round the percentage up to an even 51%. This means that for the year 2007, approximately 51% of the total revenue was actually income or "increase" to George and Jane. To double-check the numbers, we can multiply the gross revenue of \$95,000 by 51%. We will get an estimate of \$48,450 as the income or "increase." By

safely rounding up the percentage (from 50.5% to an even 51%), we are favoring God as we calculate the *biblical giving* for the new year.

To convert this percentage ratio to a decimal value, put a decimal point in front of the first number. For example, 51% = 0.51. This simplifies the math calculations.

Now that George and Jane know the ratio (51% of gross revenue), they can start the new year with a ratio that will help them determine their ten percent tithe.

In Example #3, let's assume that their first week's total business revenues for the new year (2008) added up to \$2,000. They can estimate that their income or increase will again be 51% of the gross revenue. So, for the first week of January 2008, they multiply their gross revenue of \$2,000 by 51% to get \$1,020 as a safe estimate of their income or increase for the week.

$$\mathbf{\$2,000 \times 0.51 = \$1,020 \text{ increase}}$$

Their family tithe would then be ten percent of \$1,020 or \$102. Since the tithe is always a "first fruit" offering, the \$102 check to their church should be their first check of the week.

$$\mathbf{\$1,020 \times 0.10 = \$102 \text{ tithe}}$$

Freewill offerings and alms, above the tithe, should be prayerfully determined by George and Jane and made part of their *Biblical Giving Plan*. It is good to include children in the decision process.

For the balance of this year (2008), the Smiths can use the same ratio (51%) of gross revenue to estimate their increase and their tithe. At the end of the year, they should again calculate the ratio and use the new ratio (percentage) for next year's estimates. If they learn that their income (increase) for 2008 was actually more than 51% of their revenue then a one-time tithe check can correct the shortfall.

If it turns out that their new ratio (percentage) fell below 51%, we suggest they not try to deduct some amount in order to downwardly adjust the tithe. Remember, it is impossible to out-give God.

EXAMPLE #4 – ONE SPOUSE HAS A PART-TIME, IN-THE-HOME BUSINESS

Today, in many families, one spouse earns supplemental income with a part-time business operated from the home. Cosmetics, plastic products, and miscellaneous home supplies, may be representative of these types of small businesses. For many couples, questions arise such as: "Just how much of the gross sales revenue (or sales volume) is income?" and "How are tithes calculated on this portion of the family income?"

We will label this Example #4 and refer to it as *Ann's In-Home Business*. Several facts are provided about Ann's business for last year (2007). In Example #4, we ask you to calculate her increase and her tithe for the first week of this new year (2008).

Ann's Gross Revenue or Total Sales For Last Year (not including sales tax):	\$10,000
Her Actual Yearly Business Expenses Were:	
Cost of Products Sold	\$ 5,000
Promotional Gifts For Customers	\$ 500
Supplies and Postage	\$ 100
Advertising	\$ 200
Business Use of Vehicle	\$ 400
Long Distance Business Telephone	\$ 50
Meetings and Training Events	\$ 600
Child Care/Baby-sitting	\$ 250
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 7,100</u>

1. Calculate Ann's annual income/increase: \$_____
2. Calculate the ratio (percentage) of income or increase to gross revenue using the formula below:
Annual income \$_____ ÷ Annual revenue of \$_____ = _____% (ratio)
3. Convert the percentage ratio to a decimal value by placing a decimal point in front of the first digit of the percentage (for example: 50% = .50).
Ann's percentage ratio of _____% converts to 0.____ decimal value.
4. Now you have calculated the ratio of income or increase of Ann's gross revenue for the past full year (2007). How would you advise Ann to calculate her income or increase, and her tithe, for the very first week of this new year? In this example, Ann's first week's product sales were \$200. You can use the following steps to provide the information Ann needs:
Week one sales of \$_____ x (decimal value of income to gross sales ratio) 0._____ = \$_____ which is her income or increase for Week 1 of 2008.
Ann's tithe for the week would be ten percent or $0.10 \times$ the estimated weekly increase of \$_____ which = \$_____ (tithe).

**Remember, Ann's freewill offerings and alms are above the ten percent tithe, and no set formula applies.

III. DO YOUR OWN CALCULATIONS

If you own your own business, or if either spouse has some income from self-employment, then it is essential that you calculate your increase as part of the homework for Week 2. You can develop a simple form using Example #3 or #4 as a guide or use the blank form provided on the next page.

1. Use your information from last year.
2. List your gross revenue.
3. List all business expenses. Do not include a salary to either spouse, personal cost of health insurance, personal income taxes, or personal retirement account deductions.
4. Deduct total business expenses from gross revenue to get your income or increase for last year.
5. Divide gross revenue into your income or increase to get a ratio (percentage or decimal value).
6. Now you have a ratio to help you estimate what your increase is on any new revenue for this new year (see examples).
7. Once you know how to estimate your increase, your tithe is ten percent (or 0.10) of the increase.
8. Freewill offerings and alms are above the ten percent tithe and should be included in your *Biblical Giving Plan*.
9. Make several copies of the blank form on the next page. (Note: This blank form is not included with the blank forms in Chapter 15.)
10. Use one of the forms to complete your own calculations. You will need to do this each year.

Blank Form For Self-Employed “Increase” Calculations

(A) Gross Revenue: \$ _____

Less Business Expenses:

(Item) (\$ Amount)

(B) Total Business Expenses - \$ _____

(C) Income or "Increase"
(Gross Revenue Minus Total Expenses) = \$ _____

(D) Divide Gross Revenue into Increase ($C \div A = \text{Ratio}$) % ratio

(E) Convert ratio to decimal value by placing decimal point in front of % first digit $\% = 0.$

Note: Now that you know your ratio, use it to calculate your actual increase each time you receive self-employment revenue. Once you know your increase, multiply it by ten percent (0.10) to calculate your tithe. Remember to include additional freewill offerings, and alms in your *Biblical Giving Plan*.

****PERMISSION TO COPY THIS BLANK FORM.** The authors encourage owners of this book to copy and use this blank form for personal use. Remember, only blank forms and blank report forms may be photocopied, and only by book owners for personal use.

CHAPTER 2 HOMEWORK

BIBLICAL GIVING

SPIRITUAL WARFARE HOMEWORK: This week's spiritual warfare section is on the sources of curses. It specifically targets curses that result from robbing God by not tithing and giving offerings and alms.

1. **Read Spiritual Warfare Section #2.**
2. **Do Practical Application Exercise #2.** Remember to take time to prayerfully consider the teaching and do the exercises in a spirit of prayer and submission. Do not fall prey to the guilt and condemnation of the accuser but do be sensitive to the conviction of the Holy Spirit.
3. **Create an Action Plan.** Now is the time to put our knowledge of biblical giving into an action plan. Look at the one-page form entitled ***Projected Income and Biblical Giving***. Use the ***Projected Income and Biblical Giving*** form. (The blank form is located in Chapter 15. We recommend making a minimum of six extra copies of all blank forms found in Chapter 15 for future use.)

Examples #1 and #2 (seen previously in this chapter) show how our couple, Bob and Mary Jones, completed their forms before and after the course. Use these as a guide.

4. **Fill out the *Projected Income and Biblical Giving* form in pencil.** Use a full page copy from Chapter 15. Please do not put data in this workbook. Be conservative regarding income estimates. Round-off numbers and avoid decimal points. These are estimates, so do not expect perfection. For couples, it is essential that this is done together and understood by both. Singles may benefit from a godly, trusted, accountability partner.
5. **Review the income projections for accuracy.** (Be certain both spouses understand and agree.)
6. **Now progress to the *Projected Income and Biblical Giving* form** on the bottom of the same page. (Note: the one page form projects income at the top and giving at the bottom.) Pray about your *Biblical Giving Plan*. (Again, couples must be in agreement for a plan to work.)
7. **Complete the *Projected Income and Biblical Giving* form.** Start with the tithe as ten percent of your gross income. Usually the tithe will go to your church. Remember, the tithe needs to be your first expenditure in order to be the first fruit offering God requires.

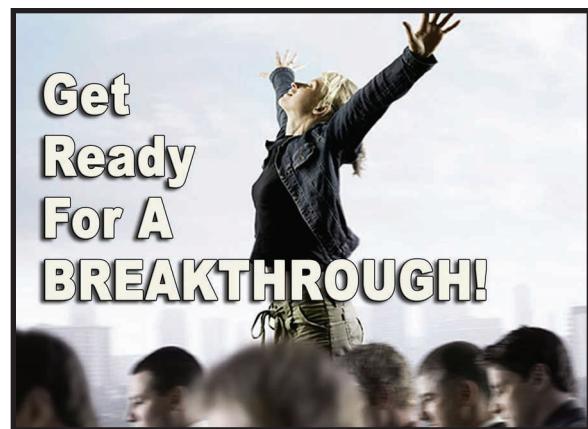
Additional freewill offerings may go to a number of ministries. Alms may be sown into your church benevolence fund or to missions and other charitable organizations. Freewill offerings may also go to your church for special activities or building funds. It is acceptable to designate where we give our offerings and sow our alms. However if we are paying our tithes into our church, then we should not attempt to designate or control how our trusted church leadership uses the tithes; after all, it is God's money.

8. **Write your names on the top of the *Projected Income and Biblical Giving* form and date it for your records.** You will develop revised plans in the future, but this first plan is a big step. Congratulations!
9. **Keep the completed form handy.** You will use it again as part of your complete *Flexible Spending Plan* later in the course.

10. **Bring the completed form to the next session and be prepared to share** regarding items a, b, c and d. You will never be asked to share your numbers with the whole group.
 - a. What steps did you take in completing the form?
 - b. How did God work in the process?
 - c. Problems encountered, and how you overcame them.
 - d. What will you do differently when you do this the next time?
11. **Self-Employed Individuals and Families with any Self Employment Income** should study the *Special Guidelines for The Self Employed*. Then, they need to complete all the appropriate forms and be prepared to give a very brief recap (without using specific numbers) to the group. Ask the leaders for special assistance if necessary.
12. **Fill in your *Breakthroughs* form for Week 2.** Thank God for small and large breakthroughs and be prepared to share with your group during Week 3.

BREAKTHROUGHS!

FINANCIAL FREEDOM COURSE
RECORD YOUR WEEKLY TESTIMONIES



NAME: _____

DATE: **MONEY, CAREER, GIFTS/INHERITANCE, & OTHER**

CHAPTER 3

(WEEK 3)



"The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender" (Proverbs 22:7, KJV).

***Freedom From
Debt Principles***



LEADERS' NOTES – WEEKLY PROTOCOL

- ❖ **Praise Song** – A great way to start!
Suggest typed lyrics and upbeat music.
Have the tape or CD ready so you can just hit play.
- ❖ **Prayer** – Led by a Leader or LIT.
Recommend group holding hands.
- ❖ **Spiritual Warfare** – in Jesus' mighty name!
(According to Luke 10:19)
- ❖ **Homework Sharing** – Normally led by LITs.
Led by leaders if LITs are teaching this week.
Time control and equal sharing are important.
- ❖ **Share Breakthroughs** – Celebrate!
Brief but builds hope. Can be combined with
homework sharing.
- ❖ **Offering Time** – Opportunity to Sow!
Have a focus group member pray first.
Put faith into action!
- ❖ **10 Minute Break** - Beverages & restroom.
- ❖ **Weekly Lesson** – Taught by both leaders and LITs.
- ❖ **Homework Preview**
- ❖ **Dismiss with Prayer and Spiritual Warfare**
- holding hands. Entire session should average 2
to 2 ½ Hours.
- ❖ **Leaders and LITs complete weekly report**

CHAPTER 3 (WEEK 3)

FREEDOM FROM DEBT PRINCIPLES

OVERVIEW

In Chapter 1, we learned that God has a lot to say about how we steward His resources. In fact, over a thousand Old and New Testament Scriptures provide wisdom on how we are to be good stewards. Last week in Chapter 2, we learned God's basic ingredients to a recipe for financial freedom, namely: tithes, offerings, and alms. Now we are ready to kick the devil out of our lives.

There is freedom in the Word of God. "If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32, KJV). It is important to start this section with the confidence that your debt situation is not at all hopeless. God is not embarrassed by your indebtedness, but He does want to free you from debt bondage. This means you should not be embarrassed by your debts, but you do want to be free. We applaud you for wanting to learn how to smash the debt cycle.



LEADERS' NOTE – We suggest creating a larger visual of the following graphic to display every week for the remainder of the course. It represents a *PARADIGM SHIFT*. Use it to emphasize the importance of shifting from the world's materialistic view of debt to God's view which envisions a totally debt free life for us, His children.



Hint: The visual shows two dimes (a pair of dimes) shifting.

I. FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS

It is imperative that we shift our perspective from the world's materialistic view regarding debt to God's financial perspective.

- ◆ **GOD HAS A GOOD PLAN FOR US.** Jeremiah 29:11, which was a letter written to captives, says: "For I know the thoughts and plans that I have for you, says the Lord, thoughts and plans for welfare and peace, and not for evil, to give you hope in your final outcome" (AMP). We also learn that when we pray to God, He hears us and heeds our prayers. God says He "will release you back from captivity" (Jeremiah 29:14, AMP). For those who have been or are now in debt bondage, debt is definitely a form of captivity.
- ◆ **PROSPERITY DEFINED.** Prosperity is having all the resources (time, talent, and money) we need to accomplish what God has called us to do.
- ◆ **WE MUST LISTEN AND LET GOD'S WORD GUIDE US.** "Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise" (Proverbs 19:20, NIV). Also, be encouraged that the Holy Spirit wants to guide you. "Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path" (Psalm 119:105, NIV).
- ◆ **YOU SHOULDN'T FEEL CONDEMNED FOR BEING IN DEBT.** Romans 8:1 says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the (Holy) Spirit" (KJV).

- ◆ **OUR PRAYERS MUST HAVE GODLY MOTIVES AND LINE-UP WITH GOD'S WORD.** "You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures" (James 4:3, NAS). This Scripture makes it clear that our Lord is not interested in lavishing wealth on us just for our pure pleasure.

II. PREPARE YOUR HEART AND MIND

Wisdom from God's Word will help you gain freedom from debt's burdens.

- ◆ **ENVISION A DEBT-FREE LIFE.** Imagine you have no past due bills, no car payments, and no big mortgage payment due each month. You are totally debt free, free to serve others and God. God wants you to bless people with your time, talents, and abundance. Ephesians 3:20-21 tells us, "Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen" (NKJV).
- ◆ **BELIEVE THAT DEBT FREEDOM IS NOT JUST A DREAM.** After all, there were no bill collectors in the Garden of Eden, nor will there be any in heaven. Clearly, God did not intend for His covenant people to be in debt bondage!
- ◆ **ELIMINATE DEBT.** James 1:6 instructs us to ask in faith not doubting.
- ◆ **FORGIVE YOURSELF FOR PAST ERRORS AND LET GOD DO A NEW THING.** Isaiah 43:18-19 says, "Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert" (KJV).
- ◆ **UNDERSTAND THAT DEBT IS NOT SIN, BUT NOT REPAYING DEBT IS SIN!** Psalm 37:21 says, "The wicked borrows and does not pay back, but the righteous is gracious and gives" (NAS). Romans 13:8 says, "Keep out of debt and owe no man anything, except to love one another; for who loves his neighbor - who practices loving others - has fulfilled the Law (relating to one's fellowmen), meeting all its requirements" (AMP).

III. BAD CONSEQUENCES OF DEBT

Note: If you are currently experiencing severe strain related to finances, you can provide your own examples.

FOR MARRIED COUPLES

**You need to understand that your spouse
is not the enemy. The devil is the enemy!**



Your marriage vows most likely included promises to "*love, cherish, and obey in sickness and in health and for richer or for poorer.*" Since you promised each other and God to stick together, you need to deal with the difficult subject of debt together!

Agreement in prayer can activate God's promises, and agreement is essential for a couple to accomplish something this important. Amos 3:3 says, "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" (KJV) And Matthew 18:19 states, "Again I tell you, if two of you on earth agree (harmonize together, together make a symphony) about - anything and everything - whatever they shall ask, it will come to pass and be done for them by My Father in heaven." (AMP) Jesus, reminds us of the power of praying together in agreement.

WILL MORE MONEY SOLVE DEBT PROBLEMS?

It is a serious mistake to assume that “more money” will remove debt problems.

Individuals who tend to overspend typically continue to purchase (even more) on credit as their income increases. Once the burden of debt is removed and habits are changed, people can focus on godly goals and run their lives in a financially stress-free manner.

- ◆ **POVERTY.** “He who loves pleasure will become poor; whoever loves wine and oil will never be rich” (Proverbs 21:17, NIV). God does not say that prospering is bad; in fact, He wants his covenant people to prosper. However, if we seek pleasure before God, we can be easily tempted to go into debt. Unfortunately, this keeps us from truly prospering (which we previously defined as “having all the resources we need to do what God has called us to do.””)
- ◆ **THE RICH WILL RULE OVER YOU.** Proverbs 22:7 says, “The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender” (KJV). If you have ever owed money to another person, then you know the relationship changes. There is no real joy in being in debt, and God wants His covenant people to have joy.
- ◆ **PRESUMPTION CONCERNING THE FUTURE.** Going into debt, especially if we do not have a guaranteed way to repay, presumes upon the future. In James 4:13-15 we are warned not to presume upon God, but rather to make Him the center of our planning process, for ourselves or for our businesses.

“Come now, you who say: ‘Today or tomorrow, we shall go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.’ Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, ‘If the Lord wills, we shall live and also do this and that.’” (James 4:13-15, NAS)

- ◆ **A BACK-UP PLAN.** Married couples should seriously consider living on one income (if both spouses are employed) and use the second income to retire all debt. If you are single, make sure that you have a back-up plan in the event of unemployment or illness.

WHY NOT GO INTO DEBT?

If you have a “steady job,” you might question how taking on sizable debt could presume on the future. Stop and reflect on your ability to repay it if you lose your job or suffer a serious disability. Also, if you have counted on the equity in your home to provide collateral for a debt, think about your status if home market values decline as they did in the 1930’s, 1980’s, and are now declining in many parts of the USA. These are heavy issues to ponder before going into debt.

- ◆ **A DAMAGED CHRISTIAN WITNESS.** How Christians conduct their financial affairs is very important. What reaction do you have to someone who claims to run a “Christian business” if that person is consistently late in paying bills, abuses employees with sub-standard pay and/or poor working conditions, and operates from shoddy offices or with broken-down vehicles? Proverbs 22:1 says, “A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold” (NIV). We know that consistently paying bills late or declaring bankruptcy damages our Christian witness to our family and to the world. Bankruptcy tells an unbelieving world that Jesus cannot keep His Word. Because as a member of the body of Christ your mouth is perceived as Jesus’ mouth, your word should reflect His Word! As we learn and apply Kingdom financial principles, the world will be much more interested in what we have to say about salvation.

IV. DEBT MORTGAGES YOUR FUTURE



EXAMPLE

Consider a \$100,000 home mortgage at 6.75% interest.

Payments over 30 years	\$648.60
Total House Payment	\$233,959.00
Total Amount of Interest Paid (nearly)	\$134,000.00

For a \$200,000 home, the payments and mortgage costs are doubled.

- ◆ **DEBT OBLIGATES YOU TO MAKE PAYMENTS FROM MONEY NOT YET EARNED.** This obligation can keep people from fulfilling other important obligations and from doing some of the activities God intends.
- ◆ **DEBT MAY FORCE YOU TO LOWER YOUR LIVING STANDARDS** due to the heavy burden of payments. There is nothing wrong with some tightening of the budget. (Soon you will learn to forget the "budget" concept and focus on a Flexible Spending Plan concept.) However, this may even cut into some essential needs, and God does not like that at all. 1 Timothy 5:8 says, "But if any provide not for his own, and especially those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (KJV).
- ◆ **DEBT ADVERSELY AFFECTS MARRIAGES.** It is widely accepted that the number one cause of marital separation and divorce is financial stress. Financial stress is cited in 50% to 80% of divorces - far more often than problems with intimacy or any other area. Most of the stress is related to severe debt pressure.

FOR MARRIED COUPLES

Divorce is not part of our Heavenly Father's divine plan for covenant marriages. In the first chapter of Genesis God made it very clear that we are to take dominion over the earth. Being in serious debt would hardly indicate dominion. So, let's learn how to fight debt and get the victory God intends for His covenant couples to enjoy true financial freedom.



Singles should resolve financial issues while they are single rather than carry indebtedness into a marriage. Financial problems do not go away once you get married. Instead they often create problems in an otherwise healthy relationship. Even if you have no plans to marry, achieving financial freedom will position you to be and to do all God intends for you. It is important to change bad habits and mindsets now.

V. A CLOSER LOOK AT DEBT

By understanding what debt is and how people get into it, we can start gaining wisdom that will help us break out of the debt cycle.

- ◆ **DEBT DEFINITION.** According to the American Dictionary of the English Language, Noah Webster defines debt as: "that which is due from one person to another, whether money, goods, or services; that which one person is bound to pay or perform to another."

Webster adds that "when you run in debt you give to another power over your liberty." This reminds us of Proverbs 22:7: "The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender" (NIV).

KEEP THE FAITH!

Many of you are probably struggling to imagine living debt free.
We encourage you to nourish and water this debt-free faith vision
as you complete this course.

- ◆ **FROM DEBT TO CRISIS.** Debt becomes a serious problem for people when they incur debt with no sure way to repay. A family crisis occurs when we default on our debts, and that is when our borrowing becomes sin. Psalm 37:21 warns us that the wicked borrow and do not repay; and Romans 13:8 tells us to owe no man except to love him.
- ◆ **SURETY IS DEBT RELATED.** It takes place when we incur an obligation without the means to repay it. Then, we risk losing some or all of our assets. "Be not one of those who strike hands and pledge themselves or those who become security for another's debts. If you have nothing with which to pay, why should he take away your bed from under you?" (Proverbs 22:26-27, AMP).

Surety is a very serious concept. In Hebrews 7:22, we see that by His death on the cross, the shedding of His blood, and His resurrection from the dead, Jesus made himself "surety of a better testament" (KJV). There is no evidence in the Bible for us to take surety lightly. It obligates us, and our families, to make good on the debts of another.



BE WARY OF CO-SIGNING

Co-signing notes for others makes you fully responsible if they default. By co-signing, you are helping others obtain credit they do not deserve. In any event, know that you are promising to pay the debt in full if the co-signer defaults.

If you really want to help the person, it is better to provide wise counsel against new debt or just give the money. Then you are free and the other person is free to repay you if he really wants to.

VI. WHAT GETS US INTO DEBT?

- ◆ **EASY CREDIT** has allowed us to get in deep messes. During the first half of the 20th century, it was not easy for people to get deeply mired in debt because easy credit was not available. So, people were more likely to save for major purchases and pay cash on delivery.

Now, the concept of delayed gratification (putting off buying things we desire and only buying the things we really need now) has given way to a "buy now and pay later" mentality. The messages relayed by television, radio, and billboards are aimed at our flesh. They go something like this: "Buy now, you deserve it" or "Surely, with your income, you can afford our easy payment plan of just a few dollars a month."

- ◆ **FEEDING “GREED” vs. “NEED”** Are we focusing on consumption (what we desire) rather than what we need and can afford? A preacher friend of ours once referred to the advertising spirit in today’s society as the god of “DIS.” These messages bombard us daily — making us feel dissatisfied or discontent with what we have. As a result, we are tempted to covet many things for the wrong reasons (such as keeping up with the neighbors, or showing off to impress others).



Singles and Dining Out. Monitor your spending in this area and you may be surprised at how much you can save.

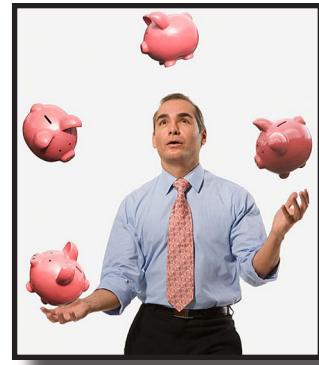
SOME HONEST QUESTIONS TO ASK:

Remember this is not a time for blame or condemnation, but a time of self-examination so you can gain victory over debt bondage. Couples should discuss these questions together.

1. Am I buying a home that is more than I can afford?
2. Does the car I drive reflect a good use of God’s money?
3. Do I buy the latest gadgets, appliances, or expensive clothing on credit when I have better places to use the money?
4. Do I get carried away with sports equipment, entertainment, or hobbies?
5. Am I inclined to eat out far too often, or do I go to restaurants I really cannot afford?
6. Am I forsaking biblical principles of tithing plus giving of freewill offerings and sowing alms because there is no money left at the end of the month? In other words, do I put God last on my priority list because I run out of money?

VII. THE IMPORTANCE OF BALANCE

- ◆ **ENJOYING PROSPERITY WITHOUT GREED.** God does not say that we are not to enjoy nice things. The Bible is full of examples in which He prospered His faithful servants, including Abraham, Joseph, Job and many others. All of these were wealthy and not greedy. However, in Luke 12:15, Jesus warned: “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions” (NIV). In modern terminology, Jesus exploded the popular myth of “Whoever has the most toys in the end wins.”



- ◆ **IMPORTANCE OF CONTENTMENT.** God wants to bless His people and He calls us to seek balance in our lives. Paul spoke of contentment saying: "For I have learned, in whatever state I am, therewith to be content" (Philippians 4:11, KJV).
- ◆ **FLEE FROM TEMPTATION – AVOID TROLLING FOR DEBT.** New Christians may not realize how easy it is to open themselves to debt's temptation. Just as the trolling fisherman pulls his fishing lure through the water to attract and hook the fish, we are trolling for debt (openly asking for it), when we window shop, watch a shopping channel, or check out expensive catalogs "just for entertainment." We need to flee from temptation and stay focused on the goal of being debt free.

VIII. CREDIT CARD ABUSE

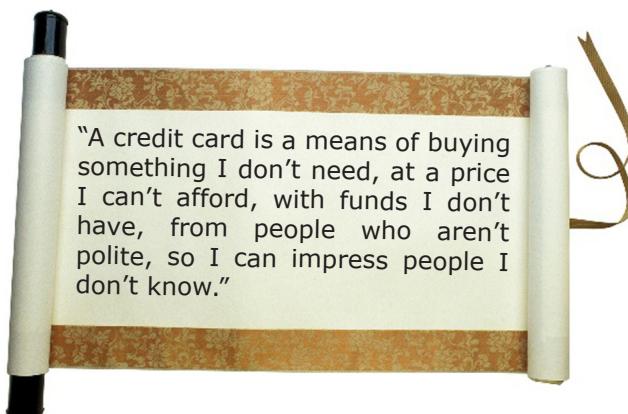
- ◆ **CREDIT CARD DEBT IS THE WORST.** Credit card debt (*and other consumer loan debt*) has risen to astronomical proportions. Of all types of consumer debt, credit card debt is the worst. In fact, credit card abuse has led to a plague of debt bondage for believers and non-believers.

STARTLING REALITIES

Many American families deal with credit card balances of \$7,000 to \$80,000 or more, with compound interest rates of 18% to over 29%.

Most people have no concept of actually paying off the card balance each month. As a result, the interest charges often amount to considerably more than the actual purchase price of the item.

MANY AMERICANS CARRY AND USE AN AVERAGE OF 7 CREDIT CARDS!



A QUOTEABLE QUOTE

In his book, *Dollars and Sense*, Wilson J. Humber used the following quote to discuss the problem with excessive card use.

- ◆ **CREDIT CARD PURCHASES OFTEN LEAVE NO LASTING VALUE.** Unfortunately, many credit card purchases become ways to finance goods or services that have no lasting value such as meals, vacations, clothing, or other rapidly depreciating items. Therefore, a person often ends up paying off credit card debt for an item that has absolutely no remaining value.
- ◆ **CREDIT CARDS LULL YOU INTO FALSE SECURITY.** Many people think that the "available credit" amount that appears on their monthly statements is money they have available to spend. It is NOT!



- ♦ **CREDIT CARDS “MAKE” US SPEND UP TO 35% MORE**, even if we never pay a cent of interest! Several prominent Christian financial teachers and writers have carefully studied this subject. They agree that an individual spends between 25% to 35% less if he or she does not use credit cards. Imagine having one-third

more spendable money each and every month. Studies show that we are far less apt to make spontaneous purchases if we have to write out a check or pay in cash. In other words, if we have the discipline to use a check or to pay in cash for purchases, we may save one third on our monthly expenditures. With such savings in mind, it is best to “go with the green.” Use checks or cash, and only use them for planned expenditures.



- ♦ If you continue to regularly use “plastic,” be on guard against impulse buying! Only buy what is in your family *Flexible Spending Plan!*

BE CREATIVE TO BREAK OLD HABITS

Some people lock their credit cards in a safety deposit box to avoid overuse while others freeze their cards in a large Tupperware bowl. (Imagine praying about an expenditure and then having to thaw the card before purchasing the item!)

- ♦ **PRAY ABOUT USING CREDIT CARDS.** Everyone should pray about the use of credit cards. For couples, honesty is the essential key in gaining financial freedom. If there is a life pattern of card abuse, you should consider not using cards at all or consider establishing strict guidelines. Ask God to give you the grace and wisdom to change.
- ♦ **DEBIT CARDS.** A bank debit card may work best for you. When you use this plastic you are drafting on your checking account balance. You absolutely must record these expenditures as withdrawals from your checking account, to avoid costly and embarrassing overdrafts. You should still use a debit card only for purchases planned in your Flexible Spending Plan.

NOTE — In the next chapter, we will develop an action plan and discuss specific strategies for accelerated repayment of credit card debt. SO GET READY TO GET FREE!

IX. COMPOUND INTEREST: A BLESSING OR A CURSE?

- ♦ **ONE OF THE WONDERS OF THE WORLD.** Compound interest has been referred to as one of the wonders of the world. Unfortunately, many do not understand compound interest. Once we grasp the concept, we will see that compound interest can be good by working for us, or it can be a curse, working against us. Jesus, in the parable of the talents, characterized the wicked and lazy servant as the one who failed to put (invest) some of his master’s money in the bank so it could have at least earned interest (Matthew 25:14-27).
- ♦ **WHAT EXACTLY IS COMPOUND INTEREST?** Compound interest means the initial amount, borrowed or saved, earns interest that is added to the principal to get a new balance. Then, the new total amount earns interest, and the process of compounding is repeated for the term of the agreement. The higher the compound interest rate is, the faster the balance increases. Let’s use a basic example. (You may prefer to use interest tables or a financial calculator.)

If the starting amount, or the principal, is \$2,000 and the compound annual interest rate is 18% (not far off many of today's credit card rates), the following table shows us the effect of compound interest. Utilizing the compound interest chart below, let's assume that no additional principal payments have been made and no withdrawals have been deducted. Remember, compound interest applies to any financial transaction, whether it is a debt or an investment.

	Principal \$	Interest @ 18%	Balance at Year End
1	\$ 2,000	\$ 360	\$ 2,360
2	\$ 2,360	\$ 425	\$ 2,785
3	\$ 2,785	\$ 501	\$ 3,286
4	\$ 3,286	\$ 591	\$ 3,877
5	\$ 3,877	\$ 698	\$ 4,575
6	\$ 4,575	\$ 823	\$ 5,398
7	\$ 5,398	\$ 972	\$ 6,370
8	\$ 6,370	\$ 1,147	\$ 7,517
9	\$ 7,517	\$ 1,353	\$ 8,870
10	\$ 8,870	\$ 1,597	\$ 10,467
15	\$ 10,467	\$ 1,884	\$ 12,351
20	\$ 46,424	\$ 8,356	\$ 54,780
25	\$ 106,206	\$ 19,117	\$ 125,323
30	\$ 242,974	\$ 43,735	\$ 286,709
35	\$ 555,866	\$ 1,000,056	\$ 655,922
40	\$ 1,271,687	\$ 228,904	\$ 1,500,597

This is a simplified example and the numbers have been rounded off to whole dollar amounts. But WOW! Starting with just \$2,000, this amount grew to over \$10,000 in just ten years. The increase (miracle growth) came because the principal at the start of each year was added to the interest earned during the year. The next year's starting principal amount was the combination of the two. Then, the larger amount earned interest and the process continued. (Note: To check the math, use your own calculator. Multiply \$2000 X 1.18 and keep multiplying the answer (principal) 40 times and you will get \$1,500,597.)

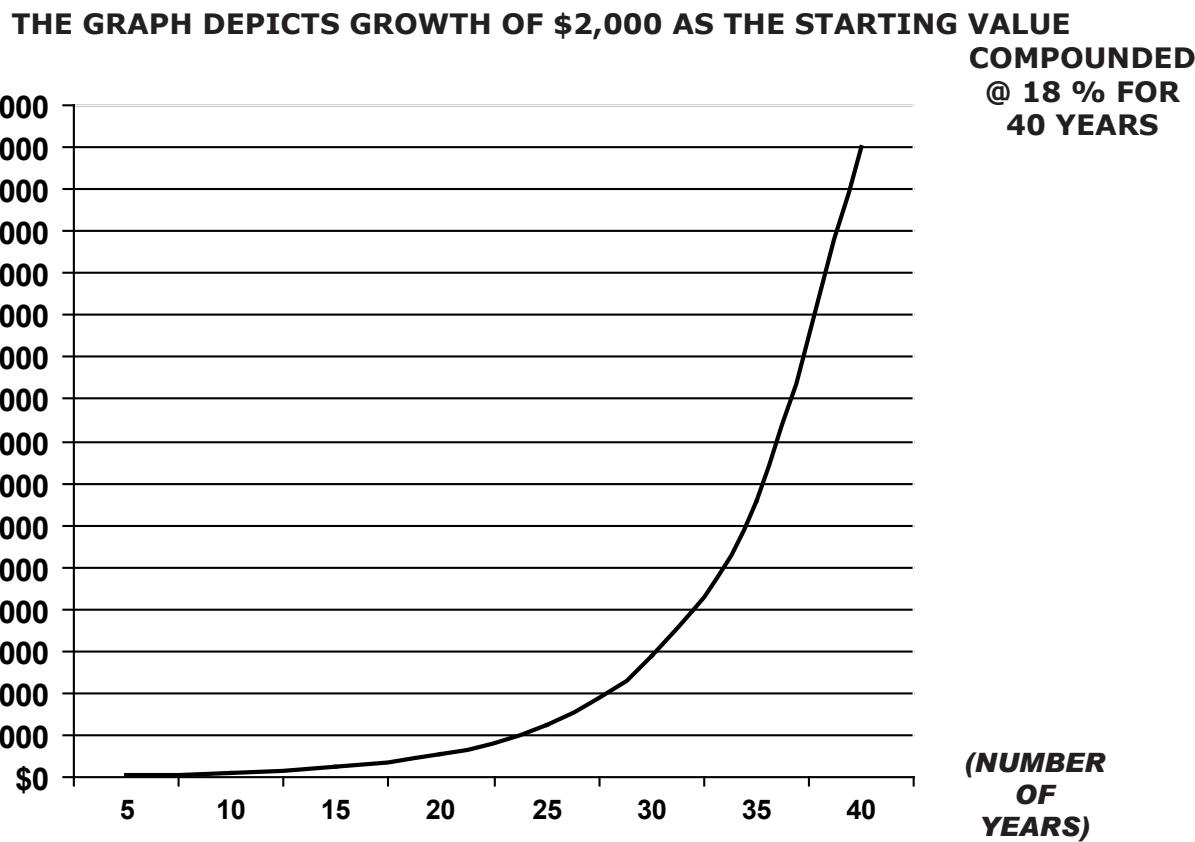
GOOD NEWS OR BAD NEWS?

If this \$2,000 (in the compound interest example) is an investment, the resulting total is very good news. If it is a debt balance, the news is terrible. When the calculations are run for 20-30 years, we observe a very steep increase. At the end of 40 years, the balance is over \$1.5 million. Wow!

Unfortunately, it is very easy to find credit cards that carry compound rates of 18% or higher. It is far more difficult to find investments with sure rates of return that are anywhere near this high.

If you have high interest rate debt and you accelerate the payoff schedule by paying more than the minimum, you are making a guaranteed investment at that high rate. **This is very important. If you pay-off (early) an 18% credit card balance, you have made the equivalent of an 18% guaranteed investment! So, before looking for speculative investments, invest in yourself by eliminating credit card balances and any other high interest debts.**

- ◆ **THE EFFECT OF COMPOUND INTEREST.** Note: The following graph displays the same numbers you just observed. For many people, seeing this dramatic compounding effect in a graph provides a clearer picture than just seeing the numbers in a table form. Because of the scale of the graph, it is difficult to show that the graph actually starts at \$2,000 on the vertical axis, and increases to \$1.5 million (refer back to the table for correct values, year-by-year).



- ◆ **CREDIT CARD DEBT PRACTICAL EXAMPLE.** Consider a \$2,000 credit card purchase made for a ring or a vacation trip. If the compound interest rate is 19.8% and you make only the minimum monthly payments, how long would it take you to pay off this debt? OUCH! The answer is 31 years and 2 months. Even worse, you will have paid interest of \$8,202 and a total amount of \$10,202. This should convince us all to absolutely avoid the minimum monthly payment trap.

X. FINANCIAL VISION AND FAITH GOALS

In Chapter 1, we learned how to use the **Basic Values and Goal Setting** form to establish our core values and match them to corresponding goals. Now we will really dig into the specifics of goal setting using a **Financial Vision and Faith Goals** form. Our fictitious couple, Bob and Mary Jones, provides an example of their personal goal setting. Let's walk through the steps they took:



LEADER'S NOTE - Depending on available class time, you may need to select just two or three examples from the following financial vision and faith goals form. We suggest that you ask focus group participants to turn to the sample form while you read the explanation for the goals categories you select.

1. **Bob and Mary completed the top of the form and dated it** to provide a historical record. Their goals for the ten categories have different time completion dates, which are referred to as "Target Periods." They listed targets ranging from 1 to 10 years for various categories.
2. **Biblical Giving Goals.** We see their commitment to a full ten percent tithe, plus an additional commitment to give freewill offerings and alms of not less than two percent of their increase. A \$250 annual church building fund offering is also in the plan. They will start honoring this commitment next month (September 2007 in this example). They chose a one year target period.
3. **Saving Goals.** They see the need to establish a \$1,000 emergency reserve fund and expect to achieve that in three months. Within one year, they plan to have a reserve fund equal to three months of living expenses. Action steps are critical to make goals come alive, so they plan to open a \$100 bank savings account no later than December 2007. Then they will need to diligently add to that fund in order to build the reserves they've planned for. A one year target period was also chosen for this goal.
4. **Education Fund Goals** are next and you can see that they've projected the funds needed to send their son through a technical college and their daughter through a state university. They've also committed to opening special college fund accounts and adding a stated amount each year. Because of the age of their children, a 5 year target period was chosen. (NOTE: Please do not use Bob and Mary's numbers as being correct. They are part of an example only and you will need to project your own current numbers for each category.)
5. **Debt Repayment Goals.** Bob and Mary Jones used the data regarding their current debts from their own **Debt Repayment** form and set a general family goal starting immediately.

They target a maximum of 2 years for goal fulfillment.

6. **Major Purchases.** Most people do not plan for the next vehicle, the next vacation, next major appliance, or even home remodeling. However, Bob and Mary are planning and you can view the projected costs of each item. As simple action steps, they will open separate savings accounts for the van and vacation. It is a start. The home remodel project is 5 years in the future, but they will soon need an action step for that faith goal to become a reality.
7. **Lifestyle Goals.** These will definitely vary for families based on ages and career status, as well as plans to maintain, enlarge, or cut back on ones' lifestyle. Bob and Mary chose a growth mode because their family is growing and they plan to start a business within three years. They decided on 5 years for this total lifestyle category.
8. **Start a Business.** Bob and Mary Jones have projected total costs of \$25,000. As action steps they will complete this course, develop a sound family *Flexible Spending Plan*, and then devote serious (planned) time to a two-year study of the business they plan to open. They need to evaluate all aspects of this new venture. For example: cost of equipment, maintenance, fuel, hired labor, stationary, advertising, office staff and expenses, accounting services, licenses, taxes, all insurance, etc. NOTE: They recognize the absolute necessity of having a positive monthly cash flow, plus cash reserves, before launching a new business. Their goal is 5 years or less.
9. **Investment Goals.** Bob and Mary see the need to plan for the future and their plan addresses a retirement fund, building a savings reserve, and investing in long-term growth mutual funds. As an essential first action step, Bob will start funding his company retirement plan, at least to the level where he receives all company matching funds. NOTE: They used 5 years as the planning horizon for retirement and for savings goals and 10 years for the mutual fund growth goal. Use target periods that work for you.
10. **Other Goals.** This is a great place to list your personal goals for any category not included on the form. Bob and Mary decided to teach their children God's financial principles by selecting suitable financial training materials for each child.
11. **Estate Planning.** Bob and Mary believe in leaving a legacy, so they address being totally debt free (including their home and business) in 15 years, leaving at least \$10,000 to each child, and providing a good term life insurance policy (on Bob) so Mary can live reasonably if Bob dies before she does.
12. **Homework – God's Work:** As part of this week's homework, you will complete your own ***Financial Vision and Faith Goals*** form and bring it to next week's focus group. Use Bob & Mary's example as a guide, but use your own amounts and timeframes for each goal category.

****REMINDER: These are faith goals so don't be afraid to dream and to project. Put action steps in each goal area and be diligent to take those steps. Establish an accountability review process. Finally, review these goals annually for optimum effectiveness.**

WRITTEN GODLY GOALS = SUCCESS

Only 5% or less ever set written goals with accountability dates and measurements, and they are incredibly more successful than the other 95%. Be one of the 5% and use written godly goals. Dream BIG; we serve a big God! Act on your goals and expect God to do His part.

XI. SUMMARY – FREEDOM FROM DEBT PRINCIPLES

- ◆ **GOD HAS A GOOD PLAN FOR YOU** (Jeremiah 29:11).
- ◆ **THE KNOWLEDGE OF COMPOUND INTEREST** should help you be good stewards of the resources God has given you. We can see that **compound interest can be either a blessing or a curse**. Prudent people should position themselves only for the blessing side of compound interest. (Let the miracle growth work for you!)
- ◆ **UNDERSTANDING DEBT PRINCIPLES** is essential to developing a plan for debt freedom.
- ◆ **GOD DESIRES TO SHARE/IMPART HIS WISDOM TO US.** He knew that Christians in the 21st century would be severely tempted by the bondage of debt, and that Satan would strive to use debt to destroy their testimonies and even their marriages. The more we seek His ways, the easier it will be to make this godly paradigm shift to financial freedom.



LEADERS' NOTE – Give the focus group another brief preview of the forms and examples that are used in this course. (You did this in week 1.) By now the group should be getting more familiar with the forms and examples. Note that they are only examples and are only meant to serve as a guide.

- Example #1 features Bob and Mary Jones before they learned the lessons of this course.
- Example #2 shows how much their situation changed and improved approximately one year after they successfully completed the course.

Now proceed to the homework for Chapter 3

WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE!

(Matthew 19:26)

Be encouraged, you are on the right path!

CHAPTER 3 HOMEWORK

FREEDOM FROM DEBT PRINCIPLES

SPIRITUAL WARFARE HOMEWORK: This week's spiritual warfare section is on curses from believing in false gods and participating in false religions. Do not take this lightly or dismiss it because you were not directly involved in a false religion. Renouncing past involvement (including that of your family/ancestors) is crucial to being able to move forward in God. Please do this section prayerfully even if nothing immediately comes to mind. Many are surprised at what the Holy Spirit reveals to them as they go through this teaching.

1. **Read Spiritual Warfare Section #3.**
2. **Do Practical Application Exercise #3.** Do not let demonic manifestations intimidate you. JESUS IS LORD! NO WEAPON FORMED AGAINST YOU SHALL PROSPER! Declare it and believe it. Do not be afraid to seek godly counsel and help if needed. There is great power in agreement.
3. **Pray and attack the devil before continuing the rest of your homework.** Put on the whole armor of God. Getting free from debt's bondage requires honesty and transparency. You will need to explore your own debt portfolio and determine what, if any, patterns trapped you into bondage. Satan is cunning and he will attempt to turn this time into a blame and guilt session. Use Ephesians 6:10-18 and Romans 8:1 as a guide for your prayer and warfare.
4. **For married couples, you must agree/desire to get out of debt. Pray together before you take the next steps. This is absolutely essential.** Openly discuss debt. Then discuss how debt is affecting your relationship with one another and your relationship with God. Write your answers below.

a) Is there agreement on getting out of debt?

b) How will being debt free improve your relationship with:

Each other? _____

Your family? _____

With God? _____

5. **For Singles – get an accountability partner to join in prayer with you over your finances.** Use wisdom and ensure that the person is in agreement with God’s Word as it relates to finances. Do not hesitate to seek counsel from your focus group leaders.
6. **Identify Supportive Scriptures.** Go back through the teaching outline and select two Scriptures that especially help you understand the perils of debt. List them below and prepare to discuss one of them with the group.

a) _____

b) _____

7. **Review Compound Interest.** Compound interest is a very important principle that can work for you or against you. Review the explanation of compound interest.
 - a) Be sure you understand how compound interest works. Explain it to someone else. (For couples, explain it to your spouse or your children.)
 - b) How has compound interest worked against you.
 - c) How is compound interest working for you? Or how do you envision compound interest could be a positive factor in your household?
8. **Set Faith Goals.** In Chapter 1, you prepared some very broad goals. Now, use the blank forms provided (after you’ve made 6 extra copies) to set your goals. The form entitled **Financial Vision & Faith Goals** can be used for any time period of one year or longer. You decide what target periods to set for each category and state the target date (month and year) after the words “Target Period” for each individual category. Pray, dream and enjoy setting your faith goals. Be prepared to discuss some of these goals next week. **This multi-page blank goals form can be found in Chapter 15.** Use Bob and Mary’s example from Chapter 3 as a guide.
9. **An Annual Letter to Your Spouse or Dependents.** In June of 1998, Bill Sitter (co-author) got a shocking surprise. A hospital visit for “tests” ended with a seven-bypass heart surgery. God did an amazing healing work, as only He can. However, Maureen took considerable

comfort in knowing that Bill periodically updated a letter outlining the family's actual financial position. The letter provided approximate balances of banking and investment accounts. It listed key contacts: CPA, lawyer, investment broker, family, and especially who to lean on for spiritual advice. It also discussed wills, insurance and funeral instructions.

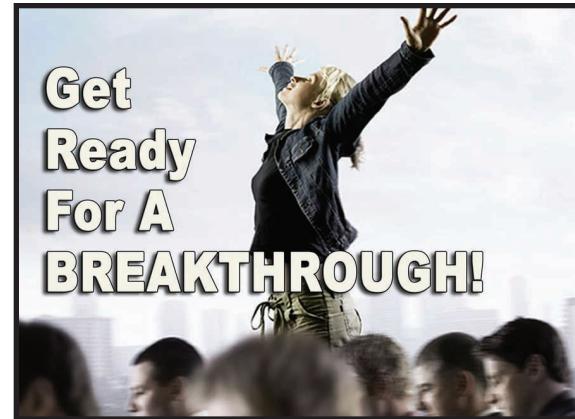
No one enjoys reflecting on what life will be like if one spouse dies. This can be especially stressful if the main income provider dies first. So, we urge you (if you have a spouse or any dependents) to consider writing this annual "financial status" letter. Give it to your mate (or oldest dependent) and keep a copy. Then mark your calendar to update in a year. This is a big step in the process of being a "good and faithful steward."

Singles should consider writing a letter that includes contact information for friends and family and make sure the letter is put in a secure place. Ensure that you have a legal will prepared. Use caution when sharing vital information.

10. **Record Financial & Other Breakthroughs. Be ready to give God the glory during next week's sharing time.**

BREAKTHROUGHS!

FINANCIAL FREEDOM COURSE
RECORD YOUR WEEKLY TESTIMONIES



NAME: _____

DATE: **MONEY, CAREER, GIFTS/INHERITANCE, & OTHER**

FINANCIAL VISION AND FAITH GOALS - EXAMPLE

Form may be used for 1 year or longer - you decide for each goal.

Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones

Date: June 30, 2007

**Target Dates may vary for each goal.

BIBLICAL GIVING GOALS

Target Period: 1 year

To pay the 10% tithe plus give & sow min of 2 % of our increase for offerings & alms.

To make additional gifts each year of \$250 to church building fund.

First Action Step: Commit to 10% first fruits tithe & prepare Biblical Giving Plan.

First Action Step By (Month & Year): September, 2007

SAVING GOALS

Target Period: 1 year

Type of Savings Account

(Do Not Include Investments)

	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Annual Return</i>	<i>Date</i>
Emergency Reserve	\$ 1,000	2 %	3 months
3 Month Reserve	\$ 12,000	2 %	1 year
	\$ _____	%	_____
TOTAL:	\$ 13,000	2 %	_____

First Action Step: Open Bank Savings Account with \$100.

First Action Step By (Month & Year): December, 2007

EDUCATION FUND GOALS

Target Period: 5 years

A college or special education fund will exist for each of our children/grandchildren:

<i>Child</i>	<i>Type of College</i>	<i>Approximate Annual Cost</i>	<i>Approximate Total Cost</i>	<i>Goal Amount</i>
Jacob	Tech. College	\$ 3,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000
Sarah	State University	\$ 10,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000
		\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
		\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

First Action Step: Immediately open special college funds both children \$100 each and make a commitment to annual contributions of \$500 to each fund.

First Action Step By (Month & Year): January 2009

FINANCIAL VISION AND FAITH GOALS - EXAMPLE

(Page 2 of 4)

DEBT REPAYMENT GOALS

Target Period: 2 years

To have paid off the following debts:

Creditors	Total Owed	Target Pay-Off Date
Credit Card A	\$ 4,000	Sep 2007
Credit Card B	\$ 2,000	Dec 2007
Car Loan	\$ 7,000	Jun 2008
Parent's Loan	\$ 3,000	Aug 2008
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____

First Action Step: Sell surplus assets. Begin the Rapid Debt Repayment Plan, tithe, give offerings, and believe in God.

First Action Step By (Month & Year): August 2007

MAJOR PURCHASES

Target Period: 2-5 years

To have paid cash for the following major purchases/expenditures: (new home, car, vacations, etc.)

Purchase/Expenditure	Goal Amount	Target Date
New Van	\$ 28,000	3 years - Aug 2010
Annual Vacation	\$ 2,500	2 years - Aug 2009
Remodel Home	\$ 20,000	5 years - Aug 2012
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____

First Action Step: Open savings accounts for van & vacation - \$50 each and keep adding funds monthly.

First Action Step By (Month & Year): Immediate

LIFESTYLE GOALS

Target Period: 5 years

For the next 5 years, to:

- Check One:**
- Maintain Present Level (Giving, Saving & Spending).
 - Enlarge Spending Plan (Giving, Saving & Spending).
 - Cut Back on Lifestyle and Spending Plan.

Strategy/Plan to achieve the lifestyle goal checked above:

Our family is growing & we plan to start a business in 3 years, or sooner, & plan to grow our: income, giving, spending & savings.

First Action Step: Complete & use a Flexible Spending Plan & Cash Flow Control System.

First Action Step By (Month & Year): December 2007

FINANCIAL VISION AND FAITH GOALS - EXAMPLE

(Page 3 of 4)

START A BUSINESS

Target Period: 5 years

To start a business which will require an approximate investment of: \$ \$25,000

Business Description: Lawn Care & Maintenance

First Action Step: Complete sound Spending Plan & start 2 year study & business plan process.

Devote 5 hours per month for 2 years to evaluate and plan.

First Action Step By (Month & Year): January 2008 - Start research. If results are favorable launch in three years. Must have sound Flexible Spending Plan & positive cash flow first.

INVESTMENT GOALS

Target Period: 5-10 years

To have the following investments (stocks, bonds, mutual funds, real estate, savings, etc.):

Type of Investment	Amount	Annual Return	Date
Retirement (401k etc.)	\$ 100,000	7 %	5 yrs.
Savings Reserve	\$ 12,000	5 %	5 yrs.
Mutual Funds - growth	\$ 50,000	10 %	10 yrs.
	\$ _____	%	_____
	\$ _____	%	_____
	\$ _____	%	_____
TOTAL:	\$ 162,000		

First Action Step: Fund my share of company 401k plan to get matching funds.

First Action Step By (Month & Year): Immediately & stay with it.

OTHER GOALS

Target Period: Immediate and ongoing

(List, explain & estimate values if applicable)

To train our children on God's financial principles. - Starting immediately

First Action Step: Select financial training materials suitable to our children's ages.

First Action Step By (Month & Year): Begin searching now. Purchase resources in 3 months.

FINANCIAL VISION AND FAITH GOALS - EXAMPLE

(Page 4 of 4)

ESTATE PLANNING:

Target Period: varies - see below

To pass on the following legacy (estate) as described below:

Our own & Business Debt Free - 5 years

An inheritance of at least \$10,000 for each child. - 10 years

At least a \$100,000 life insurance policy on Bob for Mary. (Investigate term life & try to reach \$250,000 coverage) - 1 year

First Action Step: Complete this course and review goals & plans yearly, as a family.

First Action Step By (month & year): First yearly review August 2008.

CONGRATULATIONS:

Once godly goals are established, you are ahead of 95% of the people in the world.

The very next step is to begin taking your First Action Steps to accomplish the goals that God has given you. These may be very small steps. For example, a savings plan goal may start by you opening a savings account with a \$5 deposit. It may seem small, but in reality it is a huge action step - so don't delay.

MOVE IN FAITH:

You need to move in faith. You prayed and set these goals knowing that God has a wonderful plan for you (Jeremiah 29:11). God has the resources. You need to supply the faith and the diligence to be a good and faithful steward. Then let God be God. He is your pilot and your provider.

REVIEW/REVISE ANNUALLY:

Make a commitment to review your goals at least once a year, maybe at the start of the New Year. Thank God for progress and for breakthroughs! Set new goals, or revise; these are YOUR goals.



Married Couples: Be sure to do your goal setting, and goals review, as a one flesh couple.



SINGLES: Seek a godly, trusted accountability partner.

CHAPTER 4

(WEEK 4)



"Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law."
(Romans 13:8, NIV)

"Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits... who redeems your life from the pit...who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's."
(Psalm 103:2,4-5, NIV)

Freedom From Debt Action Plan



LEADERS' NOTES – WEEKLY PROTOCOL

- ❖ **Praise Song** – A great way to start!
Suggest typed lyrics and upbeat music.
Have the tape or CD ready so you can just hit play.
- ❖ **Prayer** – Led by a Leader or LIT.
Recommend group holding hands.
- ❖ **Spiritual Warfare** – in Jesus' mighty name!
(According to Luke 10:19)
- ❖ **Homework Sharing** – Normally led by LITs.
Led by leaders if LITs are teaching this week.
Time control and equal sharing are important.
- ❖ **Share Breakthroughs** – Celebrate!
Brief but builds hope. Can be combined with
homework sharing.
- ❖ **Offering Time** – Opportunity to Sow!
Have a focus group member pray first.
Put faith into action!
- ❖ **10 Minute Break** - Beverages & restroom.
- ❖ **Weekly Lesson** – Taught by both leaders and LITs.
- ❖ **Homework Preview**
- ❖ **Dismiss with Prayer and Spiritual Warfare**
- holding hands. Entire session should average 2
to 2 ½ Hours.
- ❖ **Leaders and LITs complete weekly report**

CHAPTER 4 (WEEK 4)

FREEDOM FROM DEBT ACTION PLAN

REVIEW CHAPTER 3 – “Freedom From Debt Principles”

In Chapter 3, you learned about a godly paradigm shift - from the world's acceptance of debt bondage as being normal to a heavenly view with no debt bondage.

We know that debt is not sin, but failure to repay it is. We hope you will learn to hate debt and refuse to stay in the hideous cycle of debt bondage!

I. GET YOUR HEART RIGHT

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you have the right attitude so you can break out of the bondage of debt.

- ◆ **PRAY** (together if married) and ask God for wisdom. Believe that our Father in Heaven will give you good gifts (good answers) if you ask (Matthew 7:11).
- ◆ **BE TRANSPARENT ABOUT LIFE PATTERNS** that have led you to a destructive debt cycle. Ask God to deliver you and your family from a poverty mentality.

With Christ in our lives, we all have the power and the responsibility to renew our minds.

Often Christians accept a poverty mentality as a sign of spirituality. This is not God's plan! So break off that curse of poverty!

- ◆ **BE QUICK TO REPENT** over past abuses and lack of financial discipline. God already knows all about them and will forgive you if you admit and repent. In the Lord's Prayer, we are commanded to forgive each other. This is not an option but a direct command. Forgive yourself (and your mate if married). Failure to forgive others or yourself holds you in debt bondage. God wants His people free!
- ◆ **DARE TO DREAM of financial freedom.** Declare your vision openly. As Habakkuk 2:2 instructs, **“write down the revelation and make it plain” (NIV)**. Remember, Proverbs 29:18 tells us that **“where there is no vision, the people perish” (KJV)**. You set faith vision goals in Chapter Three's homework. Keep the vision alive. We serve a Big God!
- ◆ **GET INTO AGREEMENT WITH GOD'S WORD.** There is power in agreement. Couples need to agree in prayer and seek a freedom from debt plan. Singles are encouraged to find a godly partner who shares their financial freedom goals. Pray in agreement and cover each other with prayer and spiritual warfare. Matthew 18:19 says, **“Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven” (NIV)**. This Scripture is a promise from Jesus to us.
- ◆ **BE COURAGEOUS!** Your new biblical view of debt and credit will not be accepted by the world. The world is caught up in consumerism and focused on self-satisfaction. **“For everything in the world - the cravings of sinful man, the lust of the eyes and the boasting of what he has and does - comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever” (1 John 2:16-17, NIV)**.



Singles make sure you understand and agree with the biblical roles of a husband and a wife prior to entering into the marriage covenant. (1 Peter 3:1-7) If you are planning to marry, discuss this with your partner so that you are aware of each other's beliefs and expectations.

FOR MARRIED COUPLES



You should always support each other and avoid playing the guilt and blame game. Satan wants couples to argue over financial problems. Ask God for grace for you and for your mate.

God assigned roles for both the husband and the wife. Read 1 Peter 3:1-7 (together and out loud) and ask the Holy Spirit to help each of you assume your proper role. Seek and value your spouse's counsel.

Be Courageous: Many times the enemy will use distractions or friction in a marriage just before an impending breakthrough.

II. FIRST STEPS

If you are a covenant Christian with a debt problem that you created and you are willing to repent, then you are clearly ready to develop a plan to get out of debt. Here are some key steps.

- ◆ **HONOR GOD WITH YOUR GIVING AND INVITE HIM TO BE PART OF ALL YOUR PLANS.** We have established that God owns everything and He is the only source of increase (Psalm 50:10-11, Deuteronomy 8:18). Therefore, your debt repayment plan must not exclude what His Word says pertaining to the acts of tithing, freewill offerings, and alms. If you want God to bless your plan, you must honor Him with your giving.
- ◆ **WHERE ARE YOU NOW?** Many people do not have a true picture of their debt status. The *Debt Repayment Schedule* makes it easy to list all your current debts. Knowing your financial situation will relieve considerable stress, and that is a good start.

BOB AND MARY'S DEBTS – EXAMPLE #1. Let's look at our fictional couple, Bob and Mary Jones. Before they enrolled in a focus group, Bob and Mary obtained their financial records in order to complete the *Debt Repayment Schedule* form shown in Example #1.

IMPORTANT NOTE

The *Debt Repayment Schedule* should include all debts with the exception of the primary home mortgage. The mortgage obligation is a debt and must be included as a liability when you complete the *Inventory Your Liabilities* form. However, the mortgage payment is not included on this form because it will be included in the monthly housing expense category when you complete the *Living Expenses* form.

DEBT REPAYMENT SCHEDULE - EXAMPLE #1

NAME(S): Bob and Mary Jones

DATE: June 20, 2007

	LENDER	\$ BALANCE	\$ MONTHLY PAYMENT	INT. %	REMAINING PAYMENTS	PAY-OFF DATE
1	Credit Card A	\$4,000	\$67	18.0	300	6/30/2032
2	Credit Card B	\$2,000	\$33	18.0	300	6/30/2032
3	Car Loan	\$7,000	\$307	12.0	36	6/30/2010
4	Parent's Loan	\$3,000	\$50	0.0	60	6/30/2012
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
TOTAL:		\$16,000	\$457			

NOTE ON USING DEBT REPAYMENT SCHEDULE:

This form should include all debts with the exception of a primary home mortgage. The mortgage obligation is a debt and must be included as a liability when you complete the *List Your Liabilities* form. However, the mortgage payment is not included on this form because it will be included in the monthly housing expense category when you complete the *Estimated Monthly Living Expenses* form. If your list of debts exceeds the 15 spaces given, make extra pages. Do not despair, you are on the road to Financial Freedom.

HOW TO DETERMINE REMAINING PAYMENTS – To determine how many payments are left on each debt, Bob and Mary called each lender and got an estimate, based on continuous minimum payments and assuming no change in the interest rate. You may also be able to use online calculators from credit unions or banks.

Bob and Mary have four separate debts, not including their home mortgage. The schedule shows a current balance of \$4,000 for Credit Card A, with minimum monthly payments of \$67 and an interest rate of 18%. There are 300 monthly payments left (25 years) if they make only the minimum payment and no new charges are incurred.

Credit Card B has a \$2,000 balance, minimum monthly payments of \$33, and an interest rate of 18%. This card will also be paid off in 300 payments if no additional charges are incurred.

The Jones' also have a car loan for \$7,000 at 12%, and there are 36 remaining monthly payments of \$307 each.

Their parents loaned them \$3,000 at zero percent interest. There are 60 payments left at \$50 per month. (NOTE: Today, in the USA, interest free loans are not legal. However, since many family loans are often actually gifts disguised as interest free loans, we will continue with this example.)

At the bottom of their *Debt Repayment Schedule*, our fictional couple did the math. Their total consumer debt was \$16,000 and the monthly payment total was \$457. The blacked-out areas indicate spaces where columns are not to be totaled.

Your homework for this week will involve the completion of your own *Debt Repayment Schedule*. Now you know how it is done, so let's move on and find out how to activate a debt repayment plan.

III. KEY ELEMENTS FOR A DEBT REPAYMENT PLAN TO WORK

Once the *Debt Repayment Schedule* is completed, you will have a picture of: what is owed, to whom, at what interest rate, and for how long - assuming there are no new charges and no extra or accelerated payments. Let's explore the elements necessary for a debt repayment plan to work.

♦ **UNDERSTANDING THE POSITIVE CASH FLOW MARGIN CONCEPT.** A positive cash flow situation exists when money is left over at the end of the month after tithing, giving offerings and sowing alms, paying taxes, paying debt payments, and accounting for all expense items. Workable repayment strategies are based on having enough money to meet the minimum obligations in your *Flexible Spending Plan* and using surplus money to attack debts. If there is no extra money, the *Flexible Spending Plan* must be carefully reworked.

- POSITIVE CASH FLOW = CHOICE
- EVEN CASH FLOW = NO CHOICE
- NEGATIVE CASH FLOW = FORCED BORROWING

♦ **BOB AND MARY – EXAMPLE #1 MONTHLY CASH FLOW ANALYSIS.** Because the concept of a monthly cash flow margin is so vital to your debt repayment strategy, let us examine Bob and Mary's situation in Example #1. You will be working with these forms in Chapters 5 and 6, so this review will be brief.

The top of the form is used to show the family's income less their priority expenses: giving, payroll taxes, and debt repayments. The result is a *net spendable income* of \$2,378 (\$4,000 less \$1,622).

The middle section of the form is used to recap the couple's monthly living expenses. There are ten categories labeled A-J. You will work with these in Chapter 5, so for now just note that the monthly living expenses amount to a total of \$2,876 per month.

Cash flow margin is determined by subtracting the total monthly living expenses of \$2,876 from the couple's net spendable income of \$2,378. Unfortunately, Bob and Mary quickly see that they have a negative cash flow of \$498 each month. This is not good news, and it is impossible to execute a rapid debt repayment strategy when there is more month left at the end of the money.

MONTHLY CASH FLOW ANALYSIS - Example #1

Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones

June 30, 2007

Gross Income: \$ 4,000

Less Priority Expenses:

A. Giving (tithes, offerings & alms)	<u>\$ 415</u>
B. Taxes (from payroll records)	<u>\$ 750</u>
C. Debt (total of mo. payments)	<u>\$ 457</u>

Total Priority Expenses: (-) \$ (1,622)

NET SPENDABLE INCOME: (Gross income less A, B, & C =) **\$ 2,378**

MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES

A. Housing	<u>\$ 1,072</u>
B. Food	<u>\$ 500</u>
C. Clothing	<u>\$ 110</u>
D. Transportation	<u>\$ 286</u>
E. Entertainment/recreation	<u>\$ 308</u>
F. Medical	<u>\$ 120</u>
G. Insurance	<u>\$ 135</u>
H. Children	<u>\$ 90</u>
I. Gifts	<u>\$ 80</u>
J. Miscellaneous	<u>\$ 175</u>

TOTAL MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES: \$ (2,876)

MONTHLY CASH FLOW MARGIN: \$ (498)

(Net Spendable Income minus total (A-J) Living Expenses)

Commitments for Monthly Positive Cash Flow Margin:

A. Savings	<u>\$ _____</u>
B. Retirement	<u>\$ _____</u>
C. Extra Debt Payment	<u>\$ _____</u>
D. Additional Giving	<u>\$ _____</u>

Total Commitments for Positive Cash Flow: \$ _____

Uncommitted Monthly Cash Flow Margin: \$ _____

Comments: There is a serious negative monthly cash flow margin. Immediate corrective action is needed to avoid further debt, and to reduce expenses.

GOOD NEWS – EXAMPLE #2 MONTHLY CASH FLOW ANALYSIS. We do not want to get ahead of Chapters 5 and 6. However, we do need to take a peek at the Jones' situation about one year after they completed the *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* book and focus group.

MONTHLY CASH FLOW ANALYSIS - Example #2	
Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones	Date: August 31, 2008
Gross Income:	\$ 4,000
Less Priority Expenses:	
A. Giving (tithes, offerings & alms)	\$ 415
B. Taxes (from payroll records)	\$ 750
C. Debt (total of mo. payments)	\$ -
Total Priority Expenses: (-)	\$ (1,165)
NET SPENDABLE INCOME: (Gross income less A, B, & C =)	\$ 2,835
MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES	
A. Housing	\$ 1,052
B. Food	\$ 425
C. Clothing	\$ 95
D. Transportation	\$ 174
E. Entertainment/recreation	\$ 110
F. Medical	\$ 120
G. Insurance	\$ 35
H. Children	\$ 90
I. Gifts	\$ 46
J. Miscellaneous	\$ 110
TOTAL MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES:	\$ 2,257
MONTHLY CASH FLOW MARGIN:	\$ 578
(Net Spendable Income minus total (A-J) Living Expenses)	
Commitments for Monthly Positive Cash Flow Margin:	
A. Savings	\$ 100
B. Retirement	\$ 100
C. Extra Debt Payment	\$ 100
D. Additional Giving	\$ 50
Total Commitments for Positive Cash Flow:	\$ (350)
Uncommitted Monthly Cash Flow Margin:	\$ 228
Comments: Now that high interest debt has been eliminated, this family has a balanced spending plan and is on the way to paying off the mortgage. They have \$228 per month in uncommitted cash flow and have the freedom to rework their spending plan as needed.	

The Joneses had no change in income or taxes. After completing the Chapter 2 on Biblical Giving, Bob and Mary rearranged their giving plan. The amount (\$415) they are giving has been restructured to include a full tithe plus offerings and alms. They also sold several assets and made other sacrifices to eliminate all consumer debt. As a result, their net spendable income is now \$2,835.

As a family, they took separate actions to reduce certain monthly living expenses and their A-J total is now \$2,257. Therefore, it is no surprise that their monthly cash flow margin went from a negative \$498 to a positive \$578. Now, they are ideally positioned to make a number of excellent financial decisions including extra principal payments on their home mortgage.

Now let's return to the key elements needed for an effective debt repayment plan.

- ♦ **USE MONTHLY SURPLUS MONEY TO ATTACK DEBT.** A portion of the positive cash flow, or monthly surplus, should be prayerfully committed to paying outstanding debt balances. The first extra monies should be used to bring any past due loans to current status.
- ♦ **COMMIT EXTRA INCOME TO DEBT REPAYMENT.** If a believer is sincere about his or her commitment to break out of the debt cycle, he or she should prayerfully consider committing a significant portion of any extra income to paying off loans early. This extra income includes raises, bonuses, inheritances, and cash gifts.

DEBT REPAYMENT TIPS

- 1) Using some of your monthly surplus to attack the highest interest rate loans will have the biggest impact. By paying off an 18% interest-bearing credit card loan, you are making an 18% investment in your future.
- 2) Some financial advisors favor paying off loans with the smallest balance first because there is a sense of satisfaction in having a debt paid in full. You decide and then do it!
- 3) Of course, while you are making extra payments on the targeted debts, it is essential that you make at least the minimum payments for all other debts on time. Stay current with all creditors.

- ♦ **AS YOU PAY OFF ONE DEBT, COMMIT MORE MONEY TO ANOTHER.** A key to rapid debt repayment is to agree that as one debt is paid off, the amount of that monthly payment is committed to paying off the next debt. (This extra money is in addition to the regular payment amount for the next debt.) When debt number two is paid in full, the amount you applied to debt #1 and #2 is applied against debt #3, and so on until all debts are paid.

If you have ever played with dominos, envision your paid-off credit cards tumbling over one at a time as they are paid-off, cut-up, and the accounts are closed.

- ♦ **PRAY ABOUT CUTTING UP CARDS AS THEY ARE PAID-OFF.** If your household has been burdened with high interest credit card debt, we recommend that you pray about cutting up the cards as they are paid-off or even before they are paid-off. Then, get a paid in full statement for your records. Rejoice and give thanks to the Lord for each small victory.
- ♦ **KEEP ONE LOW INTEREST CREDIT CARD OR DEBIT CARD.** You will likely need one card in order to travel, book a hotel, or rent a car. We recommend a debit card or a low interest major credit card, but caution you to use it wisely and only for expenses in your *Flexible Spending Plan*. Promptly pay the card off in full each month to avoid any interest payments.

- ◆ **PRAY DAILY.** Reinforce your covenant with God and daily commit yourself to your debt repayment plan. Be prepared to do spiritual warfare by putting on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-18). Ephesians tells us that our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the devil, who wants us in all types of bondage. (*If married, pray together.*)

Commit Your Plan To The Lord

As we see in Psalm 103:4, it is the Lord “**who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s**” (NKJV).

IV. GO INTO ACTION

The debt repayment process allows you to start kicking the devil out of your finances!

- ◆ **CHANGE SPENDING HABITS IF NEEDED.** For some people, significant changes in spending habits must take place. In Proverbs 25:28, we see that God encourages self-control: “**Like a city whose walls are broken down is a man who lacks self control**” (NIV).
- ◆ **SELL NON-ESSENTIAL ASSETS.** Selling non-essential assets (such as a boat, coin or card collection, extra vehicle, antique, etc.) may be an option. Ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom. If you are married, reach an agreement. Then turn any extra cash into accelerated debt payments. Once you escape debt bondage, you can agree to treat yourselves to certain nice items. In Example #2, Bob and Mary sold assets to drastically reduce debt.
- ◆ **BE WARY OF DEBT CONSOLIDATION LOANS AND HOME EQUITY LOANS.** These are often second mortgages on your home! You will generally do better with your own debt repayment plan. Unfortunately, these consolidation or home equity loans often become new debt and do not help address core problems.
- ◆ **WIVES TEND TO BE MORE SECURITY CONSCIOUS THAN HUSBANDS.** Men are generally more willing to take risks. Any loan that jeopardizes the equity in a home can be a serious cause of concern to a wife, and should concern all homeowners.
- ◆ **ATTACK ROOT CAUSES OF DEBT.** It is paramount that you attack the root cause of the debt and/or overspending problem. If the root cause is not corrected and serious behavior changes are not implemented, any “bailout loan” plan will just allow the problem to get worse.
- ◆ **COMMUNICATE WITH CREDITORS.** Communication with creditors is essential regarding all past due debts. Proverbs 15:1 provides wisdom regarding our communications with creditors: “**A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger**” (NIV). Call creditors before they call you. BE PROACTIVE!

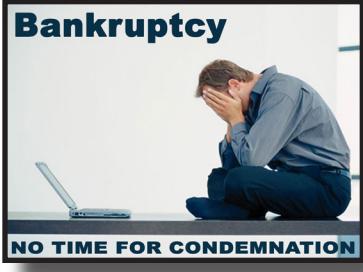


FOR MARRIED COUPLES ~ The husband has responsibilities as the head of the household and he should generally be the one to speak with creditors. It is unfair to dump this responsibility on the wife just because she may be the one at home when the creditor calls. Ephesians 5:23 is one of many Scriptures defining the husband’s role as head of the family: “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church, and He is the savior of the body” (KJV).

V. BANKRUPTCY

The legal system in America provides for several types of personal and business bankruptcies. What does bankruptcy mean for covenant Christians?

- ◆ **LEGAL PROTECTION.** In many cases, declaring bankruptcy may provide legal protection from creditors, temporarily or permanently.
- ◆ **GOD EXPECTS US TO REPAY.** If we owe money to someone for an unpaid bill (including a company or the government), then God expects us to repay the debt regardless of all the bankruptcy laws that exist. ***"The wicked borrows and does not pay back" (Psalm 37:21, NAS).***
- ◆ **DECLARING BANKRUPTCY IS NOT A SIN.** However, we should purpose in our hearts to repay every debt. The only exception would be if the creditor actually releases you from part or all of the debt.



VI. SUMMARY

In Chapter 3, you learned that God does not want His people in bondage to debt. The combination of high compound interest rates and credit card abuse is drowning many Christians and keeping them from achieving the destiny God has planned.

In this chapter, you studied the concept of developing a positive monthly cash flow margin and learned how to utilize monthly cash surplus for rapid debt repayment.

In Chapters 5 and 6, you will see how easy it is to develop your own *Flexible Spending Plan*, so your situation will resemble Bob and Mary's situation in Example #2.

- ◆ **FAITH & TRUST ARE REQUIRED.** Committing to your new debt repayment plan and making sacrifices requires faith and trust in God. If you have reached this point in the course prayerfully and in agreement, then you are definitely ready to use the powerful faith spoken of in Hebrews 11:1: ***"Now faith is the assurance (the confirmation, the title deed) of the things (we) hope for, being the proof of things (we) do not see and the conviction of their reality - faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses" (AMP).***
- ◆ **THE BORROWER IS SERVANT TO THE LENDER!** So we should strive to do our best, with God's grace, to follow His instructions.
- ◆ **REMEMBER - All financial decisions are really spiritual decisions!**
- ◆ **PUT YOUR PLAN INTO ACTION!** Go for it! And may God take you out of debt's bondage and bring you into financial freedom. By God's grace, smash the debt cycle. Commit to breaking the pattern of buying on easy payment terms. Show the world you have the discipline to pay for what you need, to tithe the first fruits of your increase, to give freewill offerings, to sow alms biblically, and to save for emergencies and for the future.



LEADERS' NOTE – Now is the time to preview this week's homework. Close this session with a strong prayer asking the Holy Spirit to grant grace to each participant in changing their bad habit patterns. Lead the group in spiritual warfare in Jesus' mighty name.

CHAPTER 4 HOMEWORK

FREEDOM FROM DEBT ACTION PLAN

SPIRITUAL WARFARE HOMEWORK: This week's spiritual warfare section is on curses from sin. It addresses curses from general sin, unfaithfulness, and insensitivity.

1. **Read Spiritual Warfare Section #4.**
2. **Do Practical Application Exercise #4.** Sin is a very real stronghold that blocks the blessings of God. Sin must be dealt with if you want to be completely financially free. Do not believe the lie that you cannot be victorious in every area of temptation or that you will forever reap the consequences of past sin. Declare the truth of God's Word. YOU ARE A NEW CREATION IN CHRIST. THE OLD HAS PASSED AWAY. ALL THINGS ARE MADE NEW! (2 Cor. 5:17) Do not be overly harsh with yourself for failures. Remember His mercies are new EVERY morning.
3. **Pray Hard.** You are about to experience a huge breakthrough as you move toward financial victory. Satan wants you in debt bondage because it leads to strife and bitterness.
4. **Complete the *Debt Repayment Schedule* form** from this week's teaching. Use a copy of the full size form of this miniature version.

DEBT REPAYMENT SCHEDULE						
NAME(S): _____ DATE: _____						
	LENDER	\$ BALANCE	\$ MONTHLY PAYMENT	INT. %	REMAINING PAYMENTS	PAY-OFF DATE
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
TOTAL:						

NOTE ON USING DEBT REPAYMENT SCHEDULE:

This form should include all debts with the exception of a primary home mortgage. The mortgage obligation is a debt and must be included as a liability when you complete the *List Your Liabilities* form. However, the mortgage payment is not included on this form because it will be included in the monthly housing expense category when you complete the *Estimated Monthly Living Expenses* form. If your list of debts exceeds the 15 spaces given, make extra pages. Do not despair, you are on the road to Financial Freedom.

- a) **Make six extra copies of the form** for future use. The full size blank forms are located in Chapter 15.
 - b) List each debt you owe. If you need more space, use more forms. We recommend you list the loans from top to bottom with the highest interest rate at the top and the rest of the debts in descending order. If you do not have all the information needed, call each lender. They are obligated to inform you of this information. (Pray before calling to cut through phone delays. Be persistent and don't hesitate to ask for a supervisor. Do not wait to start making these calls!)
 - c) Remember, do not include a primary home mortgage payment on the *Debt Repayment Schedule*. It is a debt and our long-range goal should be to pay it off! However, the mortgage payment will be included as one of the monthly housing expense items on the *Living Expenses* form you will complete in the *Flexible Spending Plan* section of this course.
 - d) For those with serious debt challenges, a good short-term goal is to keep car and mortgage payments current while focusing attention on reducing and eliminating all higher interest debt.
 - e) Do the math (in pencil) to total the appropriate columns for balances and monthly payments.
 - f) Complete the name and date blanks and keep this form as a key working document.
 - g) Be prepared to discuss your progress during next week's homework sharing time (no specifics need to be discussed).
5. **Take a few minutes to celebrate!** Just by completing this *Debt Repayment Schedule*, you have leaped ahead of the majority of people with debt problems because most of them do not have an accurate picture of their debt status. Now you do, and you have a powerful tool to use in your debt repayment strategy.
6. **Commit prayerfully to a rapid debt repayment plan.** For couples who want to achieve success, both spouses must be in complete agreement. For singles, we suggest a godly accountability partner. Take time to discuss what it will take to be free from debt.
- a) All loan payments must be kept current.
 - b) No new debt is to be incurred.
 - c) The *Flexible Spending Plan* must be worked and/or reworked to ensure that there is some positive cash flow at the end of the month. You will develop these forms in the coming weeks.
 - d) Commit to using a set minimum portion of your positive cash flow to make extra payments against the principal balance on your highest interest loan.
 - e) Commit to using a portion of unexpected increases in income (raises, tax refunds, gifts) to make extra loan principal payments.
 - f) Once a targeted loan is paid in full, document your records and close that account. If it is a credit card account, we recommend you destroy the card.

- g) Commit to using the money that you were using to make payments to the previous loan, which is now paid-off, to pay down the principal of the next highest interest loan. Then retire that loan and close that account.
- h) Commit to repeating this process until all loans are paid off. This strategy takes discipline and sacrifice, but the outcome of true financial freedom is well worth the effort. Remember freedom from all debt is not a dream, it is God's plan for all of us.
7. **Write a commitment statement.** A successful debt repayment plan takes time. In this homework session, you may only be able to establish what your present situation is and agree on an action plan for the future. We encourage you to write out a statement (using the space below) about your commitment to avoid new debt and to pay-off existing debt. You are encouraged to sign and date your statement to reinforce your commitment to debt free living.

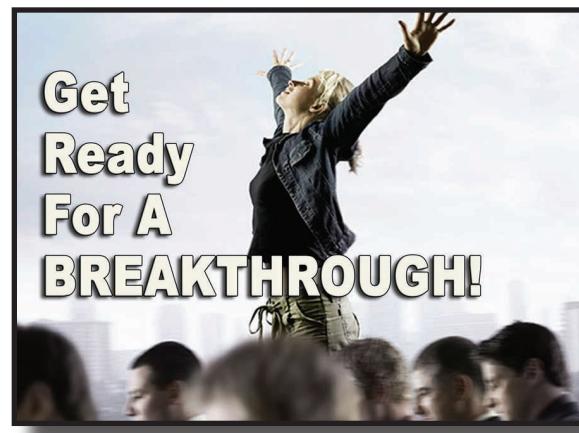
Signed: _____ & _____

Date: _____

8. **Record Your Breakthroughs for this week and share them during homework sharing time.**

BREAKTHROUGHS!

FINANCIAL FREEDOM COURSE
RECORD YOUR WEEKLY TESTIMONIES

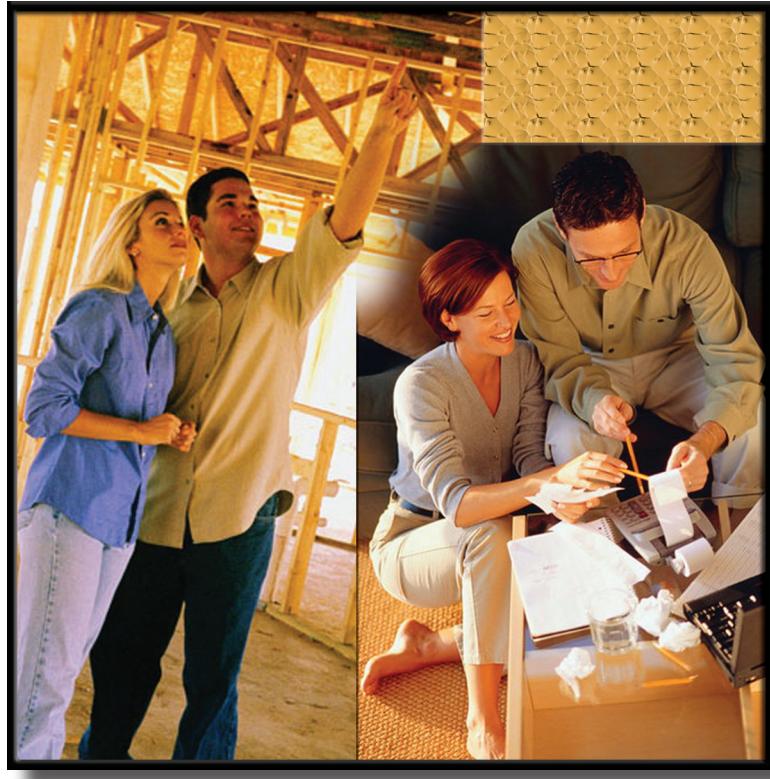


NAME: _____

DATE: **MONEY, CAREER, GIFTS/INHERITANCE, & OTHER**

CHAPTER 5

(WEEK 5)



"For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it—lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish'."

(Luke 14:28-30, NKJV)

Developing A Flexible Spending Plan: Part 1



LEADERS' NOTES – WEEKLY PROTOCOL

- ❖ **Praise Song** – A great way to start!
Suggest typed lyrics and upbeat music.
Have the tape or CD ready so you can just hit play.
- ❖ **Prayer** – Led by a Leader or LIT.
Recommend group holding hands.
- ❖ **Spiritual Warfare** – in Jesus' mighty name!
(According to Luke 10:19)
- ❖ **Homework Sharing** – Normally led by LITs.
Led by leaders if LITs are teaching this week.
Time control and equal sharing are important.
- ❖ **Share Breakthroughs** – Celebrate!
Brief but builds hope. Can be combined with
homework sharing.
- ❖ **Offering Time** – Opportunity to Sow!
Have a focus group member pray first.
Put faith into action!
- ❖ **10 Minute Break** - Beverages & restroom.
- ❖ **Weekly Lesson** – Taught by both leaders and LITs.
- ❖ **Homework Preview**
- ❖ **Dismiss with Prayer and Spiritual Warfare**
- holding hands. Entire session should average 2
to 2 ½ Hours.
- ❖ **Leaders and LITs complete weekly report**

CHAPTER 5 (WEEK 5)

DEVELOPING A FLEXIBLE SPENDING PLAN:

PART 1

Welcome to our two *Flexible Spending Plan* chapters. These two weeks can be incredibly exciting and rewarding. You will learn how to record your lifestyle on some simple forms. This is not boring number crunching. NO! The *Flexible Spending Plan* gives you the financial tools for ultimate financial victory. So get ready and get excited as you allow God to open the door to victory. Remember God has a wonderful plan for you and for all of us (Jeremiah 29:11).

SPENDING PLAN OVERVIEW

By developing and using a spending plan, you will take a bite out of stress. Instead of feeling out of control, you will gain tremendous freedom as you use the biblical principles and easy-to-use forms provided in this section.

This week, we will study Example #1 (*Bob and Mary's finances before they completed this course*). Next week, we will look at Example #2 and observe the positive changes made by Bob, Mary, and their family. Example #2 forms were completed approximately one year after Bob and Mary faithfully completed the course. Proverbs 16:3 tells us, "**Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed**" (NIV).

Your homework for this week will be to start filling out your own set of *Flexible Spending Plan* forms. Good news: the homework assignment will be spread over a two-week period and you have two examples to guide you.

I. WHAT IS A SPENDING PLAN?

- ◆ **IT IS NOT A BUDGET** imposed by others. It is developed with the help of wise counsel. (For couples, the input of both husband and wife is essential.) A *Flexible Spending Plan* includes the establishment of goals and priorities with the freedom to make adjustments. Essentially, it puts you in control.
- ◆ **IT IS FLEXIBLE.** Because the plan is developed by you, there is room for reasonable flexibility as conditions change.
- ◆ **IT REFLECTS YOUR PRIORITIES.** Imagine standing at heaven's gates being asked to toss your checkbook through the door of heaven for thorough examination. What would your check stubs show? Good stewardship of the resources that God gave you? Would your stubs reflect godly priorities? The *Flexible Spending Plan* can help you answer these key questions with a big YES!
- ◆ **IT IS COMPREHENSIVE.** The *Flexible Spending Plan* will include your income, biblical giving, all spending categories, and savings. In addition, it will provide a true picture of your assets, liabilities, net worth, and monthly cash flow. It sounds complex, but in actuality it is a real simple process.

FOR MARRIED COUPLES ~ As you develop and use a flexible spending plan, you will gain control over the very area that plagues so many marriages - finances. Control over your finances will eliminate stress and the tendency to argue or worry about finances. Philippians 4:6 warns us "to be anxious for nothing."



II. SPENDING PLAN SCRIPTURES

Do Christians even need to set goals, control spending, and save money? Or can we just live for today and trust God for what we need? Let's see what God's instruction manual has to say:

- ◆ **PROVERBS 21:5** - "***The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty***" (NIV).
- ◆ **PROVERBS 27:23** - "***Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds***" (NIV). This Scripture alerts us to always know the financial, physical, and spiritual condition of our family and others God has placed in our care.
- ◆ **MATTHEW 25:21** (the parable of the talents) - The Lord commended the servant for his faithfulness over little and rewarded him greatly by putting him in charge of much more.
- ◆ **PROVERBS 13:18** - "***He who ignores discipline comes to poverty and shame, but whoever heeds correction is honored***" (NIV). Yes, the process will take discipline and commitment, but that is clearly God's will.
- ◆ **PROVERBS 6:6-8** - We are clearly instructed to gain wisdom about saving, through observing the ant that plans for the winter by storing extra food from the harvest.

ADVICE FOR SINGLES



Do not make the mistake of putting off financial planning because you are not married. Having control of your finances brings security, confidence, and freedom. In addition, as your knowledge and discipline in the area of finances increases, so do your prospects for a *successful* marriage. If you hope to one day be married, save more – not less.

GOOD NEWS!

You have already completed your written *Financial Vision and Faith Goals* forms! Now, the development of a complete and *Flexible Spending Plan* will get you on the road to achieving those goals.



III. A LOOK AT EXAMPLE #1

For many of you, this may be the very first time you have developed a comprehensive financial plan. Therefore, we will look at two examples utilizing Bob and Mary Jones. They have two children. In addition, they are buying a home. Unfortunately, they incurred unplanned debt as a result of buying things on credit. Bob is the sole income earner. This week we will study Example #1. Next week, we will look carefully at the corrective measures taken in Example #2 by Bob and Mary.

Example #1 is dated June 30, 2007 and it reflects Bob & Mary's financial status before they completed the *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* focus group. Prior to filling out these forms, they really did not know their financial status. They did not know why there was never enough money left at the end of the month to meet all obligations, or why they always needed to increase debt just to keep running the household.

Now, let's examine Bob & Mary's set of Example #1 forms, which they completed as they went through the course. Your course leaders will answer questions. Please try to understand all the numbers. (*If you are married, do not just defer the number crunching to the one who keeps the family's books. For this plan to work, both spouses need to understand and agree on how God's resources will be managed.*)

- ♦ **PROJECTED INCOME AND BIBLICAL GIVING FORM** — Bob earns a salary of \$4,000 per month or \$48,000 per year. Bob and Mary have projected (planned) to give \$365 per month (\$350 to their church, \$10 to missions, and \$5 to United Way) on a regular basis, plus some non-monthly charitable giving which amounts to an additional \$600 during the year. On an average monthly basis, they plan to give a total of \$415 per month.

Note: They had not yet learned about tithing. So, their church-related giving falls short of the ten percent first fruit tithe.



LEADERS' NOTE – Walk the group through the process of how Bob and Mary completed the five columns. On the *Projected Income and Biblical Giving* form, there is a "note on using this form" that should be read. It states:

This form will help you arrive at an average monthly amount which is crucial for your spending plan and cash flow management. Record the monthly amount in the first column and then multiply by 12 months for a yearly subtotal. In the third column, record amounts that do not occur every month. Add columns 2 and 3 together to get the total annual amount for column 4. Finally, divide the total annual amount by 12 to get the average monthly amount. Do this for each line item.

Encourage participants to get in the habit of completing all appropriate columns.

It may help to put a dash in the columns that do not apply.

PROJECTED INCOME AND BIBLICAL GIVING - EXAMPLE #1

NAME(S): Bob & Mary Jones

Date: June 20, 2007

Projected Income

INCOME SOURCES:	Amount Paid Monthly	(Mo. x 12) Subtotal for Year	Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Average Monthly Amount
Gross wages: husband	\$ 4,000	\$ 48,000		\$ 48,000	\$ 4,000
Gross wages: wife					
Dividends					
Interest					
Rent (Income less expenses)					
Business Income/"Increase"					
Retirement Funds					
Other					
TOTAL GROSS INCOME:	\$ 4,000	\$ 48,000	\$	\$ 48,000	\$ 4,000

Projected Giving

	Organization	Amount Paid Monthly	(Mo. x 12) Subtotal for Year	Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Average Monthly Amount
10% Tithe	Church	\$ 350	\$ 4,200		\$ 4,200	\$ 350
Freewill Offerings	Missions	\$ 10	\$ 120		\$ 120	\$ 10
Alms (Poor)						
Other Charities	Misc. Charities			\$ 600	\$ 600	\$ 50
Other Charities	United Way	\$ 5	\$ 60		\$ 60	\$ 5
Other Giving						
TOTAL GIVING:		\$ 365	\$ 1,380	\$	\$ 4,980	\$ 415

Once the income is calculated, the next step is to determine where it goes. Begin with giving. Project your giving for the year by considering each organization you support. This can be from specific giving goals, percentages of income, or past giving records. You may want to check your actual giving to date and then project what you plan to give for the rest of the year.

NOTE ON USING THIS FORM: This form will help you arrive at an average monthly amount which is crucial for your spending plan and cash flow management. Record the monthly amount in the first column and then multiply by 12 months for a yearly subtotal. In the third column, record amounts that do not occur every month. Add columns 2 and 3 together to get the total annual amount for column 4. Finally, divide the total annual amount by 12 to get the average monthly amount. Do this for each line item

- ♦ **LIST YOUR ASSETS FORM** — Bob and Mary's total assets of \$173,500 include liquid assets of \$10,500 plus \$163,000 in non-liquid assets. **NOTE: Home owners may simply combine the home and lot under "Home" below. If desired, you can separate the two.**

<i>LIST YOUR ASSETS - EXAMPLE #1</i>	
Name(s):	Bob & Mary Jones
Date:	June 20, 2007
TYPES OF ASSETS	
1 . Liquid Assets (easily converted to cash)	
Cash on hand	\$ 200
Checking account balance	\$ 1,800
Money market funds	\$
CDs (% interest rate)	\$
Savings (% interest rate)	\$ 5,000
Stocks & bonds	\$
Life insurance cash values	\$ 3,500
Other (describe)	\$
TOTAL Liquid Assets:	\$ 10,500
2. Non-liquid Assets	
Home (market value)	\$ 75,000
Land (market value)	\$ 25,000
Net worth (value) of business	\$
Real estate investments (not home)	\$
Jet ski, camper, RV, boats, etc.	\$ 10,000
Automobiles at market value	\$ 20,000
Furniture & personal property (conservative market value)	\$ 10,000
Valuable collections (stamps, coins, etc.)	\$ 3,000
Retirement funds balance	\$ 20,000
Funds due from others (receivables)	\$
Other (describe)	\$
Other (describe)	\$
TOTAL Non-liquid Assets	\$ 163,000
3. Total Assets (1 + 2)	\$ 173,500

- ◆ **DEBT REPAYMENT SCHEDULE** — Bob and Mary's *Debt Repayment Schedule* includes four loans with their respective monthly payments. Note that their home mortgage payment is not included on the form because it is included as a monthly housing expense item. Their total monthly debt payments amount to \$457.

DEBT REPAYMENT SCHEDULE - EXAMPLE #1						
NAME(S): Bob and mary Jones DATE: June 20, 2007						
	LENDER	\$ BALANCE	\$ MONTHLY PAYMENT	INT. %	REMAINING PAYMENTS	PAY-OFF DATE
1	Credit Card A	\$4,000	\$67	18.0	300	6/30/2032
2	Credit Card B	\$2,000	\$33	18.0	300	6/30/2032
3	Car Loan	\$7,000	\$307	12.0	36	6/30/2010
4	Parent's Loan	\$3,000	\$50	0.0	60	6/30/2012
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
TOTAL:		\$16,000	\$457			

NOTE ON USING DEBT REPAYMENT SCHEDULE:

This form should include all debts with the exception of a primary home mortgage. The mortgage obligation is a debt and must be included as a liability when you complete the *List Your Liabilities* form. However, the mortgage payment is not included on this form because it will be included in the monthly housing expense category when you complete the *Estimated Monthly Living Expenses* form. If your list of debts exceeds the 15 spaces given, make extra pages. Do not despair, you are on the road to Financial Freedom.

- ◆ **LIST YOUR LIABILITIES FORM** — The form below shows a total of five debts (two high-interest credit card debts and a sizable car loan). Four of these debts were recorded directly from their *Debt Repayment Schedule*, and their mortgage was added so that all debt was included. The monthly drain of loan payments totals \$1,132, which is much too high based

LIST YOUR LIABILITIES - EXAMPLE #1				
NAME(S): <u>Bob & Mary Jones</u> DATE COMPLETED: <u>June 20, 2007</u>				
LENDER (CREDITOR)	BALANCE DUE	INTEREST RATE %	PAYMENT SCHEDULE	
			PER MONTH	UNTIL (MO./YR.)
1. Credit Card A	\$ 4,000	18.00%	\$ 67	6/30/2032
2. Credit Card B	\$ 2,000	18.00%	\$ 33	6/30/2032
3. Car Loan	\$ 7,000	12.00%	\$ 307	6/30/2010
4. Mortgage	\$ 80,000	9.00%	\$ 675	6/30/2032
5. *Parent's Loan	\$ 3,000	0.00%	\$ 50	6/30/2012
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				
16.				
17.				
18.				
19.				
20.				
21.				
22.				
23.				
TOTALS:	\$ 96,000		\$ 1,132	
Note: This form should include all debts previously listed on the "Debt Repayment Schedule" plus the home mortgage if applicable. *In the USA, no interest loans may not be legal, but they often occur.				

on the family's income.

BALANCE SHEET AND NET WORTH STATEMENT EXAMPLE #1

Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones

Date: June 30, 2007

Note on Using this Form: Complete this form using data from your recently completed *List Your Assets* & *List Your Liabilities* forms. Then, subtract ***total liabilities*** from ***total assets*** & record your NET WORTH.

A. Assets

Liquid Assets: \$10,500

Non-liquid Assets: \$163,000

Total Assets: \$173,500

B. Less: Total Liabilities: (-) -96,000

C. Net Worth: (Total Assets - Total Liabilities) \$77,500

Comments:



Leader's Note: Please refer students to the full size forms in Chapter 12, where all of Bob and Mary's Example #1 forms are provided. Next week, refer to Chapter 13 for full size forms.

- ◆ **BALANCE SHEET & NET WORTH STATEMENT** — The results below actually made Bob and Mary feel pretty good because they display a positive net worth of \$77,500. This is good news because a great many families have a negative net worth (which means they owe more than they own). Sadly, the Jones family is not financially strong despite their positive net worth, as you will soon observe.
- ◆ **ESTIMATED MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES FORM.** Filling out this form took Bob and Mary a significant amount of time to complete because they had to search for check records and credit card receipts. The results are projected on this 3-page form showing the average monthly amounts for each of the ten expense categories. (**Note: please start pulling your records together so you can complete your living expense estimates.**) If you have been tracking daily expenses using the CF1 form, introduced previously, you will have some current expense data to help with estimation.

Since some expense items may not occur every month (repairs to your home or car, gifts, insurance or property tax payments, etc.), you will need to arrive at an average for those monthly expenses. The *Projected Income and Biblical Giving* and *Estimated Monthly Living Expenses* forms have been developed to assist you in this process. Both of the forms include a "note on using this form" to walk you through the five-column calculation process.

Take a few minutes to see how this couple was spending their money. This is just an example, but it is representative of how easy it is to overspend in each of the ten major categories. These situations typically get even worse where record keeping is very lax.

Look at Bob & Mary's housing expenses (Category A). They have regular monthly expenses that add up to \$905 (column one). They also have a total of \$2,000 in non-monthly expenses per year. So, they multiplied their monthly expenses (\$905) by 12 to get a subtotal of \$10,860 for column two. Then they added their non-monthly expenses (\$2,000) to the subtotal, for a yearly total housing estimate of \$12,860. By dividing the total housing estimate (\$12,860) by 12 months, they arrived at \$1,072 as an average monthly total of all projected housing expenses in column five (far right).

ESTIMATED MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES - EXAMPLE #1

Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones

Date: June 30, 2007

Living Expenses Form (Page 1 of 3)		\$ Amount Paid Monthly	Mo. x 12 = Subtotal for Yr.	Amount Paid Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Total Annual Amt. Div. by 12 = Avg. Mo. Amt.
A. Housing						
Mortgage or rent payment	\$ 675	\$ 8,100			\$ 8,100	\$ 675
Insurance for home		\$ 500		\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 42
Property taxes (not in house pmt.)		\$ 1,500		\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 125
Electricity	\$ 60	\$ 720		\$ 720	\$ 720	\$ 60
Heating	\$ 50	\$ 600		\$ 600	\$ 600	\$ 50
Water	\$ 25	\$ 300		\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 25
Garbage collection						
Telephone	\$ 50	\$ 600		\$ 600	\$ 600	\$ 50
Cleaning services						
Repairs/maintenance	\$ 35	\$ 420		\$ 420	\$ 420	\$ 35
Improvements & furnishings						
Supplies for home	\$ 10	\$ 120		\$ 120	\$ 120	\$ 10
Other						
TOTAL HOUSING EXPENSES:	\$ 905	\$ 10,860	\$ 2,000	\$ 12,860	\$ 1,072	
B. Food:	\$ 500	\$ 6,000		\$ 6,000	\$ 500	
C. Clothing						
Husband	\$ 25	\$ 300		\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 25
Wife	\$ 35	\$ 420		\$ 420	\$ 420	\$ 35
Children	\$ 50	\$ 600		\$ 600	\$ 600	\$ 50
TOTAL CLOTHING:	\$ 110	\$ 1,320		\$ 1,320	\$ 110	
D. Transportation						
Auto insurance		\$ 600		\$ 600	\$ 600	\$ 50
Gas & oil & filters	\$ 200	\$ 2,400		\$ 2,400	\$ 2,400	\$ 200
Repairs/maintenance	\$ 24	\$ 288		\$ 288	\$ 288	\$ 24
Parking	\$ 12	\$ 144		\$ 144	\$ 144	\$ 12
Bus/train/subway						
Other						
TOTAL TRANSPORTATION:	\$ 236	\$ 2,832		\$ 600	\$ 3,432	\$ 286

Living Expenses Form (Pg. 2 of 3)	\$ Amount Paid Monthly	Mo. x 12 = Subtotal for Yr.	Amount Paid Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Total Annual Amt. Div. by 12 = Avg. \$ Mo. Amt.
E. Entertainment/Recreation					
Dining out	\$ 50	\$ 600	\$	\$ 600	\$ 50
Childcare	\$ 15	\$ 180	\$	\$ 180	\$ 15
Newspapers/cable/magazines	\$ 20	\$ 240	\$	\$ 240	\$ 20
Vacation			\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 208
Club dues/fees					
Classes/courses/activities					
Other	\$ 15	\$ 180	\$	\$ 180	\$ 15
TOTAL ENTERTAINMENT:	\$ 100	\$ 1,200	\$ 2,500	\$ 3,700	\$ 308
F. Medical Expenses					
Medical/health insurance	\$ 50	\$ 600	\$	\$ 600	\$ 50
Doctors	\$ 50	\$ 600	\$	\$ 600	\$ 50
Dentists	\$ 10	\$ 120	\$	\$ 120	\$ 10
Medicine	\$ 10	\$ 120	\$	\$ 120	\$ 10
Other					
TOTAL MEDICAL:	\$ 120	\$ 1,440	\$	\$ 1,440	\$ 120
G. Insurance					
Life (all family members)	\$ 135	\$ 1,620	\$	\$ 1,620	\$ 135
Disability					
Other					
TOTAL INSURANCE:	\$ 135	\$ 1,620	\$	\$ 1,620	\$ 135
H. Children					
School lunches	\$ 35	\$ 420	\$	\$ 420	\$ 35
Allowances	\$ 30	\$ 360	\$	\$ 360	\$ 30
School tuition					
Lessons/special fees/dues	\$ 25	\$ 300	\$	\$ 300	\$ 25
Other					
TOTAL CHILDREN:	\$ 90	\$ 1,080	\$	\$ 1,080	\$ 90

Living Expenses Form (Pg. 3 of 3)	\$ Amount Paid Monthly	Mo. x 12 = Subtotal for Yr.	Amount Paid Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Total Annual Amt. Div. by 12 = Avg. \$ Mo. Amt.
I. Gifts/Occasions:					
Christmas			\$ 650	\$ 650	\$ 54
Birthdays			\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ 17
Anniversary			\$ 50	\$ 50	\$ 4
Holidays other than Christmas					
Other			\$ 50	\$ 50	\$ 5
TOTAL GIFTS:	\$	\$	\$ 950	\$ 950	\$ 80
J. Miscellaneous					
Toiletries	\$ 20	\$ 240		\$ 240	\$ 20
Husband (lunches, etc.)	\$ 55	\$ 660		\$ 660	\$ 55
Wife (lunches, etc.)	\$ 35	\$ 420		\$ 420	\$ 35
Dry cleaning/laundry	\$ 35	\$ 420		\$ 420	\$ 35
Pet care (medical/tags/food)	\$ 30	\$ 360		\$ 360	\$ 30
Beauty/barber					
Other					
Other					
TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS:	\$ 175	\$ 2,100		\$ 2,100	\$ 175
TOTAL LIVING EXPENSES	\$ 2,371	\$ 28,452	\$ 6,050	\$ 34,502	\$ 2,876

Conclusions or Comments: This was Bob & Mary's first time to estimate monthly living expenses. They were surprised at some categories and will adjust in Example #2.

NOTE ON USING THIS FORM: This form will help you arrive at an average monthly amount which is crucial for your *Flexible Spending Plan* and cash flow management. Record the monthly amount in the first column and then multiply by 12 months for a yearly subtotal. In the third column, record amounts that do not occur every month. Add columns two and three together to get the total annual amount for column four; then divide column four by 12 to get an average expenditure, for each category, per month! Finally, add the average expense for each category (A-J) to arrive at your estimated monthly total living expenses.

Several expenses do not occur monthly, but must be planned for, such as: auto insurance, most gift categories, and home or auto repairs. It is important that these items be placed in the column labeled "Amount Paid Other Than Monthly." In Chapter 7, you will learn how to reserve for these in a "Freedom Account". Please use pencil and no decimal points. Remember, these are your best estimates for an average month. You will learn to adjust and correct, as you use this form several times.



LEADERS' NOTE – For many people, using the *Estimated Monthly Living Expenses* form may be a new experience. Take time to allow class members to study the form. Be willing to answer a few clarification questions. The goal is for all group members to have a good grasp of the spending plan process and how the numbers flow by the end of week six. (It will make sense, as group members work with their own numbers. The examples will help.)

MONTHLY CASH FLOW ANALYSIS — Here we see a projection of Bob and Mary's monthly cash flow. Since bills need to be handled at least monthly, it is essential that people project cash flow on a monthly basis, not annually.

MONTHLY CASH FLOW ANALYSIS - Example #1	
Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones	June 30, 2007
Gross Income:	\$ 4,000
Less Priority Expenses:	
A. Giving (tithes, offerings & alms)	\$ 415
B. Taxes (from payroll records)	\$ 750
C. Debt (total of mo. payments)	\$ 457
Total Priority Expenses: (-)	\$ (1,622)
NET SPENDABLE INCOME: (Gross income less A, B, & C =)	\$ 2,378
MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES	
A. Housing	\$ 1,072
B. Food	\$ 500
C. Clothing	\$ 110
D. Transportation	\$ 286
E. Entertainment/recreation	\$ 308
F. Medical	\$ 120
G. Insurance	\$ 135
H. Children	\$ 90
I. Gifts	\$ 80
J. Miscellaneous	\$ 175
TOTAL MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES:	\$ (2,876)
MONTHLY CASH FLOW MARGIN:	\$ (498)
(Net Spendable Income minus total (A-J) Living Expenses)	
Commitments for Monthly Positive Cash Flow Margin:	
A. Savings	\$ _____
B. Retirement	\$ _____
C. Extra Debt Payment	\$ _____
D. Additional Giving	\$ _____
Total Commitments for Positive Cash Flow:	\$
Uncommitted Monthly Cash Flow Margin:	\$
Comments: There is a serious negative monthly cash flow margin. Immediate corrective action is needed to avoid further debt, and to reduce expenses.	

The *Monthly Cash Flow Analysis* form draws information from the previous forms. Bob's monthly income is at the top. Priority expenses are those that must be deducted before income is spent. These three categories are Giving (tithes, offerings and alms), Income Taxes, and Debt Repayment. For many people who receive a regular paycheck, the pay records include federal and state taxes as well as social security (in America) and unemployment taxes. These should all be included here. Medical plan deductions are not included here because they belong in the *Living Expenses* form under Medical Expenses.

In reality, the biblical tithe, or ten percent first fruits giving must be priority number one. If you prefer, your freewill giving beyond the tithe and sowing of alms could be included in a special expense category (below the net spendable income line). However, experience has taught us that without a commitment to a full Biblical Giving Plan, most people do not follow through. So we suggest including the full amount of your projected giving in item A – Giving.

For this couple, priority expenses total \$1,622. We observe that nearly one third of this is for debt repayment, and that **this couple is not tithing**.

Their expenses on the *Monthly Cash Flow Analysis* form are simply a recap of the ten major subtotals (A-J) from their *Estimated Monthly Living Expenses* form. The total is \$2,876.

Bob and Mary's monthly cash flow margin is a negative \$498 per month. This is a very serious problem. They are now faced with borrowing \$498 each month (not counting the extra interest on any new debt) just to "balance" their cash flow. If this continues for a full year, they will be worse off by \$5,976 ($\498×12) plus the interest cost on that additional debt. Also, if they do not make major changes, this trend will continue indefinitely.



LEADERS' NOTE – Stop to make sure each student understands items A, B, & C and what Total Priority Expenses really means and how Net Spendable Income differs from "Take Home Pay." Explain that Net Spendable Income is what is left to spend, then progress to a recap of Monthly Living Expenses.

GOOD NEWS!

In Chapter 6 we will see how Bob and Mary corrected this dangerous problem and discuss positive changes you can make.



SUMMARY

God cares very much about our planning, spending, saving, and overall stewardship of His resources. That is evident by the 2,000 plus Scriptures relating to how we are to use His resources.

So far, you should have completed the following forms: *Goal Setting, Income and Biblical Giving, & Debt Repayment Schedule*. Now you'll be completing new user-friendly forms to help you complete your own financial freedom plan.

Example #1 showed Bob and Mary's situation before they took this course. Even though their cash flow was negative, they had hope that God would reveal a better way. Hope is a central key to this course. Combine hope with wisdom, action, and discipline, and you will break free and pass on a legacy of financial freedom to future generations.

Remember what you learned in the first four chapters! If the attitude of your heart is right, God wants to bless you and your family. He definitely wants His covenant people to have all the resources needed to accomplish what He has called them to do. This means all the time, talent, skills, health, and yes, all the money needed to fulfill His will for your life, for your God-given destiny – THAT'S GODLY PROSPERITY!

By now you should be absolutely convinced that spiritual warfare is essential every week. For this reason, we strongly encourage you to complete Spiritual Warfare Section #5 (from Chapter 9) this week and Spiritual Warfare Section #6 next week. You have two weeks to complete the financial forms. This involves considerable effort so please do not delay. Pray, do spiritual warfare, and get started now with the knowledge of God's good news found in Jeremiah 29:11-13:

“For I know the plans that I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek me and find me, when you search for Me with all your heart.” (NAS)



LEADERS' NOTE – Review the combined homework for Chapters 5 & 6. As one of our focus group leaders says, **“Homework really is God’s Work!”** Then, pray, include spiritual warfare, and release everyone with a blessing. You may need to call group members during the coming week to see if they need help or encouragement.

EVERYONE: We encourage you to contact your focus group leaders if you encounter difficulties during the week. They are praying for your financial freedom.

CHAPTER 5 & 6 HOMEWORK

COMPLETING YOUR FAMILY FLEXIBLE SPENDING PLAN: (PART 1 & 2)

The combined homework for Chapters 5 and 6 is to prepare and complete all spending plan forms. It takes two full weeks to do this properly, and we urge you to start now.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE HOMEWORK: This week's spiritual warfare section is on how judgments affect our finances.

1. **Read Spiritual Warfare Section #5.**
2. **Do Practical Application Exercise #5** and be set free from all negative consequences and strongholds caused by judgments.
3. **Form Review** – In these first four chapters you completed several vital forms:
 - a) Chapter One's homework included your *Basic Values & Goal Setting* form.
 - b) Chapter Three's homework included your more in-depth *Financial Vision & Faith Goals*.
 - c) You started the actual tracking of your daily expenditures using form CF1 entitled *Monthly Cash Flow Control*.
 - d) You completed the *Projected Income and Biblical Giving* form.
 - e) You previously completed your *Debt Repayment Schedule*.
 - f) And we trust you have recorded many BREAKTHROUGHS each week.
4. **Important Guidelines.** As homework for Chapters 5 & 6, you will be focusing on completing five additional forms: *List Your Assets*, *List Your Liabilities*, *Balance Sheet & Net Worth Statement*, *Estimated Monthly Living Expenses*, and *Monthly Cash Flow Analysis*.

These are user-friendly forms and you already have examples to guide you. Let's establish some important guidelines before we go forward.

- a) Use a sharp **pencil** and have an eraser and a calculator handy.
- b) Fill in all possible blanks. Use the examples as a guide.
- c) When you first attempt to complete most forms, **strive for 90 to 95 percent accuracy** — not 100 percent!
- d) Use whole dollar amounts and round up - no decimal points.
- e) Expenses will be estimates, so at first it is best to estimate them slightly higher.
- f) Income projections should be realistic, probably estimated on the conservative side, especially where commissions and bonuses are involved.

- g) **Make a minimum of six extra copies of blank forms, for future use. See Chapter 15 for full size blank forms.**
- h) Put your **names and the date on all forms** for your records.
- i) **Couples must complete forms together, because both spouses must understand and accept all numerical values for the plan to succeed.**
5. **Pray hard and do spiritual warfare before starting to develop your financial plan.** Your focus group leaders will provide prayer support. You must avoid guilt, blame, and shame from the process. Remember, conviction to change for good comes from God, by His Holy Spirit. Condemnation comes from the devil. **Record any special prayer thoughts below.**
-
-
-
6. Your first form is your *Projected Income and Biblical Giving* form (Remember blank forms are in Chapter 15).
- Good news! You previously completed this form. Now is a good time for a quick review. If your situation has changed, then fill out a new form with a new date.
 - Your projected income should be estimated and totaled using the top portion of this form.
 - Your *Biblical Giving Plan* (paying tithes, giving freewill offerings, and sowing alms) plus other planned charitable giving should be estimated and totaled using the bottom portion of this form. (Please read the special note on how to use the five columns for calculations.)
7. Previously you listed your goals on the form entitled *Financial Vision and Faith Goals*. Unless you need to revise those goals, progress to the next forms.
8. Previously, you also completed your *Debt Repayment Schedule*. Remember, addressing a list of debts could be a stressful and difficult experience. Do not give the devil an opening. Be patient and keep your heavenly armor in place in accordance with Ephesians 6:10-18. Absolutely do not allow condemnation to creep into these activities. Conviction and correction, however, are acceptable. If you are experiencing strife, stop, pray, and do spiritual warfare.
9. **List Your Assets form** – This is simply a one-page form where you list your family assets, or what you own. (Copy blank forms from Chapter 15.) Use the spaces for various asset categories. Ninety to ninety-five percent accuracy is fine for now. Refer to Example #1 if you need a guide.
- Liquid assets are easily converted to cash if needed for emergencies.**
 - Non-liquid assets have real value but cannot be converted to cash rapidly.**
 - Cars and home values should be realistic market resale values.
 - All assets should be realistically and conservatively valued. For example, think of what you would pay for someone else's used television, freezer, sofa, or clothing.

PROJECTED INCOME AND BIBLICAL GIVING

NAME(S): _____

Date: _____

Projected Income

INCOME SOURCES:	Amount Paid Monthly	(Mo. x 12) Subtotal for Year	Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Average Monthly Amount
Gross wages: husband					
Gross wages: wife					
Dividends					
Interest					
Rent (Income less expenses)					
Business Income/"Increase"					
Retirement Funds					
Other					
TOTAL GROSS INCOME:	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

Projected Giving

	Organization	Amount Paid Monthly	(Mo. x 12) Subtotal for Year	Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Average Monthly Amount
10% Tithe						
Freewill Offerings						
Alms (Poor)						
Other Charities						
Other Charities						
Other Giving						
TOTAL GIVING:		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

Once the income is calculated, the next step is to determine where it goes. Begin with giving. Project your giving for the year by considering each organization you support. This can be from specific giving goals, percentages of income or past giving records. You may want to check your actual giving to date and then project what you plan to give for the rest of the year.

NOTE ON USING THIS FORM: This form will help you arrive at an average monthly amount which is crucial for your spending plan and cash flow management. Record the monthly amount in the first column and then multiply by 12 months for a yearly subtotal. In the third column, record amounts that do not occur every month. Add columns 2 and 3 together to get the total annual amount for column 4. Finally, divide the total annual amount by 12 to get the average monthly amount. Do this for each line item

LIST YOUR ASSETS

Name(s): _____

Date: _____

TYPES OF ASSETS

1 . Liquid Assets (easily converted to cash)

Cash on hand	\$
Checking account balance	\$
Money market funds	\$
CDs (% interest rate)	\$
Savings (% interest rate)	\$
Stocks & bonds	\$
Life insurance cash values	\$
Other (describe)	\$
TOTAL Liquid Assets:	\$

2. Non-liquid Assets

Home (market value)	\$
Land (market value)	\$
Net worth (value) of business	\$
Real estate investments (not home)	\$
Jet ski, camper, RV, boats, etc.	\$
Automobiles at market value	\$
Furniture & personal property (conservative market value)	\$
Valuable collections (stamps, coins, etc.)	\$
Retirement funds balance	\$
Funds due from others (receivables)	\$
Other (describe)	\$
Other (describe)	\$
TOTAL Non-liquid Assets	\$

3. Total Assets (1 + 2) **\$**

e) Subtotal both the liquid and non-liquid asset categories, and then arrive at a grand total.

f) Bob and Mary's assets, before taking this course, are shown in Example #1.

10. **List Your Liabilities form** – This form is used to determine what you owe. (Use a copy of full-sized form from Chapter 15.)

a. You can easily complete this form by using your *Debt Repayment Schedule* from the homework you completed in Chapter 4.

b. Refer to Example #1 to see Bob and Mary's *Debt Repayment Schedule*.

c. Now, look at their *List Your Liabilities* form in Example #1.

d. Since we purposely omitted the primary home mortgage payment from the *Debt Repayment Schedule*, please be sure to add that information now to the *List Your Liabilities* form. (You will observe in Example #1 that the Jones family added their \$80,000 mortgage to their list of liabilities.) If you have a mortgage, add it to your liabilities form and fill out all the appropriate information for each column.

e. Total the two columns labeled "balance due" and "per month." These totals will show your total liabilities, or what your family owes, and the total of your monthly debt payments including the mortgage.

11. **Balance Sheet and Net Worth Statement.** Do not be intimidated. This is a very simple form to complete. You simply use the information you already recorded from the two previous forms to complete this form.

a. Enter your family's assets from the *List Your Assets* form: liquid, non-liquid, and total assets. (Check Example #1 for help.)

b. Enter your total liabilities from the *List Your Liabilities* form.

c. Calculate your household's net worth by subtracting total liabilities from total assets. (In Example #1, Bob and Mary's net worth is a positive \$77,500.)

d. **Congratulations!** You are starting to get an understanding of the financial status of your household and are closing in on the process of developing a comprehensive financial plan. This is a huge step. Way to go!

12. **Estimated Monthly Living Expenses form** – Living expenses can now be estimated using the three-page form. It will be very important that you do not get bogged down in the number crunching process by trying to arrive at a perfect number. Strive for 90 to 95 percent accuracy, not perfection. (Blank forms are in Chapter 15.)

a. Use records, files, your checkbook register, or your best estimate for each category. If you've been using the daily expense log portion of the CF1 form, you have some recent data to help. You will be adjusting this form in future *Flexible Spending Plans*. This is your first start.

b. Carefully consider each of the ten expense categories labeled A-J. Enter your estimates in pencil and subtotal each category. Use only whole dollars, no decimals.

LIST YOUR LIABILITIES - EXAMPLE #1

NAME(S): Bob & Mary Jones

DATE COMPLETED: June 20, 2007

LENDER (CREDITOR)	BALANCE DUE	INTEREST RATE %	PAYMENT SCHEDULE	
			PER MONTH	UNTIL (MO./YR.)
1. Credit Card A	\$ 4,000	18.00%	\$ 67	6/30/2032
2. Credit Card B	\$ 2,000	18.00%	\$ 33	6/30/2032
3. Car Loan	\$ 7,000	12.00%	\$ 307	6/30/2010
4. Mortgage	\$ 80,000	9.00%	\$ 675	6/30/2032
5. *Parent's Loan	\$ 3,000	0.00%	\$ 50	6/30/2012
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				
16.				
17.				
18.				
19.				
20.				
21.				
22.				
23.				
TOTALS:	\$ 96,000		\$ 1,132	

Note: This form should include all debts previously listed on the "Debt Repayment Schedule" plus the home mortgage if applicable. *In the USA, no interest loans may not be legal, but they often occur.

BALANCE SHEET AND NET WORTH STATEMENT

Name(s):

Date:

Note on Using this Form: Complete this form using data from your recently completed ***List Your Assets*** & ***List Your Liabilities*** forms. Then, subtract ***total liabilities*** from ***total assets*** & record your NET WORTH.

A. Assets

Liquid Assets: \$ _____

Non-liquid Assets: \$ _____

Total Assets: \$ _____

B. Less: Total Liabilities: (-) \$ _____

C. Net Worth: (Total Assets - Total Liabilities) \$ _____

Comments:

FINANCIAL VISION AND FAITH GOALS

Form may be used for 1 year or longer - you decide for each goal.

Name(s): _____

Date: _____

**Target Dates may vary for each goal.

BIBLICAL GIVING GOALS

Target Period: _____

To pay the 10% tithe plus give & sow _____ % of our increase for offerings & alms.

To make additional gifts each year of _____ to _____.

First Action Step:

First Action Step By (Month & Year):

SAVING GOALS

Target Period: _____

Type of Savings Account

(Do Not Include Investments)

Amount

Annual Return

Date

\$ _____ % _____
\$ _____ % _____
\$ _____ % _____
TOTAL: \$ _____ % _____

First Action Step:

First Action Step By (Month & Year):

EDUCATION FUND GOALS

Target Period: _____

A college or special education fund will exist for each of our children/grandchildren:

Child	Type of College	Approximate Annual Cost	Approximate Total Cost	Goal Amount
_____	_____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

First Action Step:

First Action Step By (Month & Year):

FINANCIAL VISION AND FAITH GOALS

(Page 2 of 4)

DEBT REPAYMENT GOALS

To have paid off the following debts:

Creditors	Total Owed	Target Pay-Off Date
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____

First Action Step:

First Action Step By (Month & Year):

MAJOR PURCHASES

To have paid cash for the following major purchases/expenditures: (new home, car, vacations, etc.)

Purchase/Expenditure	Goal Amount	Target Date
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____

First Action Step:

First Action Step By (Month & Year):

LIFESTYLE GOALS

For the next _____ years, to:

- Check One:**
- Maintain Present Level (Giving, Saving & Spending).
 - Enlarge Spending Plan (Giving, Saving & Spending).
 - Cut Back on Lifestyle and Spending Plan.

Strategy/Plan to achieve the lifestyle goal checked above:

First Action Step:

First Action Step By (Month & Year):

FINANCIAL VISION AND FAITH GOALS

(Page 3 of 4)

START A BUSINESS

Target Period: _____

To start a business which will require an approximate investment of: \$ _____

Business Description: _____

First Action Step: _____

First Action Step By (Month & Year): _____

INVESTMENT GOALS

Target Period: _____

To have the following investments (stocks, bonds, mutual funds, real estate, savings, etc.):

Type of Investment	Amount	Annual Return	Date
_____	\$ _____	% _____	_____
_____	\$ _____	% _____	_____
_____	\$ _____	% _____	_____
_____	\$ _____	% _____	_____
_____	\$ _____	% _____	_____
_____	\$ _____	% _____	_____
TOTAL:	\$ _____	% _____	_____

First Action Step: _____

First Action Step By (Month & Year): _____

OTHER GOALS

Target Period: _____

(List, explain & estimate values if applicable)

First Action Step: _____

First Action Step By (Month & Year): _____

FINANCIAL VISION AND FAITH GOALS

(Page 4 of 4)

ESTATE PLANNING:

Target Period: _____

To pass on the following estate (describe basics):

First Action Step:

First Action Step By (month & year):

CONGRATULATIONS:

Once godly goals are established, you are ahead of 95% of the people in the world.

The very next step is to begin taking your First Action Steps to accomplish the goals that God has given you. These may be very small steps. For example, a savings plan goal may start by you opening a savings account with a \$5 deposit. It may seem small, but in reality it is a huge action step -- so don't delay.

MOVE IN FAITH:

You need to move in faith. You prayed and set these goals knowing that God has a wonderful plan for you (Jeremiah 29:11). God has the resources. You need to supply the faith and the diligence to be a good and faithful steward. Then let God be God. He is your pilot and your provider.

REVIEW/REVISE ANNUALLY:

Make a commitment to review your goals at least once a year, maybe at the start of the New Year. Thank God for progress and for breakthroughs! Set new goals, or revise; these are YOUR goals.



Married Couples: Be sure to do your goal setting, and goals review, as a one flesh couple.



SINGLES: Seek a godly, trusted accountability partner.

- c. Some expenses are not regular monthly items. Enter these non-monthly expenses in the column labeled "amount paid other than monthly."
- d. Total each column and then add the ten section (A-J) subtotals on page three on the line labeled **Total Living Expenses**. Please read the note on page three for instructions on how to use the five columns for calculations.

DEBT REPAYMENT SCHEDULE						
NAME(S): _____ DATE: _____						
	LENDER	\$ BALANCE	\$ MONTHLY PAYMENT	INT. %	REMAINING PAYMENTS	PAY-OFF DATE
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
TOTAL:						

NOTE ON USING DEBT REPAYMENT SCHEDULE:

This form should include all debts with the exception of a primary home mortgage. The mortgage obligation is a debt and must be included as a liability when you complete the *List Your Liabilities* form. However, the mortgage payment is not included on this form because it will be included in the monthly housing expense category when you complete the *Estimated Monthly Living Expenses* form. If your list of debts exceeds the 15 spaces given, make extra pages. Do not despair, you are on the road to Financial Freedom.

- e. Date and add your names to the form, and add any additional thoughts in the *conclusions or comments* section of the form.
 - f. Optional: review Bob and Mary's three-page **Estimated Monthly Living Expenses** forms, Example #1 and #2.
13. **Your Monthly Cash Flow Analysis form** – This next form is basically just a compilation of your prior work. It is an essential tool in your financial planning process. (Therefore, if you skipped completing any previous forms please go back and complete them before proceeding; shortcuts will not work!)
- a. Refer to Bob and Mary's Example #1 or #2 *Monthly Cash Flow Analysis* form, if you need a guide.
 - b. Start by putting combined gross income on the top line.

MONTHLY CASH FLOW ANALYSIS

Name(s): _____ Date: _____

Gross Income: _____ \$ _____

Less Priority Expenses:

A. Giving (tithes, offerings & alms) _____ \$ _____

B. Taxes (from payroll records) _____ \$ _____

C. Debt (total of mo. payments) _____ \$ _____

Total Priority Expenses: (-) _____ (\$ _____)

NET SPENDABLE INCOME: (Gross income less A, B, & C =) \$ _____

MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES

A. Housing _____ \$ _____

B. Food _____ \$ _____

C. Clothing _____ \$ _____

D. Transportation _____ \$ _____

E. Entertainment/recreation _____ \$ _____

F. Medical _____ \$ _____

G. Insurance _____ \$ _____

H. Children _____ \$ _____

I. Gifts _____ \$ _____

J. Miscellaneous _____ \$ _____

TOTAL MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES: _____ (\$ _____)

MONTHLY CASH FLOW MARGIN: _____ \$ _____

(Net Spendable Income minus total (A-J) Living Expenses)

Commitments for Monthly Positive Cash Flow Margin:

A. Savings _____ \$ _____

B. Retirement _____ \$ _____

C. Extra Debt Payment _____ \$ _____

D. Additional Giving _____ \$ _____

Total Commitments for Positive Cash Flow: _____ (\$ _____)

Uncommitted Monthly Cash Flow Margin: _____ \$ _____

Comments (What will you change?):

- c. Priority expenses are those that take precedence over your controllable living expenses.
 - 1) First, on line A, list your biblical giving (tithes, freewill offerings, and alms).
 - 2) On line B, put an estimate of your federal and state income taxes. It is acceptable to include unemployment taxes and mandatory social security type deductions – not medical. Your payroll records will be very helpful.
 - 3) On line C, add the total of your monthly payments from your *Debt Repayment Schedule*. Remember, this includes all your debts with the exception of a home mortgage payment or a rent payment (which is to be included as a monthly housing expense item on the *Estimated Monthly Living Expenses* form).
 - d. Your family's *Net Spendable Income* is calculated by deducting priority expenses (giving, taxes, and debt repayments) from your gross income. *Net Spendable Income* is really the amount you have to work with in the short term. It is **not** normally the same as *Take Home Pay*, which includes other deductions (medical, retirement, etc.) that belong in the living expense form. In other words, you need to manage your current *Flexible Spending Plan* within the limits of your *Net Spendable Income*.
 - e. The living expense data should be copied directly from the three-page ***Estimated Monthly Living Expenses*** form. Items A through J are the same on the *cash flow* form as on the *living expenses* form.
 - f. Your cash flow margin is the amount of surplus (positive margin) or deficit (negative margin) that remains at the end of the month.
 - g. If you have planned for a positive cash flow margin, there is a place to commit portions of this surplus to savings, retirement, accelerated debt repayments (extra principal payments), or other categories you care to name.
 - h. The bottom of this form provides a place for you to record additional but uncommitted positive cash flow. You can decide how to commit this extra money in the future, but you should make a smart plan so you do not just spend it. (See Bob & Mary's Example #2 for ideas).
 - i. Since cash management is crucial in a family *Flexible Spending Plan*, we recommend that the cash flow analysis form be calculated on a monthly basis. If you would like to add a set of columns for annual cash flow calculations, do so without excluding the family's monthly calculations. Our experience shows that businesses and families function best with monthly calculations.
 - j. As we observed in Example #1, Bob and Mary had a (\$498) negative monthly cash flow. In Example #2, we see how Bob and Mary corrected the negative cash flow with God's help and with God's principles of finance.
14. **Congratulations for completing your forms!** Even if the forms are looking rough and you are dissatisfied with the monthly cash flow results, you have taken a huge step toward financial freedom and God is pleased. Pat yourself (and your spouse or friend) on the back and give thanks to God Almighty for His grace and wisdom.
15. During homework sharing time, be prepared to discuss the process, the trials and the successes and breakthroughs you experienced as you completed your *Flexible Spending Plan*.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES

Name(s): _____

Date: _____

Living Expenses Form (Page 1 of 3)		\$ Amount Paid Monthly	Mo. x 12 = Subtotal for Yr.	Amount Paid Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Total Annual Amt. Div. by 12 = Avg. \$ Mo. Amt.
A. Housing						
Mortgage or rent payment						
Insurance for home						
Property taxes (not in house pmt.)						
Electricity						
Heating						
Water						
Garbage collection						
Telephone						
Cleaning services						
Repairs/maintenance						
Improvements & furnishings						
Supplies for home						
Other						
TOTAL HOUSING EXPENSES:		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
B. Food:		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
C. Clothing						
Husband						
Wife						
Children						
TOTAL CLOTHING:		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
D. Transportation						
Auto insurance						
Gas & oil & filters						
Repairs/maintenance						
Parking						
Bus/train/subway						
Other						
TOTAL TRANSPORTATION:		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

Living Expenses Form (Pg. 2 of 3)	\$ Amount Paid Monthly	Mo. x 12 = Subtotal for Yr.	Amount Paid Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Total Annual Amt. Div. by 12 = Avg. \$ Mo. Amt.
E. Entertainment/Recreation					
Dining out					
Childcare					
Newspapers/cable/magazines					
Vacation					
Club dues/fees					
Classes/courses/activities					
Other					
TOTAL ENTERTAINMENT:	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
F. Medical Expenses					
Medical/health insurance					
Doctors					
Dentists					
Medicine					
Other					
TOTAL MEDICAL:	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
G. Insurance					
Life (all family members)					
Disability					
Other					
TOTAL INSURANCE:	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
H. Children					
School lunches					
Allowances					
School tuition					
Lessons/special fees/dues					
Other					
TOTAL CHILDREN:	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

Living Expenses Form (Pg. 3 of 3)	\$ Amount Paid Monthly	Mo. x 12 = Subtotal for Yr.	Amount Paid Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Total Annual Amt. Div. by 12 = Avg. \$ Mo. Amt.
I. Gifts/Occasions:					
Christmas					
Birthdays					
Anniversary					
Holidays other than Christmas					
Other					
TOTAL GIFTS:	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
J. Miscellaneous					
Toiletries					
Husband (lunches, etc.)					
Wife (lunches, etc.)					
Dry cleaning/laundry					
Pet care (medical/tags/food)					
Beauty/barber					
Other					
Other					
TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS:	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
TOTAL LIVING EXPENSES	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Conclusions or Comments:					
NOTE ON USING THIS FORM: This form will help you arrive at an average monthly amount which is crucial for your <i>Flexible Spending Plan</i> and cash flow management. Record the monthly amount in the first column and then multiply by 12 months for a yearly subtotal. In the third column, record amounts that do not occur every month. Add columns two and three together to get the total annual amount for column four; then divide column four by 12 to get an average expenditure, for each category, per month! Finally, add the average expense for each category (A-J) to arrive at your estimated monthly total living expenses.					
Several expenses do not occur monthly, but must be planned for, such as: auto insurance, most gift categories, and home or auto repairs. It is important that these items be placed in the column labeled "Amount Paid Other Than Monthly." In Chapter 7, you will learn how to reserve for these in a "Freedom Account". Please use pencil and no decimal points. Remember, these are your best estimates for an average month. You will learn to adjust and correct, as you use this form several times.					

16. **REMEMBER...** You will meet with your focus group leaders just 1-3 weeks after Week 7. This private accountability session will include about an hour and a half review, plus discussion and assistance to ensure your plan is on a successful and godly track. Start planning now to get the most of your review sessions. Be prepared to demonstrate your diligence and good stewardship to God, and to be accountable to the leaders who have sown their time, prayer, and spiritual warfare into you and your family. Take every form – completed and dated – to your accountability session. (See Chapter 8 for details on your accountability session.)
17. **Closing thoughts on the homework from Weeks 5 and 6:**
 - a. It might take several attempts to complete a comprehensive financial plan. Don't worry, your leaders will assist you in this matter. This is a long-term, life changing process, not a one-shot 100 meter dash.
 - b. It is vital that you ignore worldly counsel that conflicts with God's Word, such as: "You can't afford to tithe!" (Re-read Chapter 2 on Biblical Giving.)
 - c. Over the coming months and years, develop a disciplined practice of completing revisions of all these forms. Date and discuss each version until you have a plan, with a balanced or positive monthly cash flow, that works. **This will be an ongoing process necessary for a life of true financial freedom.**
 - d. Brief all family members on your plan and put the plan into action!
 - e. In the first year, at a minimum, you will want to check your actual results monthly and make reasonable adjustments. Remember, this is your family's *Flexible Spending Plan* and you are in control.
 - f. Once you have developed a well-balanced *Flexible Spending Plan*, it is important to revise it annually.
 - g. **When you schedule your post-course accountability session with your leaders, be prepared to bring all forms (the most current set, including goals forms) completed in pencil and dated.**
18. **Record Your Breakthroughs for this week and share them during next week's homework sharing time.**



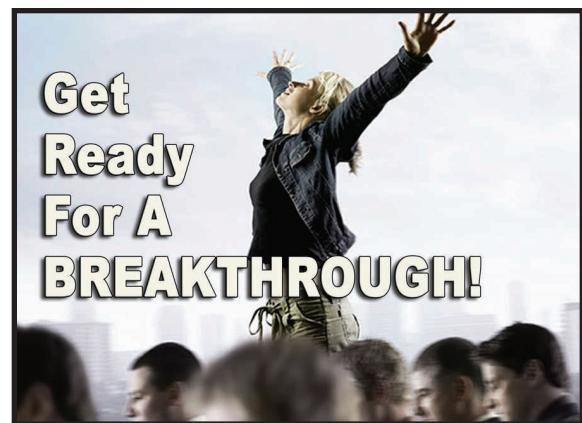
For Singles Accountability is a must. Find an accountability partner you can trust: someone who is living the principles of the Bible. Give them permission to hold your feet to the fire.

Married Couples Absolutely Must work together to develop and complete the family spending plan. The two halves of the "one flesh" must understand all forms and be able to discuss them thoroughly. Further, we recommend that children be involved in some parts of this process.



BREAKTHROUGHS!

FINANCIAL FREEDOM COURSE
RECORD YOUR WEEKLY TESTIMONIES



NAME: _____

DATE: **MONEY, CAREER, GIFTS/INHERITANCE, & OTHER**

CHAPTER 6

(WEEK 6)



"Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed." (Proverbs 16:3, NIV)

"The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty." (Proverbs 21:5, NIV)

Completing Your Flexible Spending Plan: Part II



LEADERS' NOTES – WEEKLY PROTOCOL

- ❖ **Praise Song** – A great way to start!
Suggest typed lyrics and upbeat music.
Have the tape or CD ready so you can just hit play.
- ❖ **Prayer** – Led by a Leader or LIT.
Recommend group holding hands.
- ❖ **Spiritual Warfare** – in Jesus' mighty name!
(According to Luke 10:19)
- ❖ **Homework Sharing** – Normally led by LITs.
Led by leaders if LITs are teaching this week.
Time control and equal sharing are important.
- ❖ **Share Breakthroughs** – Celebrate!
Brief but builds hope. Can be combined with
homework sharing.
- ❖ **Offering Time** – Opportunity to Sow!
Have a focus group member pray first.
Put faith into action!
- ❖ **10 Minute Break** - Beverages & restroom.
- ❖ **Weekly Lesson** – Taught by both leaders and LITs.
- ❖ **Homework Preview**
- ❖ **Dismiss with Prayer and Spiritual Warfare**
- holding hands. Entire session should average 2
to 2 ½ Hours.
- ❖ **Leaders and LITs complete weekly report**

CHAPTER 6 (WEEK 6)

COMPLETING YOUR FLEXIBLE SPENDING PLAN:

PART II



LEADERS' NOTE – Based on the homework discussion, you will get a feel for how comfortable the group is with the *Flexible Spending Plan* concept. This observation will help guide you in setting the pace for discussion of Example #2. Remember, the group has one more week to complete the *Flexible Spending Plan* forms. Also, everyone will have an individual accountability session with the leaders approximately 1-3 weeks after completing the course. Please schedule each session before you dismiss your group today.

REVIEW

Last week we introduced you to several new forms as part of your journey toward a financial freedom plan. For some, this process may have been like drinking water from a fire hydrant. This week we will again focus on Bob and Mary's *Flexible Spending Plan*.

I. A LOOK AT EXAMPLE #2

Example #2 dated August 31, 2008 reflects Bob and Mary's financial plan one year after they completed the *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* course. Again, we emphasize this is an example. However, you will see how the Jones family was able to make major changes once they learned what God's Word had to say about finances and after they sought and heeded wise Christian counsel. Let us review their forms one at a time.



LEADERS' NOTE – Please refer your group to the full size Example #2 forms in Chapter 13. They can look at the full size forms as you teach these pages. The large numbers are much easier to read.

- ◆ **THE PROJECTED INCOME AND BIBLICAL GIVING FORM** reflects no change in family income. This couple might have considered having Mary work outside the home, but when they considered the costs of childcare, transportation, additional clothing, and extra taxes, they opted for her to be a full-time mother and homemaker.

Bob and Mary's giving plan includes an important shift. Now, they are committed to paying a full 10 percent tithe on Bob's monthly gross pay. They understand this needs to be the first 10 percent and before all other spending. Once they learned what God's Word had to say about giving additional freewill offerings and sowing alms, they decided to rearrange their giving plan. They now give a \$5 monthly offering to an evangelistic missionary ministry and they sow \$5 a month into their church's benevolence fund for the needy (widows, orphans and poor). They are now in order with God's instructions to tithe freely and cheerfully, give additional freewill offerings, and to sow alms. This Biblical giving commitment pleases God and puts the couple in position to receive a Malachi 3 blessing. Finally, Bob and Mary will receive wisdom and grace to make major lifestyle changes if they simply ask God (James 1:5).

PROJECTED INCOME AND BIBLICAL GIVING - EXAMPLE #2					
NAME(S): Bob & Mary Jones			Date: August 31, 2008		
Projected Income					
INCOME SOURCES:	Amount Paid Monthly	(Mo. x 12) Subtotal for Year	Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Average Monthly Amount
Gross wages: husband	\$ 4,000	\$ 48,000		\$ 48,000	\$ 4,000
Gross wages: wife					
Dividends					
Interest					
Rent (Income less expenses)					
Business Income/"Increase"					
Retirement Funds					
Other					
TOTAL GROSS INCOME:	\$ 4,000	\$ 48,000		\$ 48,000	\$ 4,000
Projected Giving					
Organization	Amount Paid Monthly	(Mo. x 12) Subtotal for Year	Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Average Monthly Amount
10% Tithe	\$ 400	\$ 4,800		\$ 4,800	\$ 400
Freewill Offerings	\$ 5	\$ 60		\$ 60	\$ 5
Alms (Poor)	\$ 5	\$ 60		\$ 60	\$ 5
Other Charities	\$ 5	\$ 60		\$ 60	\$ 5
Other Charities		\$ 60			
Other Giving					
TOTAL GIVING:	\$ 415	\$ 4,980		\$ 4,980	\$ 415
Once the income is calculated, the next step is to determine where it goes. Begin with giving. Project your giving for the year by considering each organization you support. This can be from specific giving goals, percentages of income or past giving records. You may want to check your actual giving to date and then project what you plan to give for the rest of the year.					
NOTE ON USING THIS FORM: This form will help you arrive at an average monthly amount which is crucial for your spending plan and cash flow management. Record the monthly amount in the first column and then multiply by 12 months for a yearly subtotal. In the third column, record amounts that do not occur every month. Add columns 2 and 3 together to get the total annual amount for column 4. Finally, divide the total annual amount by 12 to get the average monthly amount. Do this for each line item					

- ♦ **LIST YOUR ASSETS.** There are significant changes here. Bob and Mary were previously saddled with high interest debt payments that put them under tremendous monthly pressure. Therefore, they prayed, agreed, and decided to liquidate several non-essential assets in order to pay-off considerable debt.

<i>LIST YOUR ASSETS - EXAMPLE #2</i>	
Name(s):	<u>Bob & Mary Jones</u>
Date:	June 20, 2007
TYPES OF ASSETS	
1 . Liquid Assets (easily converted to cash)	
Cash on hand	\$200
Checking account balance	\$1,800
Money market funds	
CDs (% interest rate)	
Savings (% interest rate)	\$5,500
Stocks & bonds	
Life insurance cash values	\$0
Other (describe)	
TOTAL Liquid Assets:	\$7,500
2. Non-liquid Assets	
Home (market value)	\$75,000
Land (market value)	\$25,000
Net worth (value) of business	
Real estate investments (not home)	
Jet ski, camper, RV, boats, etc.	\$0
Automobiles at market value	\$20,000
Furniture & personal property (conservative market value)	\$10,000
Valuable collections (stamps, coins, etc.)	\$0
Retirement funds balance	\$20,000
Funds due from others (receivables)	
Other (describe)	
Other (describe)	
TOTAL Non-liquid Assets	\$150,000
3. Total Assets (1 + 2)	
	\$157,500

Their first plan (Example #1) included whole life insurance with a cash value of \$3,500. By shopping for a competitive term life policy, they were able to cut life insurance premiums by \$100 a month without lowering Bob's coverage. They applied the cash value of the whole life policy toward immediate debt reduction. (Since they used the \$3,500, they now have zero for the cash value of their insurance policy.)

In addition, they used an extra \$500 from their sale of assets to actually increase their savings account balance from \$5,000 to \$5,500. Total liquid assets are now \$7,500.

In the non-liquid asset section, we see that they sold their \$10,000 boat and their \$3,000 coin collection. Total non-liquid assets are now \$150,000 and their Total Assets are now \$157,500, which is \$16,500 less than Example #1. Even though their assets are less, you will soon see they are in a much stronger financial position.

- ◆ **DEBT REPAYMENT SCHEDULE.** Bob & Mary were able to sell assets and actually pay off their four debts from Example #1. This took sacrifice and dedication, but they not only got free of consumer debt, they committed to operating free of consumer debt in the future (no new debt).

DEBT REPAYMENT SCHEDULE - EXAMPLE #2						
NAME(S): Bob and mary Jones						
DATE: June 20, 2007						
	LENDER	\$ BALANCE	\$ MONTHLY PAYMENT	INT. %	REMAINING PAYMENTS	PAY-OFF DATE
1	Credit Card A	\$0				
2	Credit Card B	\$0				
3	Car Loan	\$0				
4	Parent's Loan	\$0				
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
TOTAL:		\$0	\$0			

NOTE ON USING DEBT REPAYMENT SCHEDULE:

This form should include all debts with the exception of a primary home mortgage. The mortgage obligation is a debt and must be included as a liability when you complete the *List Your Liabilities* form. However, the mortgage payment is not included on this form because it will be included in the monthly housing expense category when you complete the *Estimated Monthly Living Expenses* form. If your list of debts exceeds the 15 spaces given, make extra pages. Do not despair, you are on the road to Financial Freedom!

- ◆ **LIST YOUR LIABILITIES FORM.** This reflects the wise use of the money from their asset sales to completely pay off two credit cards, the car loan, and the loan to parents. They agreed to cut up one credit card and to use the other card with very strict guidelines, including paying off the entire balance every month. As a result, they have only one monthly debt and that is their \$675 home mortgage payment at 9% interest.

LIST YOUR LIABILITIES - EXAMPLE #2

NAME(S): Bob & Mary Jones

DATE COMPLETED: August 31, 2008

LENDER (CREDITOR)	BALANCE DUE	INTEREST RATE %	PAYMENT SCHEDULE	
			PER MONTH	UNTIL (MO./YR.)
1. Credit Card A	\$ -			
2. Credit Card B	\$ -			
3. Car Loan	\$ -			
4. **Mortgage	\$ 80,000	9.00%	\$ 675	6/30/2032
5. *Parent's Loan	\$ -			
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				
16.				
17.				
18.				
19.				
20.				
21.				
22.				
23.				
TOTALS:	\$ 80,000		\$ 675	

****Note: For Simplicity, we left the mortgage balance at \$80,000. In reality, the balance would be slightly lower, due to one year of principal payments.**

Note: This form should include all debts previously listed on the "Debt Repayment Schedule" plus the home mortgage if applicable. *In the USA, no interest loans may not be legal, but they often occur.

- ◆ **BALANCE SHEET & NET WORTH STATEMENT.** This statement now reflects different values for both assets and for liabilities, but the net worth remains unchanged at \$77,500.

BALANCE SHEET AND NET WORTH STATEMENT EXAMPLE #2

Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones

Date: June 30, 2007

Note on Using this Form: Complete this form using data from your recently completed ***List Your Assets*** & ***List Your Liabilities*** forms. Then, subtract ***total liabilities*** from ***total assets*** & record your NET WORTH.

A. Assets

Liquid Assets: \$7,500

Non-liquid Assets: \$150,000

Total Assets: \$157,500

B. Less: Total Liabilities: (-) 80,000

C. Net Worth: (Total Assets - Total Liabilities) \$77,500

Comments:

The reason there is no immediate change in net worth is because this couple sold some assets and paid off an equal amount of debt. So, for now, the assets were reduced by the same amount as liabilities (debts).

We will soon see that the Jones Family is now much stronger financially as a result of these prudent changes. In Example #1, Bob and Mary were running a large monthly negative cash flow. The only way they could continue with that plan was to increase their debts every month. However, as debts grow, interest costs grow, and liabilities grow larger and larger each month. This means their net worth would actually get lower and lower every month. **In Example #2, with zero consumer debt payments and a positive monthly cash flow, their net worth will increase steadily if they do not waste their surplus.**

- ♦ **ESTIMATED MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES FORM.** Living expense reductions require significant lifestyle changes. Bob and Mary included their young children in their financial plans. As they prayed, they received grace and wisdom on how to revise their plan.

Note: If you use the "other" expense subcategory, be sure to identify the expense.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES - EXAMPLE #2					
Name(s): <u>Bob & Mary Jones</u>	Date: <u>August 31, 2008</u>				
Living Expenses Form (Page 1 of 3)	\$ Amount Paid Monthly	Mo. x 12 = Subtotal for Yr.	Amount Paid Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Total Annual Amt. Div. by 12 = Avg. \$ Mo. Amt.
A. Housing					
Mortgage or rent payment	\$675	\$8,100		\$8,100	\$675
Insurance for home			\$500	\$500	\$42
Property taxes (not in house pmt.)			\$1,500	\$1,500	\$125
Electricity	\$60	\$720		\$720	\$60
Heating	\$50	\$600		\$600	\$50
Water	\$25	\$300		\$300	\$25
Garbage collection					
Telephone	\$40	\$480		\$480	\$40
Cleaning services					
Repairs/maintenance	\$25	\$300		\$300	\$25
Improvements & furnishings					
Supplies for home	\$10	\$120		\$120	\$10
Other					
TOTAL HOUSING EXPENSES:	\$885	\$10,620	\$2,000	\$12,620	\$1,052
B. Food:	\$425	\$5,100	\$	\$5,100	\$425
C. Clothing					
Husband	\$20	\$240		\$240	\$20
Wife	\$30	\$360		\$360	\$30
Children	\$45	\$540		\$540	\$45
TOTAL CLOTHING:	\$95	\$1,140	\$	\$1,140	\$95
D. Transportation					
Auto insurance			\$600	\$600	\$50
Gas & oil & filters	\$100	\$1,200		\$1,200	\$100
Repairs/maintenance	\$12	\$144		\$144	\$12
Parking	\$12	\$144		\$144	\$12
Bus/train/subway					
Other					
TOTAL TRANSPORTATION:	\$124	\$1,488	\$600	\$2,088	\$174

Living Expenses Form (Pg. 2 of 3)	\$ Amount Paid Monthly	Mo. x 12 = Subtotal for Yr.	Amount Paid Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Total Annual Amt. Div. by 12 = Avg. \$ Mo. Amt.
E. Entertainment/Recreation					
Dining out	\$25	\$300		\$300	\$25
Childcare	\$5	\$60		\$60	\$5
Newspapers/cable/magazines	\$10	\$120		\$120	\$10
Vacation			\$720	\$720	\$60
Club dues/fees					
Classes/courses/activities					
Other	\$10	\$120		\$120	\$10
TOTAL ENTERTAINMENT:	\$50	\$600	\$720	\$1,320	\$110
F. Medical Expenses					
Medical/health insurance	\$50	\$600		\$600	\$50
Doctors	\$50	\$600		\$600	\$50
Dentists	\$10	\$120		\$120	\$10
Medicine	\$10	\$120		\$120	\$10
Other					
TOTAL MEDICAL:	\$120	\$1,440	\$	\$1,440	\$120
G. Insurance					
Life (all family members)	\$35	\$420		\$420	\$35
Disability					
Other					
TOTAL INSURANCE:	\$35	\$420	\$	\$420	\$35
H. Children					
School lunches	\$35	\$420		\$420	\$35
Allowances	\$30	\$360		\$360	\$30
School tuition					
Lessons/special fees/dues	\$25	\$300		\$300	\$25
Other					
TOTAL CHILDREN:	\$90	\$1,080	\$	\$1,080	\$90
Living Expenses Form (Pg. 3 of 3)	\$ Amount Paid Monthly	Mo. x 12 = Subtotal for Yr.	Amount Paid Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Total Annual Amt. Div. by 12 = Avg. \$ Mo. Amt.
I. Gifts/Occasions:					
Christmas			\$360	\$360	\$30
Birthdays			\$120	\$120	\$10
Anniversary			\$50	\$50	\$4
Holidays other than Christmas					
Other			\$24	\$24	\$2
TOTAL GIFTS:	\$	\$	\$554	\$554	\$46
J. Miscellaneous					
Toiletries	\$15	\$180		\$180	\$15
Husband (lunches, etc.)	\$35	\$420		\$420	\$35
Wife (lunches, etc.)	\$20	\$240		\$240	\$20
Dry cleaning/laundry	\$20	\$240		\$240	\$20
Pet care (medical/tags/food)					
Beauty/barber	\$20	\$240		\$240	\$20
Other					
Other					
TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS:	\$110	\$1,320	\$	\$1,320	\$110
TOTAL LIVING EXPENSES	\$1,934	\$23,208	\$3,874	\$27,082	\$2,257
Conclusions or Comments: This was Bob & Mary's first time to estimate monthly living expenses. They were surprised at some categories and will adjust in Example #2.					
NOTE ON USING THIS FORM: This form will help you arrive at an average monthly amount which is crucial for your <i>Flexible Spending Plan</i> and cash flow management. Record the monthly amount in the first column and then multiply by 12 months for a yearly subtotal. In the third column, record amounts that do not occur every month. Add columns two and three together to get the total annual amount for column four; then divide column four by 12 to get an average expenditure, for each category, per month! Finally, add the average expense for each category (A-J) to arrive at your estimated monthly total living expenses.					
Several expenses do not occur monthly, but must be planned for, such as: auto insurance, most gift categories, and home or auto repairs. It is important that these items be placed in the column labeled "Amount Paid Other Than Monthly." In Chapter 7, you will learn how to reserve for these in a "Freedom Account". Please use pencil and no decimal points. Remember, these are your best estimates for an average month. You will learn to adjust and correct, as you use this form several times.					

For Married Couples ~ Living expense adjustments must be agreed to by both halves of the one flesh couple. You are also encouraged to include the children. Results are better when all family members agree on the *Flexible Spending Plan*. Pray & do warfare first!



Singles – Avoid the trap of overspending on houses, cars, clothes, entertainment, etc. to impress, cover up insecurity, or to fill a void. Do not try to live at the same level as your friends (single or married) feeling as if you "should be at the same place in life." Remember married couples may have two incomes.

The following is a recap of expense reductions Bob and Mary made in their new *Flexible Spending Plan*.

1. Housing expense was lowered by \$20 by minimizing long distance calls and having Bob do some of the minor maintenance work.
2. Food expense was trimmed to \$425 by using planned menus, coupons, and by taking advantage of selected bulk quantity purchases. Expensive junk food and costly convenience food items were dramatically cut. (Nutrition actually improved.)
3. Clothing was reduced by just \$15 a month, but it all adds up. Mary reactivated her sewing machine and they agreed to shop harder for good buys.
4. Transportation was cut from \$236 to \$124 per month. Bob joined a carpool to his job and they agreed to consider the cost of unnecessary driving trips. Also, by doing their own oil and filter changes, vehicle maintenance was cut in half.
5. Entertainment and recreation was cut by over 50%. They decided to eat out less and at lower priced restaurants. Likewise, each category was scrutinized. The family agreed to vacation at a lake cabin closer to home, at least for this year.
6. No cuts were possible in the medical area. However, the family agreed to pray for excellent health and to be good stewards of their bodies through exercise and proper eating habits.
7. Life insurance was cut by \$100 a month by shopping for a good term life policy with the same death benefit.
8. After studying the children's expenses, no changes were made. However, the two young children will be accountable for more household jobs and this will benefit the entire family's quality of life. The children are also learning godly principles about stewardship, work, tithing, giving offerings, sowing alms, and saving from their allowances and outside jobs.
9. By pre-planning for gift situations and making some gifts themselves, this monthly expense was cut from \$80 to \$46.
10. Miscellaneous expenses can often get out of hand. Bob and Mary looked for creative ways to save. Bob agreed to take his lunch more often or to eat in the company cafeteria. Mary will look for quantity dry cleaning specials, etc. The net result is a monthly savings of \$65.

MONTHLY CASH FLOW ANALYSIS - Example #2

Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones

Date: August 31, 2008

Gross Income: \$ 4,000

Less Priority Expenses:

A. Giving (tithes, offerings & alms)	\$ 415
B. Taxes (from payroll records)	\$ 750
C. Debt (total of mo. payments)	\$ -

Total Priority Expenses: (-) \$ (1,165)

NET SPENDABLE INCOME: (Gross income less A, B, & C =) \$ 2,835

MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES

A. Housing	\$ 1,052
B. Food	\$ 425
C. Clothing	\$ 95
D. Transportation	\$ 174
E. Entertainment/recreation	\$ 110
F. Medical	\$ 120
G. Insurance	\$ 35
H. Children	\$ 90
I. Gifts	\$ 46
J. Miscellaneous	\$ 110

TOTAL MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES: \$ 2,257

MONTHLY CASH FLOW MARGIN: \$ 578

(Net Spendable Income minus total (A-J) Living Expenses)

Commitments for Monthly Positive Cash Flow Margin:

A. Savings	\$ 100
B. Retirement	\$ 100
C. Extra Debt Payment	\$ 100
D. Additional Giving	\$ 50

Total Commitments for Positive Cash Flow: \$ (350)

Uncommitted Monthly Cash Flow Margin: \$ 228

Comments: Now that high interest debt has been eliminated, this family has a balanced spending plan and is on the way to paying off the mortgage. They have \$228 per month in uncommitted cash flow and have the freedom to rework their spending plan as needed.

The form above provides the opportunity to study Bob and Mary's **Monthly Cash Flow Analysis** form (Example #2). This is a composite of the financial data you just observed.

1. Gross Income remains at \$4,000 per month.
2. Priority Expenses include \$415 from the *Projected Income and Biblical Giving* form; and \$750 in (monthly payroll deductions) income tax. Debt repayments are now zero, as you observed in their restructured *Debt Repayment* form.
3. Net Spendable Income is now \$2,835. This is much better than Example #1 because their consumer debt payments are now zero.
4. The Estimated Monthly Living Expenses form projects a new total of \$2,257 for the ten categories (A-J).
5. Good news! The cash flow margin is now a positive \$578 each month. What a change from a negative \$498 per month in Example #1.
6. Because they have planned to have money left over each month, they can also plan to commit some of this positive cash flow margin as follows: \$100 to savings; an extra \$100 to a retirement fund; an extra \$100 payment against the principal on their home mortgage; and \$50 in additional giving.
7. Their good stewardship practices produced \$228 in uncommitted monthly cash flow. Their *Flexible Spending Plan* allows the freedom to rework their living expenses, especially if some expense categories were squeezed too tightly. They can also begin using this uncommitted monthly cash flow to build a reserve for major purchases (newer vehicle, major appliance, etc.), a dream vacation, or a fund to start a business on a debt free basis.



EXAMPLE #2 REVIEW

In Example #2, the Jones family made two major moves to get their *Flexible Spending Plan* in balance. First, they sold nonessential assets to pay off consumer debts, which increased their net spendable income significantly. Second, they combined planning and sacrifice to make cuts in many living expense categories. They kept looking for savings, reworked their numbers, and were amazed to see a plan with a positive monthly cash flow of \$578. This is a major improvement in comparison with Example #1, in which they were headed for disaster. This positive monthly cash flow also allowed Bob and Mary to make five positive moves: start a long-term savings plan, add to a retirement fund, make extra principal payments on their mortgage, increase their giving, and have additional uncommitted monthly surplus.

We realize that Example #2 versus #1 shows Bob and Mary turning their situation around in just over one year. This is just an example. Your situation may take considerably longer and could require even more drastic actions, but the point is to understand how plans can be changed with dedication, and how to include God in the whole process. There is definitely hope and God has a "Plan A" for you! (Jer. 29:11)



LEADERS' NOTE – Ask the group if they have any questions concerning Example #2. Please be sure all participants are comfortable with the development of the numbers and the use of the forms before moving on.

TIPS ON REDUCING LIVING EXPENSES, LOWERING DEBT PAYMENTS, AND/OR INCREASING INCOME can be found in a variety of excellent Christian resource materials.

See Chapter 11 for a list of several excellent resources. These resources will only benefit you if you go get them and use them. Action is the key!

II. SAVINGS – IS IT A BIBLICAL CONCEPT?

After six weeks of dealing with debt and *Flexible Spending Plans*, and with a new grasp of cash flow, you can certainly see that it would be great to have the security of a sizeable savings account. Let's explore what the Bible says about saving regularly.

BIBLICAL REFERENCES

1. In Proverbs 6:6-8, we are instructed, "Go to the ant you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer, or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest" (NIV).
2. Proverbs 21:20 says, "In the house of the wise are stores of choice food and oil, but a foolish man devours all he has" (NIV).
3. Relating to providing for one's family now and via an inheritance, we refer to 1 Timothy 5:8: "If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever" (NIV).

WHAT ABOUT RETIREMENT?

Retirement, especially as we know the concept in North America, is not based on biblical wisdom. However, we recommend that you use retirement and savings plans to prepare for the future, to include uncertainties and/or to position you and your family financially to do whatever God calls you to do. This could involve launching a new career or accepting a full or part-time ministry call. Regardless of the option, you will be better prepared for the future if you have developed and implemented a savings plan.



III. SEQUENTIAL STRATEGIES FOR SAVING AND INVESTING

While we will not make specific recommendations, we will provide a logical sequence of events to help guide you as you use your positive cash flow to save and invest. Remember, these important steps all require that you start with a positive monthly cash flow.

"Through skillful and godly wisdom is a house (a life, a home, a family) built, and by understanding it is established (on a sound and good foundation). And by knowledge shall the chambers (of its every area) be filled with all precious

and pleasant riches" (Proverbs 24:3-4, AMP).

- ◆ **STEP ONE:** Pay off high interest debt as quickly as possible and commit to no new debt. Get a will ASAP if you don't already have one. This is an absolute must for good stewardship.
- ◆ **STEP TWO:** Build a small reserve for emergencies — At least a few hundred dollars in your joint checking account.
- ◆ **STEP THREE:** Add to an interest-bearing savings account until you have at least enough reserve to cover all family expenses for a full month. Limit access only to emergencies and married couples need mutual agreement.

Stay within your ***Flexible Spending Plan*** guidelines as you complete steps 1, 2, and 3.

- ◆ **STEP FOUR:** If you really need to increase some living expense categories, do so, but with caution. (*If you are married, do so by mutual agreement only.*)
- ◆ **STEP FIVE:** Build up a three-to-six-month living expense reserve in an interest-bearing money market or savings account. Shop for the best deal that is secure. Start or add to college funds now.
- ◆ **STEP SIX:** Don't miss out on company-provided retirement funds, such as 401K plans, especially if there are company matching fund provisions. These deals are just too good to miss.
- ◆ **STEP SEVEN:** Look for the best interest returns for certificates of deposit (CDs) or a money market account to build up a secure reserve so you can pay cash for major purchases, such as furniture, a car, or home improvements.
- ◆ **STEP EIGHT:** This is a very good time to begin making extra principal payments on your home mortgage.

You can also save huge amounts of interest by paying twice a month. (Note: This does not mean making two full mortgage payments a month, but it means dividing your one monthly payment into two half payments made at the beginning and the middle of the month.) Ask your mortgage provider. You could easily take this twice-a-month-step in conjunction with steps 1, 2, and 3.

- ◆ **STEP NINE:** Seek excellent investment counsel as you grow a diversified investment portfolio. Avoid high-risk investments until you have a solid base that will provide for future needs, such as retirement or major lifestyle changes.

For Married Couples ~ Husbands and wives should openly discuss anything that involves risk. Seek one flesh agreement and do not proceed without agreement. If you both do not understand the investment, we recommend that you pass.



ADVICE FOR SINGLES

Seek wise counsel and be accountable.
All ten of these steps apply to you!

- ◆ **STEP TEN:** Revise your giving plans continually as God blesses you. You should be able to give a much larger percentage of your total income as your lifestyle changes and as your savings and investments grow. Consider special gifts to your church, your favorite ministries, and to your family.

Keep God in your plan always, and remember that prosperity is not being rich in the world's view. It is having all the resources needed to do what God has called you to do.

MORE ABOUT INVESTING, ESTATE PLANNING & INSURANCE

This course will not attempt to dive deeply into these subjects. We do encourage you to seek wise Christian counsel regarding each of these important elements of your financial plan.

Never invest in ventures you do not fully understand. Diversify investments to spread risks. All investments have risk and God expects you to be wise and faithful stewards of His resources.

Remember all financial decisions are spiritual decisions.

LOOKING AHEAD

The homework for Chapter 6 is to revise and/or complete all forms that were started in Chapter 5. Bring ALL your completed *Flexible Spending Plan* forms to next week's session to discuss.

Please remember to:

- Pray and do spiritual warfare before starting homework.
- Make six extra copies of all blank forms (see Chapter 15).
- Use pencil and aim for 90 to 95 percent accuracy.
- Get your paying of tithes, giving of freewill offerings, and sowing of alms in biblical order so God can lead you out of the wilderness.

Next week is your final full focus group session. Your Leaders will introduce you to various cash control systems to enable you to keep track of God's money. Then you will be equipped with the tools needed to help you stick to your *Flexible Spending Plan*. **Cash control means keeping track of God's money, and this is the final link in your chain to family financial freedom. Come excited and expecting!**

Please remember to call your focus group leaders if you get bogged down during the homework.



LEADERS' NOTE – Congratulate the group for getting this far!

- In the closing prayer, pray hard for each group member — for unity and hope. Include Spiritual Warfare!
- Encourage everyone to press forward for the prize of true Financial Freedom.
- The Prayer of Jabez is always appropriate. (1 Chron. 4:10)

CHAPTER 6 HOMEWORK

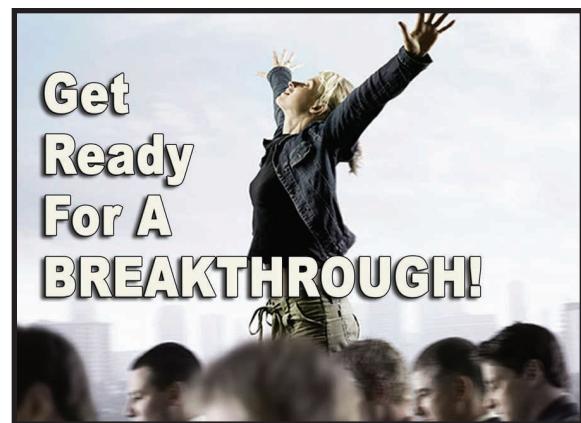
COMPLETING YOUR OWN FLEXIBLE SPENDING PLAN

SPIRITUAL WARFARE HOMEWORK: This week's spiritual warfare section deals with curses from not honoring our father and mother, the consequences of judging our parents, and generational curses.

1. **Read Spiritual Warfare Section #6.**
2. **Do Practical Application Exercise #6** and be set free of all generational curses and judgments.
3. The rest of your homework for Chapters 5 and 6 is to complete your *Flexible Spending Plan*.
4. The homework was previously explained in detail, following Chapter 5. Please refer there, and use Bob and Mary's Example #1 and Example #2, for further clarification.
5. Reminder – married couples must complete these forms together. Singles, try to find a reliable Christian accountability partner.
6. Be prepared to discuss your progress during the homework sharing time for Chapter 6.
7. Celebrate as you progress through this process. This is "A Big Deal!"
8. **Record Your Breakthroughs for the week and share them during homework sharing time.**

BREAKTHROUGHS!

FINANCIAL FREEDOM COURSE
RECORD YOUR WEEKLY TESTIMONIES



NAME: _____

DATE: MONEY, CAREER, GIFTS/INHERITANCE, & OTHER

CHAPTER 7

(WEEK 7)



"And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more."

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." (Matthew 25:20-21, KJV)

Cash Flow Control: Keeping Track of God's Money



LEADERS' NOTES – WEEKLY PROTOCOL

- ❖ **Praise Song** – A great way to start!
Suggest typed lyrics and upbeat music.
Have the tape or CD ready so you can just hit play.
- ❖ **Prayer** – Led by a Leader or LIT.
Recommend group holding hands.
- ❖ **Spiritual Warfare** – in Jesus' mighty name!
(According to Luke 10:19)
- ❖ **Homework Sharing** – Normally led by LITs.
Led by leaders if LITs are teaching this week.
Time control and equal sharing are important.
- ❖ **Share Breakthroughs** – Celebrate!
Brief but builds hope. Can be combined with
homework sharing.
- ❖ **Offering Time** – Opportunity to Sow!
Have a focus group member pray first.
Put faith into action!
- ❖ **10 Minute Break** - Beverages & restroom.
- ❖ **Weekly Lesson** – Taught by both leaders and LITs.
- ❖ **Homework Preview**
- ❖ **Dismiss with Prayer and Spiritual Warfare**
- holding hands. Entire session should average 2
to 2 ½ Hours.
- ❖ **Leaders and LITs complete weekly report**

CHAPTER 7 (WEEK 7)

CASH FLOW CONTROL:

KEEPING TRACK OF GOD'S MONEY

OVERVIEW

In Chapters 5 & 6, you developed a godly *Flexible Spending Plan* that launched you on the path to freedom from debt and to a positive monthly cash flow. Celebrate (Hooray!) as you see that true financial freedom can be a reality for you and your family!

This is an exciting chapter because you will learn how to use some basic cash flow techniques that will enable you to keep track of God's money on a daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly basis.

This lesson involves basic number crunching and three new user-friendly forms. Our goal is to teach you how to be good and faithful stewards.

This may also be a good time to reexamine your heart attitude about money.

If you need to stop and pray or do spiritual warfare, then please obey the Holy Spirit. If married, please remember to do your warfare as a one-flesh couple.

I. STEWARDSHIP PRINCIPLES REVISITED

- ◆ **GOD OWNS EVERYTHING** and it is God who gives us the power and ability to obtain wealth. He requires His people to be good stewards of what He has given them.
- ◆ **WE MUST FIRST BE FAITHFUL WITH LITTLE.** In the *Parable of the Talents* (Matthew 25), Jesus reminds us that it is the good and faithful servants, who are faithful first in little, that are given much more to steward or manage.
- ◆ **GOD WANTS US TO PLAN WISELY** (*Proverbs 21:5*).
- ◆ **GOD WANTS US TO BE AWARE OF THE CONDITION OF OUR RESOURCES.** In *Proverbs* we are instructed to know the condition of our "flocks." Today, most of us are responsible for resources other than livestock. We look after our spouse, children, cars, income, and revenue producing assets, and maybe a business. However, the advice remains the same: "Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds; for riches do not endure forever, and a crown is not secure for all generations...the lambs will provide you with clothing, and the goats with the price of a field. You will have plenty of goat's milk to feed you and your family and to nourish your servant girls." (*Proverbs 27:23-24, 26-27, NIV*)
- ◆ **GOD WANTS OUR HEARTS TO BE RIGHT.** He does not need our money, but He calls us to treat all financial decisions as spiritual decisions. In other words, He wants us to be faithful stewards.

II. CASH FLOW CONTROL – WHAT AND WHY

WHAT IS CASH FLOW CONTROL? Cash flow control is simply keeping track of where your money goes: how it is spent, saved, or wasted. This chapter will deal with three basic systems for keeping track of money:

1. ENVELOPE SYSTEM
2. COMPUTERIZED SYSTEMS (*brief reference*)
3. USER-FRIENDLY MANUAL SYSTEM (*our main focus*)

WHY DO YOU NEED A SYSTEM TO CONTROL CASH FLOW? Experience has shown that an old-fashioned “budget” or even carefully or prayerfully preparing a *Flexible Spending Plan* can look good on paper but might not work at the end of a month. The reason is that without a good cash tracking system, small and large amounts of money can slip right out of our wallets or purses without us being aware of it. If this happens on a regular basis, we will experience the ugly pattern of having “too much month left at the end of the money.” In other words, we end up with a negative cash flow and don’t know why.

III. HOW TO IMPROVE EFFECTIVENESS OF CASH FLOW CONTROL

- ♦ **KEEP GOOD RECORDS.** Accurate checkbook balances and properly rectified monthly checking statement balances are necessary.
 - ♦ **CARRY A SMALL POCKET LOGBOOK** in which you can record daily uses of cash. Perfection is not expected, but you need to know where cash is spent.
 - ♦ **CONSIDER GETTING MULTIPLE CHECKING ACCOUNTS.** For married couples, we are not talking about “his money” or “her money.” Here is a situation where four separate checking accounts might actually benefit a married couple. Look for checking accounts with no service charges.
1. One main joint checking account used for most family expenses. Income from all sources should be deposited first into this main checking account. One designated spouse, who is also accountable to his or her one-flesh partner, should maintain this checkbook.
 2. A second joint checking account, called a freedom account, is used primarily for those planned expenses that do not occur monthly. For example, quarterly or semi-annual insurance or home repair bills that are planned for in the *Estimated Monthly Living Expenses* form. Each month, the pre-planned amount is deposited into the *freedom account* from the main family checking account. Then, when these irregular (non-monthly) expenses occur, you have the freedom of knowing you have one account just for these expenses.
 3. Each spouse may also choose, by mutual agreement, to carry his/her own separate checking account. This account is used only for weekly or monthly “spending money” as allocated in the *Flexible Spending Plan*. For example, if both spouses work outside the home they may have a plan that provides \$30 per week for meals for each spouse. In this example, a \$30 check would be written on the main family checking account and deposited at the beginning of each week in the wife’s individual “spending money” checking account. Another \$30 check would be deposited into the husband’s “spending money” checking account. This may seem like a lot of check writing, but if a lack of discipline exists, this approach will definitely help you control and track your spending.

- ◆ **USE CHECKS WHENEVER POSSIBLE.** Checks allow for an accurate record of spending.
- ◆ **TRACK & RECORD ALL NON-CHECKBOOK TRANSACTIONS.** ATM withdrawals, debit expenditures, automatic bank drafts, and direct bank deposits must all be recorded or your checkbook balances will be distorted. Failure to account for debit card transactions and ATM cash withdrawals has derailed many *Flexible Spending Plans* for families.
- ◆ **DO NOT WRITE BAD CHECKS.** Writing a bad check is absolutely not acceptable! It is illegal and a terrible witness. Therefore, you must know your balance prior to writing a check!
- ◆ **NEVER WRITE POSTDATED CHECKS.** Regardless of the date, the check can be cashed once you sign it, and you are liable if there are insufficient funds.

IV. THE ENVELOPE SYSTEM – SIMPLE AND EFFECTIVE

It's simple, but it works! You just need to create an envelope for each major *Flexible Spending Plan* category.



LEADERS' NOTE – Make a simple visual by labeling envelopes for each category (A-J) shown on the *Estimated Monthly Living Expenses* form. Use a shoebox as a file holder for regular size envelopes or a larger container for full-page size envelopes.

- ◆ **LABEL ENVELOPES.** For example: food, transportation, medical, clothing, housing, etc.
- ◆ **PLACE THE DESIGNATED MONIES IN THE APPROPRIATE ENVELOPE WHEN YOU CASH YOUR PAYCHECK.** (This should coincide with your *Flexible Spending Plan*.)
- ◆ **WRITE OUT CHECKS FOR FIXED EXPENSES** and place them in the envelope for safekeeping until it's time to mail them. Fixed expenses include rent or mortgage payment.
- ◆ **USE SPECIFIED MONIES AS NEEDED.** Assuming the *Flexible Spending Plan* is balanced (has a positive monthly cash flow), there should be sufficient money to fully fund each envelope. Once the funds from an envelope are used, spending from that specific category must stop for the month.

Married Couples must work together on this envelope system. Surprises must be avoided – trust and discipline are essential.



- ◆ **TRANSFER FUNDS FROM ANOTHER ENVELOPE** only if you must spend more than the available amount from a particular envelope. Hopefully, new debt is not an easy option. If money is used from one envelope to compensate for another, then spending on that category must be curtailed accordingly.

- ◆ **IF ONE ENVELOPE IS EMPTY BEFORE THE MONTH ENDS, TIGHTEN UP.** If you operate the envelope system properly, you will not run short of funds during the month. However, if one envelope is overdrawn, you need to take immediate "belt-tightening" measures to cut equal amounts of spending from one or more other envelopes.
- ◆ **RESTRAINT AND DISCIPLINE ARE ABSOLUTELY REQUIRED** for the envelope system (or any cash flow control system) to work! You only have so much money to support your group of envelopes. The amounts for each category have been set by you in your *Flexible Spending Plan* and are reflected on your *Monthly Cash Flow Analysis* form.
- ◆ **FLEXIBILITY EXISTS.** If you need to adjust the categories, do so in your *Flexible Spending Plan* and reflect the changes on your *Monthly Cash Flow Analysis* form. Finally, change the values on selected envelopes. Remember this is your plan.
- ◆ **PROPERLY MAINTAIN CHECKBOOKS AND BANK STATEMENTS.** Checkbooks and bank statements must be accurately maintained for any system to work - no exceptions!
- ◆ **DEVELOP A SIMPLE LOG SHEET.** To go one step further with the envelope control system, we recommend you develop a simple log sheet to track activity for each envelope category. (See the sample log sheet provided.) This can be used to log cash in and out, in the same manner you use a checkbook register. However, we recommend that you use a separate page to log, or keep track of, each category. Some people obtain several blank checkbook registers and label one for each envelope category. These extra check registers serve as the log sheet, or log book, for each designated category.
- ◆ **SAMPLE ENVELOPE LOG SHEET.** Below you see an example of how Bob and Mary Jones prepared a log sheet for the category "food." This log sheet allows them to record and track the cash (or check) activity going into and out of that envelope.

ENVELOPE SYSTEM LOG SHEET - EXAMPLE					
Manual Cash Flow Management Form					
Ideal for 9" X 12" envelopes. Use one form for each expense category.					
Name(s): <u>Bob & Mary Jones</u>			Year: <u>2007</u>		
Category: <u>Food</u>					
Allocation for this category: \$ <u>425</u>			Circle one: <u>monthly</u> <input checked="" type="radio"/> bi-monthly <input type="radio"/> weekly		

	Date	Transaction	Deposit	Withdraw	Balance
1	8/30/2007	Cash to envelope from pay check	\$425	\$0	\$425
2	9/4/2007	Grocery Store A Cash Purchase	\$0	(\$125)	\$300
3	9/13/2007	Grocery Store B Cash Purchase	\$0	(\$105)	\$195
4	9/25/2007	Grocery Store C Cash Purchase	\$0	(\$165)	\$30
5	9/30/2007	Cash to envelope from pay check	\$425	\$0	\$455

- ◆ **KEEP A SAVINGS ENVELOPE.** Hopefully the savings envelope grows steadily. We recommend depositing most surplus funds, beyond a small emergency cushion, into an actual interest-earning savings account. **Develop a habit of saving.** By transferring extra (savings) money out of your checking account, and into a separate savings account, you will reduce the temptation to spend your savings.

A REAL LIFE EXAMPLE

When Bill and Maureen were a young married couple in the U.S. Army with two babies, they used a basic envelope cash control system. As the monthly paycheck was cashed, all envelopes received their cash or checks and the "surplus funds" envelope received \$30 or one dollar per day. The plan was simple and it worked! If used correctly, it is not possible to "overdraw" the envelope system.

- ◆ **BLANK ENVELOPE SYSTEM LOG SHEET FORM.** A blank form is available in Chapter 15 for you to copy and use. If you photocopy it in full size, it can be stapled or taped to the front of a large (recycled) 9-inch by 12-inch envelope. You will need a form for each A-J category plus short-term savings, so run plenty of copies (at least 11).

ENVELOPE SYSTEM LOG SHEET

Manual Cash Flow Management Form

Ideal for 9" X 12" envelopes. Use one form for each expense category.

Name(s): _____

Date: _____

Category: _____

Allocation for this category: \$_____

Circle one: monthly bi-monthly weekly

	Date	Transaction	Deposit	Withdraw	Balance
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					

Married Couples ~ be sure that both of you understand and can use whatever system you select. If one partner is not comfortable with computers, we recommend that you stick to the manual forms.



V. COMPUTERIZED CASH FLOW CONTROL

If you are comfortable with computer basics, you may want to consider using one of several commercially available and reasonably priced finance tracking or budgeting software packages. There are several good ones and they will work, but only if used with discipline. We strongly recommend using the manual cash flow forms for at least a few months before you begin using a computerized record keeping system.

UNDERSTANDING IS A MUST!

Even if you decide to use a computer-based cash flow control plan, you absolutely must understand the mechanics of how a manual system works. If you don't feel that a software approach is for you, then you definitely need to understand the manual system. So let us go forward and really learn how to keep track of God's money daily, weekly, monthly, and annually.

- ◆ **DISCIPLINE AND ACCURACY ARE VITAL.** There is a very old saying about computers: "garbage in and garbage out." This means that the elaborate financial status reports will only be as good as the data that is regularly provided as input. If this scares you, then skip to a manual system of cash control.
- ◆ **FAITHFULLY INPUT ALL TRANSACTIONS** and you will reap easy-to-read reports that can be customized for various uses. At tax time, or when doing an annual plan, it is a wonderful benefit to have detailed summaries of your income and expenses that are broken out by the major categories you pre-select. For example, you can customize most reports to match your *Flexible Spending Plan* and *Biblical Giving Plan* categories.
- ◆ **PC-BASED SOFTWARE PACKAGES.** These are just a few of the many financial software programs available. You will discover many more as you visit computer software stores and read more about this subject. If you have friends who are both expert computer users and are also financially savvy, ask them for recommendations for user-friendly systems.
 1. Quicken and Quick Books Pro are two popular software packages offered by Intuit. These are available in most computer stores. They are reasonable, have good training packages available, and allow you to reasonably customize reports. (*Note: Maureen and Bill use Quicken products for their small business accounting and for their personal records. An excellent employee maintains the records, and their tax accountant loves the reports produced.*) Visit www.quickbooks.com or call 800-624-1735.
 2. Money Matters Basic and Money Matters Deluxe are two software packages available from Crown Financial Ministries. Larry Burkett's team developed these software packages and they are reasonably priced. Call 866-424-4000 or visit www.crown.org.
 3. Microsoft offers various finance software such as Microsoft Money and Microsoft Accounting Express.

VI. A MANUAL CASH FLOW CONTROL SYSTEM

This user-friendly manual cash flow control system is built around the use of three forms, which you will learn to use in this chapter. During Chapter 1 you were actually introduced to *Form CF1 – Monthly Cash Flow Control*. We hope you have been recording your actual (A-J) Living Expenses on a daily basis. If so, this will be much easier. The sample forms labeled Example A, B and C present Bob and Mary Jones' results approximately one full year after they completed this course. The numbers used in these three cash flow forms were taken from their various *Flexible Spending Plan* forms as shown in Example #2. The easiest way to learn how to use these forms is for you to study the three examples provided. **Refer to the full size Examples A, B, & C in Chapter 14.**



LEADERS' NOTE – It is definitely recommended that you become very comfortable with the three forms (*example A*, *example B*, and *example C*) before reviewing them with the class. However, do not be intimidated; you do not need to be an expert. The forms will always work if blanks are filled in properly and the math is done correctly.

At first glance, the *Cash Flow Control* forms may appear to be complicated. They are primarily a recap of data already gathered, coupled with simple boxes to record daily activity. Leaders should be sensitive to "walk" the group through each form.

***Leaders can teach using the script in this chapter, but we urge students to refer to the full size Examples A, B & C in Chapter 14.**

EXAMPLE A: MONTHLY CASH FLOW CONTROL FORM (CF-1).

*Note: In this chapter, the examples are reduced to fit with the text. Full size examples are available in Chapter 14.

MONTHLY CASH FLOW CONTROL FORM (CF-1) Financial Freedom Plan: "Keeping Track of God's Money"												EXAMPLE A: One year after course completion (Based on data from Example #2 Spending Plan)						Recommendation: Enlarge form with 11X17 photocopies.																					
Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones												Date Completed: August 31, 2008						For Month: August					Year: 2008																
Projected/Plan (From Cash Flow Form)				Actual This Month												Comparison																							
Monthly Gross Income		4,000		Week 1		Week 2		Week 3		Week 4		Week 5		Month Total		Month Plan		Month Actual		Plus/ Minus ()																			
Less Total Giving		-415		1,000		1,000		1,000		1,000		0		4,000		4,000		4,000		0																			
Less Taxes		-750		-115		-100		-100		-100		0		-415		-415		-415		0																			
Less Debt Repayment		0		-188		-187		-188		-187		0		-750		0		-750		0																			
Net Spendable Income		2,835		0		0		0		0		0		2,835		0		0		0																			
Totals:				697		713		712		713		0		2,835		Totals:		2,835		2,835		0																	
LIV. EXPENSES: A-J: (See Living Expenses Form)		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	Actual Total	Month Plan	Dif.				
A. Housing																		25																	885	1052	167		
B. Food		100																	125																	425	425	0	
C. Clothing				20															30																	90	95	5	
D. Trans.						12													25																	184	174	-10	
E. Ent./Rec.		10					10												5																	10	98	110	12
F. Medical																			30																	130	120	-10	
G. Insurance																			35																	35	35	0	
H. Children		5		8															5																	8	92	90	-2
I. Gifts/Spec Oc																			20																	35	46	11	
J. Misc.																			18																	106	110	4	
Total (A-J):		115	30	28	20	745	0	190	50	30	58	5	15	5	30	40	40	40	83	125	48	40	32	21	25	8	90	111	0	40	6	42	8	2080	2257	177			
RECAP MONTHLY DATA																																							
Actual Net Spendable Income: \$ 2,835														After completing this form, proceed to form CF-2 to display & track your uses of positive cash flow. Note: If CF is Negative or Zero, then form CF-2 will not yet apply: proceed to annual summary form (CF-3).																									
Less Actual (A-J) Living Expenses: \$(2,080)														Advice on Using Form: Only use a very sharp pencil; don't use decimals, instead round-up to nearest dollar; use brackets () to indicate minus numbers; fill in all possible blanks; and recheck math; if possible use a calculator with adding machine tape.																									
Actual Cash Flow Margin this Month: \$ 755																																							
Planned CF From Monthly CF Analysis Form: \$ 578																																							
Temporary Surplus or Deficit () this Month: \$ 177																																							
Comments/Action Needed: Bob & Mary actually have \$177 more cash flow than an average month per their plan. This \$177 temporary surplus will be deposited into their special "Freedom Account" checking account, which will be used when they need to pay bills for planned expenses, such as insurance, that do not occur every month.																																							

1. **The box at the top left** of this form is just a recap of Bob and Mary's data from the form labeled *Monthly Cash Flow Analysis*, which you studied as Example #2 in Chapter 6. You will see that their *net spendable income* was projected to be \$2,835.
2. The "Actual This Month" box at the top center provides a place to enter actual transactions for this month, which is August 2008 in the example.
 - Bob earns \$4,000 gross each month. However, for example purposes, we show that he actually gets a weekly check of \$1,000 gross, which amounts to \$4,000 as shown in the monthly total column.
 - Biblical giving is \$415 a month. For this example, \$115 is given in week one and \$100 per week is given in weeks two, three, and four. The total column shows \$415.
 - Income taxes are deducted from Bob's weekly paychecks. For this example, we show a deduction of \$188 in weeks one and three, and \$187 in weeks two and four. The total tax for the month is shown as \$750.
 - Since Bob & Mary have no consumer debt payment, per Example #2, the *debt repayment* value is shown as zero. (It is best to fill in each blank space or box with a dash or zero to avoid errors.)
 - Finally, the monthly *net spendable income* value is obtained by subtracting the priority expenses (giving, taxes, and debt repayment) from actual gross income. In this example, the result is \$2,835.
3. The **Comparison** box at the top right of Form CF-1 provides a place for Bob and Mary to compare their planned *net spendable income* to what actually took place. In this example, the plan and actual numbers matched. However, this will not always be the case. Just record what happened, compare it to your plan, and move forward. If you find a major discrepancy, recheck your calculations.
4. The **Living Expenses** section of Form CF-1 may look more difficult than it really is. The ten expense categories (A-J) are actually the same categories used in the *Flexible Spending Plan* form.
 - Bob and Mary used this form to record how much money (in whole dollar amounts) they actually spent, on each category, on a daily basis. For example, on August 5, they made a \$735 mortgage payment and spent \$10 on entertainment or recreation.
 - They recorded their spending on a daily basis, using their checkbook or a handy pocket logbook. Then they recorded the information on form CF-1. The numbers are probably not 100% perfect, but they are good estimates of their spending.
 - At the bottom of the daily columns, there is space for a total of the day's spending on each of the ten categories (A-J).
 - At the right of the 31 daily spaces, there is a place to display the total of all monthly spending on each of the ten (A-J) categories. For example, the clothing total (across) is \$90.
 - Just to the right of the "Actual Total" column is a column for displaying the monthly values planned for each category. For example, in Bob and Mary's projected living expenses, in Example #2, they planned \$95 for clothing in an "average" month.
 - The column to the far right (column labeled "Diff.") is for recording the difference between the actual and planned values. We can see that Bob and Mary actually spent

\$5 less on clothing than projected. The value is displayed as \$5 because it was less than projected. If they spent more than planned, there would be a minus sign or parenthesis () in front of the dollar amount.

- Spreadsheets like this form allow you to record values and add columns both down and across, to verify accuracy. The daily totals are added across to arrive at a 31-day actual total of \$2,080. Fortunately, when the actual values for each category are added vertically, the total also checks-out at \$2,080.
- The vertical totals from the monthly plan amounted to \$2,257.
- The difference (actual minus planned) was a positive \$177. This means that, at least for this one month, there is a temporary surplus of \$177.
- In this example, the \$177 was deposited into a separate "freedom account" checking account for use when planned, non-monthly expenses occur: such as, insurance payments, gifts, and for a planned vacation. (Remember, these are non-monthly expenses that were planned for in the *Estimated Monthly Living Expenses* form; so do not spend this temporary surplus.)

5. Recap of Actual Month's Data

- The box near the bottom left of the form provides a place to recap the data just developed. We see that Bob and Mary started with *net spendable income* of \$2,835 and deducted actual monthly expenses of \$2,080 to arrive at a positive cash flow margin for the month of \$755.
- Since there is a positive cash flow value, this example continues on Form CF-2. If there is no positive cash flow, they would not use CF-2. Not needing to use CF-2 is not a good thing, because it means there is no positive cash to track.

EXAMPLE B: USING FORM CF-2 TO TRACK THE DAILY AND MONTHLY USE OF POSITIVE CASH FLOW MARGIN. Bob and Mary had a positive cash flow for the month of August 2008, as shown on Form CF-1 in Example A. Now on Form CF-2, in Example B, Bob and Mary use this form to track their actual daily use of this positive cash flow money.

TRACKING USE OF MONTHLY POSITIVE CASH FLOW MARGIN (FORM CF-2) "Keeping Track of God's Cash Flow"																			Recommendation: Enlarge forms with 11X17 photocopies.													
Name(s):	Bob & Mary Jones																		Date Completed:	August 31, 2008			For Month:	August			Year:	2008				
EXAMPLE B: ONE YEAR AFTER COMPLETION BASED ON DATA FROM BOB & MARY JONES' CF-1 FORM																			Actual Net Spendable Income: \$ 2,835 Less Actual (A-J) Living Expenses: \$ (2,080) Actual Cash Flow Margin this Month: \$ 755 Planned CF From Monthly CF Analysis Form: \$ 578 Temporary Surplus or Deficit () this Month: \$ 177													
Below, Record Daily Transactions & Totals:																																
Uses For Positive Cash Flow Margin																																
"Freedom Act."	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	Actual Tot.
<i>Ex. Debt Repay.</i>																																
<i>Savings</i>																																
<i>Extra Giving</i>																			50													
<i>Retirement</i>																																
<i>Money Market</i>																																
<i>Other ()</i>																																
TOTALS:	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	605	0	755
Step 1: Add each daily column to get a daily total. Step 2: When the month is complete add the daily (1-31) totals across & record in actual total space Step 3: Also, when month is complete, add across for each category (example "Freedom Account") and record total in appropriate total space for that category.																			Step 4: Add the monthly totals down. The total must equal step 2 total. Step 5: To check your calculations, the actual total monthly cash flow must equal the Actual Cash Flow Margin value in the box at the top of this form. Step 6: Now proceed to Form CF-3: Yearly Cash Flow Summary.													
Comments/Action Needed: Bob & Mary waited until near the end of the month to use most of their positive cash flow; this gave them some extra reserve funds during the month.																																
The \$177 temporary surplus was deposited into their special "Freedom Account" checking account for non-monthly, but planned, expenses.																																

1. **At the top of the CF-2 form**, there is another place to recap actual cash flow for the month. We show a value of \$755 that came directly from the previous Form CF-1. (Recap of Monthly Data.)
2. **In the same box (at the top)** we can now compare the planned “average” monthly cash flow of \$578 to the actual value of \$755. By doing the subtraction, we verify a temporary monthly cash flow surplus of \$177. In the **Comments/Action Needed** box at the bottom of Form CF-2, we see that this \$177 was deposited in a “freedom account” checking account, which is used to pay future (other than monthly) planned expenses.
3. **The main part of Form CF-2** is provided to record actual daily uses of the positive cash flow dollars. For example, \$100 was used to make an extra payment on their home mortgage, on the 5th of the month, and \$50 of extra giving was recorded on the 15th.
4. As in form CF-1, daily values are totaled down each column. Category totals are also added across the spreadsheet.
5. An actual total for each category, and for the month, is recorded. Here we see verification that the total use of all cash flow dollars is \$755 for the month. This is good, because all cash flow money should be accounted for.
6. In the comments section, we see that Bob and Mary were pretty conservative. They did not commit most of their positive cash flow dollars until near the end of the month. This delay gave them a little extra reserve in their regular checking account.
7. Now we are ready to proceed to the *Yearly Cash Flow Summary* Form CF-3.

EXAMPLE C: YEARLY CASH FLOW SUMMARY FORM (CF-3). The **Yearly Cash Flow Summary form (CF-3)** is very easy to complete. It provides a place to quickly record the monthly data from Forms CF-1 and CF-2. In this example, we will only look at Bob and Mary’s data for the month of August 2008.

1. As you look at Example C, you see that all the data came from their two previous forms. Therefore, it is no surprise that the *net spendable income* is \$2,835, the sub total for *living expenses (A-J)* is \$2,080, and the month’s total positive cash flow uses amounts to \$755.
2. At the bottom of the spreadsheet, there is a place (Box #4) to add *living expenses A-J* (Box #2) to cash flow uses (Box #3). The total of \$2,835 should equal the value for *net spendable income* (Box #1).
3. This form is used monthly and kept as part of an annual financial freedom plan, along with all the other forms used in this course. We recommend using a 3 hole punch notebook/binder to hold all your forms for each calendar year.

BLANK FORMS: CF-1, CF-2 & CF-3

1. Now, please locate the three blank forms located in Chapter 15.
2. We asked you to make six copies (enlarged if possible) of all the previous blank forms in this course. For this manual cash flow system, you will need:
 - 12 copies of Forms CF-1 and CF-2, as you will use one each month during a year.
 - Six copies of the *Yearly Cash Flow Summary* Form CF-3.
3. For this week’s homework, you will see that using these three forms will be part of your preparation for your private, scheduled, follow-up session with your leaders.

YEARLY CASH FLOW SUMMARY (FORM CF-3)
"Keeping Track of God's Money Annually"
EXAMPLE C

Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones

Date Completed: June 30, 2007

Year: 2007

Actual Summary by Month (From Monthly Cash Flow Control Forms: CF-1 & CF-2)

Advice on using this Form: Use a very sharp pencil & have a calculator & eraser handy. Round all values to nearest whole dollar; no decimals.

Net Spending	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Year Total	Year Plan	Diff.
<i>Monthly Income</i>								\$4,000							
<i>Less Giving</i>								-\$415							
<i>Less Taxes</i>								-\$750							
<i>Less Debt Repay.</i>								\$0							
1. Equals Net Spend:								\$2,835							
Living Exps. (A-J)	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Year Total	Year Plan	Diff.
A-Housing								\$885							
B-Food								\$425							
C-Clothing								\$90							
D-Transportation								\$184							
E-Ent./Rec.								\$98							
F-Medical								\$130							
G-Insurance								\$35							
H-Children								\$92							
I-Gifts/Spec. Occ.								\$35							
J-Miscellaneous								\$106							
2. Sub Total (A-J):								\$2,080							
Cash Flow Uses:	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Year Total	Year Plan	Diff.
"Freedom Account"								\$177							
Ex. Debt Repayment								\$100							
Saving								\$100							
Extra Giving								\$50							
Retirement								\$100							
Money Market								\$228							
Other (Explain)								\$0							
								\$0							
								\$0							
3. Sub Tot. CF Uses:								\$755							
4. TOTAL: (2 + 3 =4) (4 Should = 1)								\$2,835							

Comments/Action Needed: This is just an example. A family can start their plan in any month. Do not put off starting; any month is a great time to begin!

Advice on using this Form: Use a very sharp pencil & have a calculator & eraser handy. Round all values to nearest whole dollar; no decimals.

ADVICE ON USING CASH FLOW CONTROL FORMS (CF-1, CF-2, and CF-3)

1. START YOUR PLAN NOW! Although the *Yearly Cash Flow Summary* form (CF-3) starts with January, you are encouraged to start your plan now, regardless of the month. Do not delay until January.
2. These three forms probably look more complex than they are. That is why we started by looking at Bob and Mary's example forms.
3. We realize that the spaces provided in the spreadsheets are pretty small. If possible, have the copies of your forms enlarged. Please use a sharp pencil and remember to use only whole dollar values. Have an eraser handy and make your entries very clear.
4. A calculator or adding machine is a must. We recommend a calculator with an adding machine tape so you can easily check your math.
5. Remember, perfection is not necessary. The goal is to put a system in place that will help you keep track of God's money. If you are disciplined in using these forms on a regular basis, you will achieve good results!

ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNERS:

- ◆ If you are married, you already know that this course requires mutual involvement and accountability.
- ◆ Single focus group members may need to find a suitable accountability partner. We typically recommend wise Christians of the same sex.

VII. CASH FLOW CONTROL SUMMARY

We trust that you now understand that accountability and good stewardship go hand-in-hand.

A CASH FLOW CONTROL SYSTEM HELPS YOU KEEP TRACK OF GOD'S MONEY ON A DAILY, MONTHLY, AND A YEARLY BASIS. In Luke 16:2 Jesus gave us a parable about a shrewd manager whose superior called him to "give an account of your management." (NIV) This manager was in charge of certain resources, just as we are responsible for God-given resources.

WE HAVE EXAMINED THREE CASH FLOW CONTROL SYSTEMS:

1. Envelopes with supporting log sheets or log books for tracking daily envelope transactions.
2. Computerized software packages.
3. A manual cash flow control system with three forms provided.

Pick the system that works best for you. Then, use your preferred system and you will have no trouble giving God a very good "account of your management" of His resources.

VIII. CONCLUSION TO 7-WEEK COURSE

This has been a very busy and mind stretching seven weeks for many of you. The road to true financial freedom requires commitment, discipline, and ample doses of God's grace.

- ◆ **CELEBRATE!** We congratulate you on staying the course to complete this class. You have already positioned your family far ahead of the average.
- ◆ Now you have a basic understanding of several financial planning tools that you need to use on a regular basis. You may have learned some terms that previously seemed complex. Now you know that you can understand and use these user-friendly forms to develop a plan that will point you to freedom from debt and on to full financial freedom.
- ◆ Your leaders and LITs have sown a great deal of effort and prayer into you. You are encouraged to sow these principles into your family members, your loved ones, and associates.
- ◆ Let's all be part of God's plan to give His people a new paradigm that is free from the crushing cycle of debt.
- ◆ **Let us commit to passing on a legacy of godly prosperity — having all the resources we need (*time, talent, health, and money*) to accomplish what God has called us to do.**
- ◆ **DO NOT LEAVE WITHOUT AGREEING ON YOUR PRIVATE ACCOUNTABILITY SESSION.**



LEADERS' NOTE – Before closing in prayer, it is very important that you:

- ◆ Look at this week's homework
- ◆ Discuss the schedule for each student's accountability session
- ◆ Discuss what is required for graduation (if applicable).
- ◆ See Chapter 8.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

➤ ***Prayer of Thanksgiving***

➤ ***Prayer of Jabez***

(1 Chronicles 4: 9-10)

➤ ***Spiritual Warfare***

May God Richly Bless You!

CHAPTER 7 HOMEWORK

CASH FLOW CONTROL: KEEPING TRACK OF GOD'S MONEY

SPIRITUAL WARFARE HOMEWORK: This week's spiritual warfare section covers other sources of blockages such as unforgiveness and strongholds of the mind.

1. **Read Spiritual Warfare Section #7.**
2. **Do Practical Application Exercise #7** and break off everything that hinders you from being completely financially free and receiving God's abundance. Be transformed by the renewing of your mind and step into the liberty of Christ.
3. **Take a few minutes to thank God for helping you complete the course.** Ask the Holy Spirit for help with the homework. Consider taking communion - first repent of sin and prepare your heart to remember Jesus' precious sacrifice and all of God's promises.
4. **Congratulate yourself, and if married, each other!** You have just taken a big step.
5. **The homework for Chapter Seven is to complete these manual Cash Flow Control Forms (CF-1, CF-2 & CF-3).** Also, you will probably need to review and revise all of your (previously completed) *Flexible Spending Plan* forms. The good news is that you have seven to twenty one days to prepare for your individual accountability session.

a. **Manual Cash Flow Control Forms (CF-1, CF-2 and CF-3)**

- 1) Even if you decided to use the envelope system or a computerized system of cash flow control, you need to be able to use and understand the three manual system forms used in Week 7. Therefore, it is essential that you complete these three forms!
- 2) Make 12 photocopies of Forms CF-1 and CF-2 and make six copies of form CF-3.
- 3) In pencil (only) use Forms CF-1 and CF-2 to record your daily use of cash. Fill in all spaces and do the math. CF-2 is used for positive monthly cash flow situations. If you are temporarily cash flow negative or neutral, proceed from CF-1 to CF-3.
- 4) At the end of the month, record the data from Forms CF-1 and CF-2 onto the *Yearly Cash Flow Summary* form CF-3.
- 5) Refer to the examples provided, as needed.

For Married Couples ~ Couples need to be sure that both spouses understand the forms and can explain (account for) the numbers recorded on your forms. This is very important!



b. **Flexible Spending Plan – Review Forms and Revise as Needed**

- 1) In Chapters 5 and 6 you completed a series of *Flexible Spending Plan* forms. In previous chapters, you also completed forms relating to: goal setting, income and biblical giving, debt repayment, assets, liabilities, balance sheet and net worth, living expenses, and a recap of monthly cash flow.

- 2) This is a good time to review all of those forms and make changes as needed.

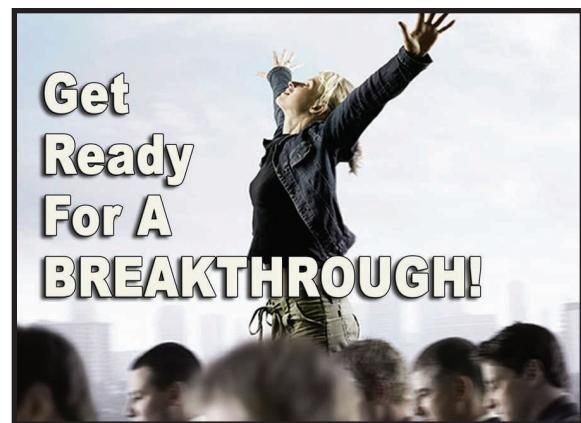
REMINDER:

1. Always keep a supply of blank forms.
2. Always use pencil and round off to whole dollar amounts.

6. **ACCOUNTABILITY FOLLOW-UP SESSIONS.** Before you left Week 7, you and your group leaders should have set an appointment for a 90 minute accountability session. (If not, call them and make an appointment ASAP.) This is a vital closing link to complete your *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* course.
 - a. The purpose of the private follow-up session is to review and assess your progress.
 - b. Bring all completed forms from this course. NO EXCEPTIONS:
 1. ***Projected Income and Biblical Giving***
 2. ***Financial Vision and Faith Goals***
 3. ***Debt Repayment Schedule***
 4. ***List Your Assets***
 5. ***List Your Liabilities***
 6. ***Balance Sheet and Net Worth Statement***
 7. ***Estimated Monthly Living Expenses (3 page form)***
 8. ***Monthly Cash Flow Analysis***
 9. ***Monthly Cash Flow Control form (CF-1)***
 10. ***Tracking Use of Monthly Positive Cash Flow Margin (CF-2)***
 11. ***Yearly Cash Flow Summary (CF-3)***
 - c. Plan on a full 90 minutes for the session. Be well organized and be prompt! Your leaders are reserving their valuable time just for you.
 - d. Bring extra blank forms, a calculator, pencils, and erasers. This is not your leaders' responsibility.
 - e. Be prepared to give an account of your stewardship.
7. **Call your leaders in advance of the follow-up appointment if you get bogged down.** This is a big and very vital assignment, so do not delay getting started.
8. **Please pray about the possibility of leading a future *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* focus group.** Talk to your leaders if you feel God may be calling you to leadership. (You will probably start as a leader-in-training, so don't be nervous.)
9. **Record your Breakthroughs for the week and share them with your leaders at the review session.**

BREAKTHROUGHS!

FINANCIAL FREEDOM COURSE
RECORD YOUR WEEKLY TESTIMONIES



NAME: _____

DATE: **MONEY, CAREER, GIFTS/INHERITANCE, & OTHER**

CHAPTER 8

ACCOUNTABILITY



"Give an account of your management..."
(Luke 16:2, NIV)

Private Accountability & Review Session

CHAPTER 8

ACCOUNTABILITY: Your Private Review Session

- ♦ **JESUS EMPHASIZED ACCOUNTABILITY with the PARABLE OF THE TALENTS.** In Matthew 25:14-30, Jesus taught very clearly on the subjects of accountability and stewardship. We encourage you to re-read this powerful Scripture keeping in mind that these are Jesus' own words. In the parable, three servants were entrusted with sizable amounts of money. The servants given five and two talents invested diligently and doubled their master's resources. To both, the master's words were exactly the same: "Well done good and faithful servant. You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!" (Matthew 25:21, NIV) As you read further, you will see the severe consequences for the servant who was unfaithful with his one talent.
- ♦ **JESUS STRESSED TRUST - REGARDLESS OF THE AMOUNT.** In Luke 16:1-15, Jesus taught the parable of the shrewd manager. He again stressed accountability for resources: "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?" (Luke 16:10-11, NIV)
- ♦ **OKAY, YOU GET THE POINT. NOW, LET'S DISCUSS YOUR VITAL 7 to 21 DAY PRIVATE REVIEW AND ACCOUNTABILITY SESSION.**

I. SCHEDULING YOUR PRIVATE REVIEW SESSION

1. Ideally, you and your leaders will schedule your accountability and review session before you depart from your Week 7 focus group meeting. If you have not scheduled this session before the Week 7 meeting, you are responsible to contact your focus group leaders to arrange your review session.
2. Remember, your leaders are busy and will be scheduling sessions for other group members. Therefore, you need to be flexible and provide ample scheduling lead-time. This is a commitment, so keep it!

II. PREPARING FOR YOUR ACCOUNTABILITY SESSION

1. Refer to the homework for Week 7 for a checklist of everything you need to complete and take to your private review session. This is your time to show your leaders that you have completed all forms and have been good stewards of this 7-week course and the effort and time invested in you.

Married Couples Reminder ~ It is essential that both spouses understand and are prepared to discuss all forms and numbers!



2. Every form used during the seven weeks must be completely filled out in pencil and brought to the meeting. If you have revised your forms, date them and bring all of them (old and new) to your session.

PRAYER & SPIRITUAL WARFARE

By now you should be in the habit of praying and doing spiritual warfare before tackling your forms. Do not let your guard down!

3. Do not waste your leader's time by showing-up unprepared. Results do not need to be perfect, but there is no excuse for not completing all forms.
4. Completing the *Financial Vision and Faith Goals* form is an important part of this accountability session.

III. CONFIDENTIALITY

1. Focus group leaders, and their leaders-in-training, are committed to keep your information strictly confidential. They do need to see all your forms and numbers in order to verify that you understand how to develop a complete financial freedom plan.
2. These sessions are private and no children, including babies, or guests should be included. Give this accountability session your full attention.
3. Leaders will review your forms and comment as appropriate. There is no reason for them to retain a copy of your data.
4. If your leaders point out areas that need attention, you should commit to making appropriate changes and/or revisions. Hopefully, you will not need an additional follow-up session, but this may be arranged by mutual agreement.

IV. CONCLUSION OF THE ACCOUNTABILITY SESSION

1. Your leaders will close the session with final comments and recommendations.
2. We suggest your leaders lead you in prayer and spiritual warfare and then release you from the group.
3. We hope that all focus group participants are under the covering of a local church or ministry. If you are, your focus group leaders will report to your church or ministry coordinator that you have fully completed the course.
4. Local churches and ministries are encouraged to award course graduates with a certificate of completion. We recommend a special Victory Night or Victory Brunch celebration where graduates publicly share encouraging testimonies so others will commit to this course.
5. Pass the good word. If this course blessed you, then pass your recommendations on to your covering church or ministry and to friends and family.

V. CALL FOR NEW FOCUS GROUP LEADERS

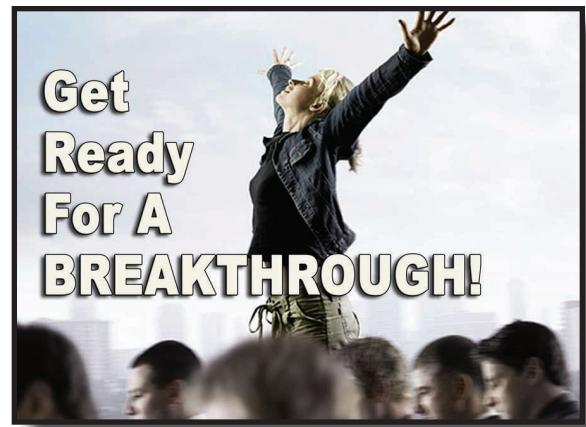
1. If you feel called to lead future *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* focus groups, then consult your leaders who will advise your church or ministry coordinator.
2. Remember, you will most likely start by serving as a leader-in-training. This will give you extra time to be discipled by your assigned focus group leaders.
3. God may lead you to serve under leaders you do not know well. Be open to new relationships and let the Holy Spirit build a strong leadership team. You will probably make excellent new friends for life.
4. Please pray for past, present and future focus group leaders and for all members of your focus group. There is incredible power in mass prayer.

♦ **CONGRATULATIONS!** “*Well done good and faithful stewards.*”

- ♦ **PASS ON THE LEGACY OF FINANCIAL FREEDOM.** Psalm 25:12-13 explains the legacy God intends for those who respect (fear) and obey Him. “Who, then is the man that fears the Lord? He will instruct him in the way chosen for him. He will spend his days in prosperity, and his descendants will inherit the land.” (NIV)
- ♦ **www.debtfreelegacy.com** is for you, your pastor, your family, and friends. This website is provided to encourage and educate, with breakthrough testimonials and hard-hitting articles. There is also an easy to use “Contact Us” function that allows you to communicate with the authors. Please pray for the successful continued development of this website and that God will use it, and Bill and Maureen Sitter, to further His Kingdom principles. Thank You!
- ♦ **TESTIMONIES** – Testimonies are extremely encouraging to others. Please use the “Contact Us” function on the website to send your own testimony with permission to add it to our website. It will definitely bless others.
- ♦ **BREAKTHROUGHS - ONE MORE FORM TO CELEBRATE WHAT GOD HAS DONE.** We realize that you recorded breakthroughs in the homework for Chapter 7, but we are providing one last place for you to record the breakthroughs, large and small, that you have experienced since your last focus group session. Write them down and share with your leaders at your accountability session. Give God the glory!

BREAKTHROUGHS!

FINANCIAL FREEDOM COURSE
RECORD YOUR WEEKLY TESTIMONIES



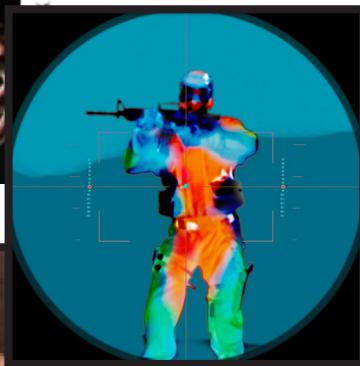
NAME: _____

DATE: **MONEY, CAREER, GIFTS/INHERITANCE, & OTHER**

CHAPTER 9

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Breaking Curses, Blockages, Judgments & Strongholds That Control Our Finances



“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”
(Ephesians 6:12, KJV)

INTRODUCTION & EXHORTATION

This material is absolutely essential for anyone serious about taking a godly journey to true financial freedom. We urge you from the depth of our hearts not to skip or skim this chapter. Open your own heart, dig deeply into God's Word, and embrace the tools, yes, the weapons, that God provides (TODAY) for us to defeat the real thief, the devil, so we can achieve godly prosperity: having all the resources needed to accomplish whatever goals God has given to us.

Believe us, when we first felt the call to write this book, we did not know why. We thought it would be fine to first teach Christian financial material that already existed. God had a better idea, and His Holy Spirit would not let us rest until we developed a 7-week course and workbook that was different in two key areas: First, we knew we had to present a Scripture-based *Biblical Giving Plan* as presented in Chapter 2. Second, because John 10:10 makes it very clear that the devil is the thief who comes to kill, steal, and destroy us, we knew we absolutely had to provide this chapter's instructions on spiritual warfare.

Over the past several years, we've learned of hundreds and hundreds of breakthrough testimonies from course graduates: salvations, marriages and families restored, and a host of physical and financial blessings. Spiritual warfare and biblical giving are consistently credited for these breakthroughs. Knowing this, you will want to totally absorb and practically apply this Bible-based teaching.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to dear friends Rick Faulk and Ron & Sherry Torbert for providing the material for this chapter, along with full permission for us to edit and use it to benefit you. May the Lord richly bless them and their families.

This chapter explores how sins, curses, blockages, strongholds, and judgments seriously affect our finances and even hinder the ability to earn a living. Our purpose is to provide you with biblical strategies that will remove the hindrances that limit your walk and destiny in God.

Jeremiah reminds us that the Lord has plans and a good future for each of us:

"For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me; when you seek me with all your heart, I will be found by you, says the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes." (Jer. 29:11-14, RSV)

In Ephesians 6:12, the Apostle Paul made it crystal clear why we must be prepared for spiritual warfare: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (KJV).

SO GET READY TO LEARN ABOUT:

- ◆ Curses, hexes, and vexes
- ◆ Sources of curses
- ◆ Sources of blockages to God's blessings and abundance
- ◆ Six steps for breaking curses, blockages, & strongholds
- ◆ How negative judgments affect our financial freedom
- ◆ The power of repentance and forgiveness
- ◆ Practical exercises – seven weeks to victory

PRACTICAL APPLICATION EXERCISES (HOMEWORK)

This chapter is divided into seven sections – one for each week of the course. Whether you are going through this workbook as a part of the 7-week course or are doing it on your own, we strongly recommend that you do the corresponding section from this chapter in conjunction with each of the first seven chapters. As you proceed through these sections, you will be given specific practical application exercises (homework) for breaking curses, blockages, strongholds, and past judgments.

You may need to go through each section and repeat these steps several times before you experience true freedom. There are several reasons for this. Most of us are not ready or strong enough to deal with everything at once, and God promises not to give us more than we can handle. As we grow in faith and obedience, God will continue to reveal things to us so that we can move forward. As we grow in faith, our spiritual authority increases and we are able to exercise that authority in our own lives and in the lives of others.

Before and during these practical application exercises, ask the Lord to bring to your attention anything that would rob you from your entire inheritance in the Lord. Please begin to pray now and ask God to begin revealing the things that are blocking you from true financial freedom.

SIX STEPS – BREAKING CURSES & STRONGHOLDS

♦ Bind Curses and Loose Blessings

“I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 16:19, RSV).

♦ This Scripture is Jesus' own words. Use your God given authority to bind and take authority over the curses that have been holding you captive!

♦ Loose the blessing of God and by faith “prophesy” the opposite of the curses that you, your family, and marriage have experienced (just as Ezekiel prophesied over the dry bones). For example, if you are under a curse of poverty, bind that curse in Jesus' mighty name and pray for the Lord to loose a blessing that you may prosper in the Lord in all ways.

Proclaim out loud who you are in Christ Jesus according to 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

“Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to Himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. So we are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us. We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.” (RSV)

♦ Renounce Involvement

Renounce your former sinful ways and renounce any stronghold(s) that have held you captive. Renounce any occult involvement, practices, or participation in false religions, however minor or major your participation. There is only “one way” to the Father and that is through Jesus. John 14:6 says, “I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me”

(RSV). The early church would have new believers renounce Satan and all his ways and works before they were baptized. Many of the liturgical churches continued this practice of "renunciation" when they made a profession of faith at confirmation.

♦ **Repent and Confess your Sin**

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us" (1 John 1:9-10, RSV).

♦ Do not participate in your former sinful life patterns. It may require you to not associate with those who are trapped in darkness (Read Ephesians 5:7-13) until you are strong enough to witness to them and show them a way out of their situation. Walk the walk "as children of the light" (Ephesians 5:8). Learn what is pleasing to the Lord (Ephesians 5:10).

♦ **Forgive, Repent for any Judgments, and then Confess Life.** Hebrews 12:15 says that we are to "see to it (go after with all our might) that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root (of judgment) grows up to cause trouble and defile many" (NIV). Strongholds in our life may be the result of judgments we have made. We must learn to judge sin without making judgments against ourselves or others.

♦ **Ask the Lord to Take Back All Ground that was Given Over to the Enemy.**

We surrender "ground" to Satan every time we let the sun go down upon our wrath and when we enter into repetitive sin without repentance (Ephesians 4:26-27, RSV). Every time we give ground to the enemy, we should ask God to reclaim this ground. Psalm 23:3 says, "He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake" (RSV). "Restore" in Hebrew means to "return to the starting point."

♦ **Walk as a Child of the Light.**

Practice Romans 12:9-13:

"Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality." (RSV)

If you fall, stand up and dust yourself off.

Remember the law of sowing and reaping is still in effect. Keep sowing good seed and you will see victory!

***Special Note: Just as you previously copied the blank forms form Chapter 15, we encourage you to make copies of the seven Spiritual Warfare Practical Application Exercises and use these copies for your homework.**

SPIRITUAL WARFARE #1

BREAKING CURSES, BLOCKAGES, STRONGHOLDS & JUDGMENTS THAT CONTROL OUR FINANCES

WHAT ARE CURSES, HEXES AND VEXES?

Curses, hexes and vexes are all very similar. Some dictionaries do not separate their meanings, but there are subtle differences. For the sake of clarity, we will define them in the following manner.

CURSE - a calling upon divine or supernatural power to send injury upon another. A prayer or invocation for harm or injury to come upon someone.

HEX - a curse that comes from those who practice witchcraft.

VEX - a curse that comes from those not involved in witchcraft.

Vexes are usually not as powerful as witchcraft or satanic coven curses and hexes. They can cause distress and/or agitation, which can negatively affect one's productivity or income. For example, a curse or hex could bring about the loss of a job, home, health, and family. A vex could come from a co-worker "jinxing" a presentation, project, or relationships which affect an employee's ability to earn income. A vexing headache could also cripple a person's ability to earn an income when the headache interferes with his/her ability to perform a job. Likewise, a person could be vexed through kids who have such bad behavioral problems that the parents are consumed with their care and with bailing them out of trouble.

LIFE AND DEATH ARE IN THE POWER OF THE TONGUE. Curses, hexes and vexes can come through others. However, just as others may speak ill over us, we may speak evil over ourselves. The book of James reminds us that life and death are in the power of the tongue: "From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brethren, this ought not be so" (James 3:10, RSV).

The Old Testament has an illustration of this when Balak, the King of Moab, asked Balaam (a false prophet) to curse Israel. "Come now, curse this people for me, since they are too mighty for me; perhaps I shall be able to defeat them and drive them from the land; for I know that he whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed" (Numbers 22:6, RSV). Religious curses can come also from witches, warlocks, voodoo witch doctors, etc.

We recommend you read and meditate on the entire third chapter of James. James reminds us that the tongue is unrighteous, a restless evil, full of deadly poison, and with it we bless God and curse men. The Word tells us that man is incapable of taming the tongue. However, God will give us the wonderful grace and wisdom to use our tongue to bless others.

EXAMPLE: While Rick Faulk was doing missionary work in Haiti, he witnessed a man in his 60's being brought to him on a stretcher for prayer. The interpreter said that his body was filled with cancer and the doctor said that he would die very shortly. The Lord showed Rick that he had been cursed by a voodoo witch doctor, so Rick broke the curse over him. The minute he broke the curse, the gentleman leapt to his feet, grabbed hold of Rick's hands, started jumping up and down with excitement, and then danced across the front of the church. God is so good! He was able to return to his family and work, relieving his two daughters of caring for him and paying for his past medical bills.

OUR WORDS ARE EXTREMELY POWERFUL. THIS IS NO JOKING MATTER. Our words are powerful and can hold blessings or curses. Proverbs 12:13-14 reminds us that, "An evil man

is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, but the righteous escapes from trouble. From the fruit of his words a man is satisfied with good, and the work of a man's hand comes back to him" (RSV). Consequently, it is important to guard the words we speak over others, ourselves, and especially our family. For example: "I'm dying to see you"; "I'm scared to death"; "You are such a klutz!"; "You will never amount to anything" or "I can't do anything right!" By speaking carelessly, we speak curses over our friends, ourselves, and even our children.

POSITIVE CONFESSIONS SPEAK LIFE. To counter some of the above negative confessions, use these words:

"I'm really looking forward to seeing you."
"God has not given me a spirit of fear."
"I have the mind of Christ."
"God has a great plan for your life."

JESUS ASSURES US THAT HIS WORD IS TRUTH, AND TRUTH HAS THE POWER TO SET US FREE - IF WE ACT ON IT. Jesus exhorts us to pray for those who persecute and abuse us (Luke 6:28, Matthew 5:44), while Paul reminds us to bless those who persecute us and not curse them (Romans 12:14). Jesus wants us to experience His total freedom. In the Gospel of John 8:36, we are reminded: "So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed" (RSV)

PRACTICAL APPLICATION EXERCISE #1

BIND CURSES AND LOOSE BLESSINGS

REMINDER: Make a copy of the practical application exercises and write on the copies instead of the book.

Write down all the curses, hexes, and vexes that you can remember being spoken over you. Focus first on those that were spoken willfully - wishing or intending you harm. Next, include negative words spoken by parents, siblings, teachers, other relatives, coworkers, or people of importance in your life. Take authority, in accordance with Luke 10:19, and break the power of those curses, hexes, and vexes over you in Jesus' mighty name.

Write down all the curses, hexes, and vexes that you spoke (or thought) over someone, including yourself. Focus first on those you spoke willfully – wishing or intending harm on someone else. (Perhaps a former spouse or significant other broke your heart and you spoke words of spite out of hurt and anger; or a coworker did not treat you well and you wished ill upon them.) Next focus on negative words you have spoken casually or unintentionally. Ask the Lord to forgive you and to render your words null and void. Now, pray blessing on all whom you have cursed, hexed, and/or vexed (Romans 12:14).

Write down the things that vex (hinder) you and ask the Lord to reveal the root cause

of each one. Then bind the things that vex you and cut them off at the root. Don't automatically assume: that's just the way it is; that's just the way I am; or that's just part of life. Declare that you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you (Phil. 4:13). Declare the peace of Christ into situations and circumstances that vex you (no matter how "normal" they seem) and claim peace in the midst of adversity.

START USING THE SIX STEPS FOR BREAKING CURSES AND STRONGHOLDS, which were mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, NOW!

Re-read the introductory pages of this chapter, as it lays a vital foundation for Spiritual Warfare.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE #2

BREAKING CURSES, BLOCKAGES, STRONGHOLDS & JUDGMENTS THAT CONTROL OUR FINANCES

SOURCES OF CURSES

Besides those curses that are directly spoken over us by others or by ourselves, there are several other ways that we can pick up curses. By definition, when we are cursed, we are injured by a supernatural power. Therefore, we are less able to build the Kingdom of God, fulfill our destiny, and raise a godly family. One of the easiest ways for the enemy of our souls to derail us from our calling is to attack our finances, our health, and our relationships. Even if you are already aware of the following ways that people can pick up curses, it is important to revisit them to ensure that you close all doors to such attacks.

Curses From Not Tithing and Giving Offerings

Malachi states:

"Return to me and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts. But you say, 'How shall we return?' Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'how are we robbing thee?' In your tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me; the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house; and thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing." (Malachi 3:7-10, RSV)

According to Malachi 3:7-10 the requirements for God to break the curse of poverty from not tithing and from not giving freewill offerings are:

- Stop robbing God by not paying the tithe and giving offerings.
- Return to God. Give God what His Word tells us to give: tithes and offerings.
- Bring the full tithe (10% of your "increase") into the storehouse where you are spiritually fed.

When we do that, God will do what He promises in Malachi 3:10-11:

- Open the windows of heaven.
- Pour down an overflowing blessing.
- Rebuke the devourer to prevent him (Satan) from destroying the fruits of your soil (or labor) so your vine will bear fruit: meaning you will be productive and blessed.

**IF YOU FEEL THE DEVIL IS DEVOURING YOUR
RESOURCES, THEN MEDITATE ON WHAT YOU JUST
READ. READ MALACHI 3:7-12 AGAIN!**

Giving also releases the favor of God. Jesus said, "Give and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back" (Luke 6:38, RSV). The Lord instructs us to give:

willingly in Exodus 25:2, ungrudgingly and cheerfully in 2 Corinthians 9:7, liberally in Proverbs 11:25, and sacrificially in 2 Corinthians 8:1-4 and Mark 12:43-44.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION EXERCISE # 2

STOP ROBBING GOD & BRING IN THE FULL TITHE

Examine your heart and your actions to determine if you have been robbing from God.
Write down your thoughts for each one.

- Have you been tithing a FULL 10% of ALL your increase? _____

- Do you withhold your tithe during times of financial hardship? _____

- Do you give freewill offerings and alms to the poor above the tithe? _____

- What is your heart attitude regarding tithing and giving offerings and alms? _____

If you have been robbing from God, identify the attitudes, thoughts, and mindsets behind "why" for each area. (Examples include greed, fear, poor planning, did not make it a priority, lack of understanding/knowledge, etc.) Confess and ask the Lord to forgive you if you have not tithed, not given freewill offerings above the tithe, or for any negative or unbelieving attitude you have had regarding giving.

Giving the first ten percent to the Lord helps to establish our faith and trust in Him. It is very important that the tithe is first as a "first fruits" presentation of our best to God. If you have not begun tithing, ask the Lord to help you get your priorities in line with His, and to help you trust Him with your finances (His Resources) and every aspect of your life. Determine to tithe a FULL 10% of ALL your increase plus give freewill offerings and alms. Commit to do so to the Lord.
WARNING: DO NOT TAKE THIS COMMITMENT LIGHTLY.

PRAY

Lord, you promised in Malachi 3 that if we tithed, You would open the windows of heaven and pour down an overflowing blessing to me and my family. This day I commit to give you the full first fruits tithe and to give offerings and alms above the tithe as You lead me. Lord, rebuke the devourer, prevent him (Satan) from destroying the fruits of my labor that I may prosper spiritually, physically, relationally, and financially. Lord, I thank you for providing these blessings. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Use this space to record what the Holy Spirit is telling you.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE #3

BREAKING CURSES, BLOCKAGES, STRONGHOLDS & JUDGMENTS THAT CONTROL OUR FINANCES

Curses From Believing in False Gods

The Word is consistent from Genesis through Revelation that if we are faithful to God we are blessed; If we are not, we are cursed.

- Paul states in Galatians 3:10 that all who are under the Law are under a curse (i.e., those who have not made Jesus Lord and Redeemer of their lives). Paul goes on to say: “If any one has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord Come!” (1 Corinthians 16:22, RSV).

SALVATION OR REDEDICATION IS VITAL:

Consequently, it is essential that if you have not accepted Jesus as Savior and Lord, you do so now. (See salvation prayer in Chapter 1.) It is also important that if you have fallen away from Him, that you confess your sin and rededicate your life to Him. This is the first step toward living a wise and prosperous life.

- Jesus said, “He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters” (Luke 11:23, RSV).

Curses From Involvement in Idolatry, Witchcraft, and the Occult.

In Deuteronomy 18:9-13, the Lord commanded His people not to get involved in “abominable practices” (RSV). The Bible defines abominable practices as sacrificing children, fortune telling (divination), soothsaying, sorcery (witchcraft), and hypnotism. He also made it clear not to visit a medium (someone who consults with familiar spirits), a wizard (a clairvoyant or psychic), or an augur or a necromancer (a medium who consults with the dead). The Lord hates these practices so much that in verse 12 He instructed Israel to show no mercy and to drive them out of the land.

GOD HATES FORTUNE TELLING AND ALL OCCULT ACTIVITIES

SOME EXAMPLES OF INVOLVEMENT IN THE OCCULT:

- | | | |
|--|----------------|------------------------|
| * fortune telling | * astrology | * free masonry |
| * ouija board | * hypnosis | * speaking in a trance |
| * palm-reading | * tarot cards | * secret oaths |
| * clairvoyance | * mind control | |
| * telepathy (mind to mind communication) | | |

Paul tells us that no idolater “has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and God” (Ephesians 5:5, RSV). In 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, Paul lumps idolaters with the immoral, adulterers, perverts, thieves, greedy, drunkards, revilers, and robbers, and states that none of them will inherit the Kingdom of God. In Revelation 21:8, we read that those who do these practices “shall be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death” (RSV).

John paints another picture in the next chapter of the final book of the Bible:

“Blessed are those who wash their robes that they may have the right to the tree of

life and that they may enter the city by the gates. Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and fornicators and murderers and idolaters, and every one who loves and practices falsehood.” (Revelation 22:14-15, RSV)

Free Masonry may have started as a simple trade association. However, in the book: *The Secret Teachings of the Masonic Lodge*, John Ankerberg and John Weldon provide a modern day Christian perspective. This book is included in the list of references in Chapter 11. Two of Alan Vincent's audio series, which are included as additional references, also refer to Free Masonry as an occult activity that often attacks in the area of finances.

In very simple terms, why would any true Christian be interested in a secret society or secret oaths of any kind? In Jesus, we have access to the "real thing" and it is no secret!

Before and during these practical application exercises, ask the Lord to bring to your attention anything that would rob you from your entire inheritance in the Lord.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION EXERCISE #3

RENOUNCE INVOLVEMENT

This exercise is designed to help you identify ungodly involvement that you may have had. This is not a complete list, but it does touch on the major ones.

Ask the Lord to reveal your previous involvement in the occult, false religions, or false teachers you may have read or listened to. You may or may not have known they were false teachers or religions at the time. Some examples are: astral projection, ouija board, speaking in a trance, automatic writing, telepathy, clairvoyance, fortune telling, tarot cards, palm reading, astrology, hypnosis, mind control, divining, human or animal sacrifice, horoscopes, transcendental meditation, free masonry, and secret oaths.

Use this space to record what God has revealed to you:

Circle any involvement you or your ancestors have had in idolatry (which includes but is not limited to the following).

- **False religions**
- **False gods**
- **Free Masonry**
- **Agnosticism** (believing that nothing is or can be known about the existence of God)
- **Atheism** (belief that there is no God)
- **Voodoo**
- **Indigenous Religious Rituals** (American Indian, Mayan, Aztec, Inca religious rituals)
- **Gypsy ancestry**
- **Eastern Religions** (Zen, Buddhism, Shintuism, Hinduism, New Age Movement, incantations, etc.)
- **Secret Oaths**
- **Any belief that is not based on the one true God**

Ask Him to reveal to you any occult or pagan religious objects, relics, or artifacts, psychic healing, esoteric (secret) philosophy, etc. that you have purchased, inherited, or were given. If you have any non-Christian religious art or relics, get rid of them. Israel was sternly warned against possessing such objects: "Destroy all their figured stones, and destroy all their molten images, and demolish all their high places" (Numbers 33:52, RSV). In Deuteronomy 29:16-21, read where Achan and his family lost their lives for hiding false idols under his tent.

RENOUNCE INVOLVEMENT in EACH false religion or occult practice that you have ever been involved in.

*"Father, I confess that I have participated in _____.
I ask you to forgive me for my involvement. I renounce Satan,
all his works, and my involvement in anything which is counterfeit
to true Christianity."*

Do not be surprised if you encounter demonic resistance as you pray. **If you experience resistance, command evil spirits to leave in the name of Jesus.** If married, make this confession together and support each other. Singles may wish to have a strong prayer partner who understands and believes in the power of spiritual warfare.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE #4

BREAKING CURSES, BLOCKAGES, STRONGHOLDS & JUDGMENTS THAT CONTROL OUR FINANCES

Curses From Sin

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating from the tree of knowledge, they were banished from the garden and received individual curses. Eve suffered the pain of childbirth and was required to submit to her husband, and Adam suffered the pain of hard work, frustration, and a cursed ground (Genesis 3:16-19, RSV). Sin causes us to labor hard with little gain.

In 1 John 5:3, John the Apostle states that we will know that we are children of God when we love God and keep His commandments. In John 5:3-5, he goes on to say that the commandments are not burdensome, and whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

READ REVELATION 2 & 3. Those who remain faithful to the end will receive their inheritance (Revelation 2:11, 17, 26-28, 3:20-21). Those who do not will face ruin (Revelation 2:5, 20-23,

3:3, 3:15-16).

1. Curses From General Sin

Most people have an inward sense that if they do something wrong (i.e. they sin), God is going to punish them. However, we also carry a belief that God is good and a good God would not do bad things to us. Actually, the Word is consistent - there are consequences to a sinful life style. Malachi 3:5 provides a list of several things that will bring God's judgment upon us:

"I will draw near to you for judgment; I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely (liars), against those who oppress the hirelings in his wages (those who do not pay a fair wage), the widow and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the sojourner (traveler) and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts." (Malachi 3:5, RSV)

Proverbs states that:

"There are six things which the Lord hates, seven which are an abomination to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, a false witness who breathes out lies, and a man who sows discord among brothers." (Proverbs 6:16-19, RSV)

2. Curses From Sexual Sin & Unfaithfulness to a Spouse

Proverbs 5:8-9 warns us to stay away from a harlot or illicit sexual relationships. The Holy Spirit also warns us of the consequences if we do not: "Keep your way far from her, (loose women), and do not go near the door of her house; lest you give your honor to others, and your years to the merciless" (RSV). Consequently, those who have affairs could suffer from extremely hard work with little recognition and little pay. In addition to this, they may also face loss of possessions, sickness and poor health, and suffer from a poor reputation (Proverbs 5:10, 11 & 14).

ADULTERY, FORNICATION, AND HARLOTRY RESULT IN LOSS OF SELF WORTH AND IN PUNISHMENT - FOR MEN AND WOMEN.

"For a harlot may be hired for a loaf of bread, but an adulteress stalks a man's very life. Can a man carry fire in his bosom (temptation) and his clothes not be burned? Or can one walk upon hot coals and his feet not be scorched? So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife; none who touches her will go unpunished" (Proverbs 6:26, RSV).

"He who commits adultery has no sense; he who does it destroys himself" (Proverbs 6:32, RSV).

PORNOGRAPHY IS A TERRIBLE CURSE TODAY. Jesus says that if you lust in your heart after a woman, it is the same as adultery (Matthew 5:28). Consequently, dirty movies and pornography bring the same curse as adultery.

The consequences of unfaithfulness are huge. Besides the warnings and curses listed above for an unfaithful spouse, we may also develop a hardened heart, a breech of trust in our

marriage, defilement of the marriage bed, ungodly soul ties, a devastated family, and without repentance we can pass on generational sins and curses.

3. Curses From Not Being Sensitive to Our Spouse.

We are told that curses can come from not being sensitive and understanding to our wife. "Likewise you husbands, live considerately with your wives, bestowing honor on the woman as the weaker sex, since you are joint heirs of the grace of life, in order **that your prayers may not be hindered**" (1 Peter 3:7, RSV, emphasis added). In this passage, we are exhorted to be sensitive to our wife and show her honor. If you have fallen short in this area, then turn over a new leaf!

Wives also receive instructions to honor their husbands in (1 Peter 3:1-6, RSV).

PRACTICAL APPLICATION EXERCISE #4 REPENT AND CONFESS YOUR SIN

Ask the Lord to reveal to you any General Sin (past or present) that has brought a curse upon you. It is common for people to have a particular "sin of choice" that repeatedly causes them to stumble and fall. The Bible says that YOU ARE NOT A SLAVE TO SIN. BREAK any sin patterns in the name of Jesus and declare that you are a slave to righteousness (Rom 6:18). Search your heart for any areas of continued disobedience or rebellion. REPENT and ASK FORGIVENESS for everything you think of and everything the Holy Spirit reveals to you.

Ask the Lord to forgive unconfessed sexual sin or marital unfaithfulness.

- a. If you have not already done so, ask the Lord to sever ungodly soul ties to those you had sexual relations with outside of marriage.
- b. If you or an ancestor were born outside of wedlock, ask the Lord to remove the curse of the sin from you, your children, and future generations.
- c. Ask the Lord to forgive you for lustng after others and to remove any stronghold of lust.
- d. Finally, if married, ask the Lord to soften your heart and purify your relationship with your spouse.

Husbands and Wives:

- a. Ask the Lord to show you instances where you were not sensitive to your spouse and where you did not honor her or him. Write them down.
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- b. After you have genuinely repented, ask your one flesh mate for her or his forgiveness. Ask your spouse to pray with you to soften your heart and make you more sensitive.
- c. Ask your mate when he/she feels honored by you and how it makes her/him feel. Ask your spouse for specific ways that you can honor her/him. Ask the Lord to show you how to honor your spouse.
- d. Both of you pray that the Lord will remove any hindrances to your prayers.

Singles:

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- a. Ask the Lord to show you how you have not honored others. Genuinely repent and where possible make peace with those you have hurt. List specific ways to honor someone you are dating.
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- b. Seek the Lord's guidance for establishing boundaries. Stay as far away from sin as possible rather than asking how far is too far. Make sure your desire to please God is stronger than your desire to please anyone else. Repent for any time you have listened to the world's standards of sexual purity instead of the Lord's.
- c. Examine your heart and identify where you have harbored bitterness, hurt, or anger from past relationships. Forgive and bless those who have hurt you. (Forgiveness is not an option if we want to be forgiven. However, forgiveness does not mean we step back into hurtful relationships.) Every time you are tempted to speak negatively or wish ill upon (curse) someone, choose to bless them instead. Honor the Lord with fruit of your lips. If you have cursed (wished ill upon) anyone that you did not previously repent of, do so now.
- d. Many singles are consumed by the desire for a spouse. Examine your heart and make sure that you are seeking the Lord first and not making an idol of a future spouse. A good question to ask of any relationship is: does my being with this person glorify God more or less than my being single?

SPIRITUAL WARFARE #5

BREAKING CURSES, BLOCKAGES, STRONGHOLDS & JUDGMENTS THAT CONTROL OUR FINANCES

How Judgments Affect our Financial Freedom

Contributed by Ron & Sherry Torbert

Hebrews 12:15 says that we are to “see to it (go after with all our might) that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root (of judgment) grows up to cause trouble and defile many” (NIV). Strongholds in our life are often the result of judgments we have made, and many of those were made when we were very young.

STRONGHOLDS – Accepting beliefs contrary to God’s will for us. A stronghold is defined as a way of thinking or a system of belief that is contrary to the will of God. Often these are things that we believe to be true, but in reality, they are false. In other words, we believe a lie. This is a scheme of the enemy that should not be a surprise to us. He has been doing the same thing since the beginning. In Genesis 3, his scheme was to get Adam and Eve to believe a lie: “You will not surely die... For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (Genesis 3:4-5, NIV). They believed the lie and wound up being cursed.

The mind is very powerful and what we believe will control how we think, act, and what we expect. So if we believe a lie, we will act, behave, and have expectations that are based on a lie. If I think and believe I am a failure, I will expect to fail. If I believe money is a curse, I will repel it. If I think I can’t manage money, I will expect to be a financial failure and actually thwart my own success. Romans 12:2 tells us that we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, then the truth of God’s Word can set us free. The more we know the Word, the more we’ll understand how to be set free from believing lies that are keeping us in bondage.

SPIRITUAL LAWS impact every area of our lives, including our finances! Spiritual laws work much the same as natural laws. After all, God established both of them. Gravity works whether we can see it or whether we believe in it or not. If you fell off a roof, the fact that you did not believe in gravity would not stop you from hitting the ground. Likewise, if you judge, you will be judged. The following four Scriptures show how spiritual laws can impact every part of our lives, including our finances. Let’s get these in our mind and let the Holy Spirit begin to reveal truth to us:

Matt. 7:1-2 – “Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you” (NIV).

Rom. 2:1 – “You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things” (NIV).

Galatians 6:7 – “Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows” (NIV).

JUDGMENTS – We must learn to judge sin and not judge the person who sins. Since judgments can hinder our finances, we need to understand how we make judgments that cause us to reap the very same thing. In both the Matthew and Romans Scriptures listed above, the Greek word for judge is *krino* (kree'-no), which implies condemnation. This is different from the Greek word for judge used in I Corinthians 2:15. The word there is *anakrino*, which means

to discern. So Scripture tells us we are to discern right from wrong, but we are not to judge or condemn others. There is a big difference. We need to separate the sin from the sinner. This is where we can easily fail. We may tend to equate the person with their sin and that we must not do. God will make that judgment. However, we are to judge what a person does as to whether it is right or wrong based on God's Word.

When we make a judgment (condemnation), we are establishing a way of thinking that will affect the way we act, speak, and hear, and we will reap what we sow. If a child tells us something that is not true, we can respond in one of two ways. We can judge that child to be a liar or we can judge what the child is saying as being untrue. Our reaction to the child will be different based on which way we have judged. If we condemn the child, we will respond by calling the child a liar or telling others that he is a liar. If this is the way we judge, then whenever he speaks to us, our expectation will be that he will lie because that is what we believe. A better response would be to judge what the child said as untrue. We are free to speak that we trust him to be honest the next time. We have now expressed our love for the child based upon who he is, not what he did.

- ♦ **RON TORBERT'S personal experience with judgments.** "My wife and I both had mothers who said a lot of critical things and we both had judged them for that. Consequently, that pattern entered our marriage. It is easy for me to judge my wife as being critical. When I do that, then I expect her to say something critical. Even though she may be trying to encourage, I still interpret it as criticism because of my judgment. I have judged her as a critical person so that is what I expect to hear and what my mind believes. I must take responsibility for my sin, repent of my judgment, ask the Lord to forgive me, and then declare the truth about my wife based on Proverbs 31:12 - She does me good and not harm all of the days of my life."

JUDGMENTS can lead to financial bondage strongholds that can cripple us for life, but God has a better plan. We can have strongholds (belief systems) or judgments in place that are impacting our finances. They may be from judgments we made of our parents, of others, or even ourselves. If we had parents who struggled financially and we judged (condemned) them, we can expect to struggle financially. If we judged them to be poor money managers, we could expect to be poor money managers. Maybe we have judged ourselves. Maybe we heard from our parents or others that we would not amount to anything, we believed that lie and judged ourselves. We need to recognize the judgment patterns and repent for our judgments and for believing the lies. We need to find out the truth: "*What does God say about me?*"

How do we break the reaping of these strongholds, judgments, and expectations? The Good News is that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds" (2 Cor. 10:4, KJV) One of these weapons is prayer. Another vital weapon is spiritual warfare. Prayers of repentance bring down strongholds. We can break the power and the negative reaping from judgments by forgiving those who wronged us and then taking responsibility for our sin of judging.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION EXERCISE #5 FORGIVE, REPENT, CLAIM LIFE.

Identify the people in your life that you have made judgments about. Think about your siblings, spouse, children, friends, and coworkers. (*The next section will focus on judgments regarding parents as well as generational curses*). Then follow these three steps to break any strongholds that have resulted from judgments in your life:

1. **Forgive** – We must forgive others for the offense(s) that caused us to judge as well as those who have judged us. We must forgive ourselves for mistakes and past sins.

2. Repent – No matter how justified we feel in our judgment, we must repent for judging others and ourselves. God is the only one who has the right to make judgments. Ask God to forgive you for making judgments and give you His heart for the people you have judged.

3. Claim life - God is in the business of restoration! Claim life and blessings to take the place of every judgment you have made.

Ask the Lord to reveal to you, and bring to remembrance, the judgments you have made regarding others. (You may see some overlap with what you wrote down for curses in exercise #1. That's okay. Judgments and curses often go hand in hand. **The emphasis here is on the judgments themselves: what we BELIEVE that affects our expectations - the attitudes of our heart towards life, others, and ourselves.**) Here are some examples:

- If you judge that "Michelle is selfish," that will change how you act towards her, what you ask her to do, and how you interpret what she says and does.
- If you think, "My husband is poor with money," you may mistrust his decisions, be controlling, and fail to support and honor him.
- If you believe your wife spends too much, you may assume that every purchase is unwise, fail to listen to valid needs, and become overly stingy with household money.
- If you judge your child saying, "Jimmy is bad at math," you may alter your expectations of him according to that judgment and instead of encouraging him to do what he is capable of, fail to explain things well, and ultimately make him believe that about himself.
- If you believe that "John never wants to help with the housework," you may not ask for help and then blame him when you feel like you are doing more than your fair share, or interpret a valid reason as a selfish excuse.
- If you believe, "That teacher has it out for my kids," you may fail to recognize a real problem or need with your children and miss an opportunity to work together with the teacher to help your kids become mature and responsible.

Write down what the Lord has revealed to you in the space provided.

Ask the Lord to reveal to you the judgments you have made regarding yourself. *I can't... I never... I always... I can't get to work on time. I can't get out of debt. I always spend too much. I always fail. I never get chosen for anything. Things never work out for me. I'll never be able to save enough for my kids to go to college. I don't handle change well.* What have you not attempted, or only put minimal effort into, because you expected to fail? What have you excused away because you believe that's just the way you are?

You can say your own judgment breaking prayer or use the following.

(Person's name), I forgive you for _____.

Lord Jesus, please forgive me for judging _____ for _____. I give you permission to take the bitterness and resentment I've held in my heart all these years and I ask you to put to death on the cross everything that I am reaping, and the habit patterns that are in place because of this judgment. I separate myself from this reaping by the blood of Jesus and I call (the opposite of what you judged) to resurrection life in _____ and in me.

While repentance can free us, we must remember that it is easy to judge the same thing again and put that stronghold right back in place. The devil is a liar! Recognize where the lie comes from and call it what it is. Learn to see people as God sees them. Once we recognize that old thought pattern and find ourselves making judgments again, we must quickly rebuke the accuser (Satan), forgive, and repent again. This becomes a good life pattern and the enemy will lose ground every time we are obedient.

BE ON GUARD – Avoid all Judgment Patterns.

Curses From Not Honoring Father & Mother

Deuteronomy 5:16 – "Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the Lord your God is giving you" (NIV).

Paul reminds us in the New Testament: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother that it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth" (Ephesians 6:1-3, RSV). Note that this is the first commandment with a promise. In every way that we honor our father and mother, we will prosper with health, wealth, relationships, and long life. And in every way that we do not honor our father and mother, things will not go well with us.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE #6

BREAKING CURSES, BLOCKAGES, STRONGHOLDS & JUDGMENTS THAT CONTROL OUR FINANCES

The 10 Commandments were not created to make us feel bad and frustrate us because we cannot live up to them. They are part of God's blueprint for living a healthy, happy, and full life. Honoring your parents is a spiritual law. If you do not (or did not) honor your father and mother, there will be negative consequences.

Many kids muddle through their lives at home and become frustrated and angry with their parents. They may criticize their parents, and make inner vows to not be like them, yet often they reap children just like themselves and become like their parents. In every way that children are disobedient or are rebellious, they DO NOT honor their mother and father. The spiritual laws of honoring your mother and father and sowing and reaping work hand in hand.

DISHONORING PARENTS with Negative Judgments. If you look back at Deuteronomy 5:16, you can see that in whatever way we dishonored our parents, things won't go well with us. One way we can dishonor our parents is by judging (condemning) them. We may have judged our parents regarding their use of, or attitude about, money in ways that cause us to reap the very same thing. If your parents grew up during the depression when money was tight, it could have resulted in behaviors such as stockpiling or hoarding, never enjoying the freedom to give, working two jobs to provide, etc. These behaviors themselves are not wrong, but if we were hurt by these things and judged our parents for them, we are most likely seeing similar behavior in ourselves. The result could be that we are not free to give and enjoy our money – we feel we will never have enough, we see ourselves as the provider, not God, and we may become workaholics who display a greater love of money than of God. Judgments create strongholds of bondage.

Where we honored our parents (and other role models) in the way they handled money, things will go well for us. Perhaps we saw how they tithe and now we find it easy to put God first by honoring Him with our first fruits tithe.

GOD is our ONLY PROVIDER. Our standard of giving determines our standard of living! God intended for us to grow up in a home where we were taught to "Seek first His Kingdom (under the dominion of the King and His way of doing things) and all these things shall be added unto us" (Matt. 6:33, NAS). If such were the case, we would have been taught that **our standard of GIVING determines our standard of living, that** God is our provider and the owner of all, and that prosperity is His will for us. 3 John 2 says, "Beloved, I wish above all things, that you may prosper and be in good health, even as your soul prospers" (NIV). In whatever way we were hurt by not being taught Kingdom living with regard to finances, we probably made judgments, have believed lies, and most likely are being held in bondage in these areas.

Generational Curses:

Curses can be passed down from one generation to the next and beyond. "I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me" (Exodus 20:5, NKJV).

We can pass on poverty, sickness, a sin pattern, and early death. For example, deceit was passed on from Abraham to Jacob, and on to Jacob's sons, who sold Joseph into slavery. Statistically, over 90% of abused kids end up being abusive parents!

EXAMPLE: JUKES AND EDWARDS FAMILIES

Two American families have been well documented to show the continuation of a family line of generational curses, and another family line which passed on a legacy of success.

The Jukes family produced generation after generation of criminals. The Edwards family passed on an incredible legacy which produced preachers, educators, doctors, legislators, and college presidents.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION EXERCISE #6

BREAKING GENERATIONAL CURSES & JUDGMENTS

Ask yourself, "What are my earliest memories of money?" How did those memories shape your beliefs? Reflect on what your parents taught or showed you about money. To trigger your thinking, here are some possibilities:

- Never had enough = poverty mentality
 - Got anything you wanted = money grows on trees, I can buy whatever I want
 - Being rich is bad = rich people have a hard time getting into heaven, guilt
 - Hiding money = hoarding things and greed

BREAK ALL BONDAGES, JUDGMENTS & CURSES FROM NOT HONORING YOUR FATHER

AND MOTHER. Ask the Lord to reveal the ways you judged, were rebellious to, disobeyed, and otherwise did not honor your parents; then write them down. Ask the Lord to forgive each offense. Finally, ask the Lord to break any curse or judgment associated with not honoring your father and mother.

BREAKING GENERATIONAL CURSES

Look at your life, your parents, your grandparents, and ask them (or the Holy Spirit) about your ancestors to determine whether you have any generational curses that have been passed on. Do not discount diseases as just biological. Your doctor knows that genetics and psychological factors can be passed on. Does cancer, heart problems, high blood pressure, hearing loss, back problems, etc. run in your family? There are dozens of other physical and psychological problems that can be passed on. Otherwise, you would not be asked about your parents' health history. Look for sin patterns in your family: anger, abuse, fear, lust, divorce, addictions, theft, adultery, etc. Ask the Holy Spirit to identify generational influences in your life. (Generational influences can be both good and bad. However, for our purposes, we are concerned only about reversing any negative generational curses.)

SPIRITUAL WARFARE #7

BREAKING CURSES, BLOCKAGES, STRONGHOLDS & JUDGMENTS THAT CONTROL OUR FINANCES

SOURCES OF BLOCKAGE TO GOD'S BLESSING AND ABUNDANCE

A blockage is something that causes God's hand of blessing to be held back from you. The Bible is clear on two things that will cause blockage to God's blessings of both mercy and provision.

- 1. Not being Sensitive to Our Spouse.** We covered this in a previous section. Now is a good time to make sure that you are putting into practice what we have previously covered.

2. Not Forgiving.

Forgiveness is a must for everyone who wants to walk in victory. As we forgive, we are forgiven. Likewise, unless we forgive others, we will not be forgiven. Matthew 6:14-15: "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (RSV).

Our prayers will not be answered if we do not forgive (Mark 11:25). Unforgiveness holds us in bondage. Jesus spoke of this bondage in terms of being imprisoned in Mathew 18:35, "So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you (put in prison), if you do not forgive your brother from your heart." (RSV)

Unforgiveness can affect our finances. For example, in this passage (Mathew 18:34, RSV) the jailers (tormentors) were part of the prison system. Not only did they cause pain and suffering, but they also required forced labor for very low wages until the debt was paid off.

A LACK OF FORGIVENESS CAN MANIFEST IN PHYSICAL AND MENTAL ILLNESS:

Ulcers, intestinal and heart problems, migraines, high blood pressure, depression, extreme anger, bitterness, etc.

A lack of forgiveness is often the root of demonic strongholds. "Do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity (or place) to the devil" (Ephesians 4:26-27, RSV). When we let the sun go down on our anger, we actually give the devil a legal right to control a part of our life. The more we allow anger to fester in our life, the more control we give over to Satan.

UNFORGIVENESS BLOCKS THE PROMISE OF GOD AND HINDERS OUR PRAYERS.

In Mark 11:23 Jesus tells us that if we have faith, we can speak to our mountains (problems) and they will be removed, if we believe in our heart. However, in verse 25, we see that lack of forgiveness is a clear act of disobedience and will block our prayers. "And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against any one; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive your trespasses" (Mark 11:25, RSV).

The solution to unforgiveness is to forgive. It may not be easy, but it is required. For example, God instructs us to forgive our brother **before** we pray. Justification for not forgiving only perpetuates the sin and continues our bondage.

Even if we do not "**feel**" like forgiving, we must. Forgiveness is not a feeling; it is an act of the will. We must choose to forgive. After we have decided to forgive, our feelings will line-up with our will.

Ask the Lord to release you from the bondage of unforgiveness once you have forgiven others. Remember, whatever we ask in His name will be granted: "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours" (Mark 11:24, NIV).

BLOCKAGES FROM STRONGHOLDS

A stronghold is defined as a way of thinking or system of beliefs that is contrary to the will of God. The main battle takes place in our mind and thoughts. Fear can be a stronghold. Paul described this well when he said, "For the weapons of our warfare are not worldly but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle to the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:4-5, RSV). Paul cannot make it more clear that the battleground is in our minds and that we must take every thought captive. This is also the reason why Paul says that we must renew our mind in Romans 12:2: "Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind" (RSV).

When our thoughts become habitual and are contrary to God's Word, we have given Satan a place of residence in our mind. By continuing to agree with Satan's way of thinking and acting,

we have given him legal right to that area of our life by either a persistent thinking and sin pattern and/or generational sin pattern that we have inherited.

A stronghold affects our actions and relationships. It can create a “leanness” in our hearts and soul. Psalm 106:15 says, “He gave them what they asked, but sent a wasting disease among them” (RSV).

A stronghold decreases our capacity to respond to God. It is also a place from which the enemy can “torment” or attack us in other aspects of our life with bitterness, fear, anger, worry, lust, and all sorts of addictions.

THE CENTER OF A STRONGHOLD IS IN THE MIND. It is the place where we must fight the battle, as we see in Romans 8:5-7: “For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace” (RSV).

All strongholds harden our heart toward God and each other.

SPECIAL WARNING - AVOID FILTHY INTERNET SITES. All strongholds can affect our finances and relationships. For example: pornography, lust, fear, anxiety, alcohol, as well as soap operas and romance novels can rob an individual of his/her ability to earn a living and be productive. A stronghold of lust can dominate a person’s thinking and cause him/her to get on the internet at work and waste time on X-rated sites. This type of wasting time could jeopardize a job and/or render the person less productive and effective. Consequently, a stronghold can negatively impact a marriage and earning power.

Many people wonder why their prayers do not work after they have prayed for a stronghold to be broken. This could be because they have given themselves to Satan to such an extent that they are powerless in this area of their life. For example, if you sold a piece of property to someone and that person took possession of it, could you order him off the land? Of course not! The new owner takes up residence on his/her land. Likewise when someone has a demonic stronghold, Satan acts as if he legally possesses that area of your mind and actions. The only way that Satan will give up a stronghold is for someone else to “pay the price” for the land. Because Jesus paid our debt, only He can take possession of the land for us. Then we can become his “bond servants.” Jesus gives us authority to pull down strongholds as part of our weapons of warfare. We studied this previously, in 2 Corinthians 10:4. Our weapons can become dull and ineffective when we do not use them in battle against the enemy of our souls. Let us sharpen our swords for the real battle!

PRACTICAL APPLICATION EXERCISE #7

TAKE BACK ALL GROUND

EXAMINE YOUR HEART.

1. Write down the names of anyone you need to forgive. Choose before the Lord to forgive them and pray a blessing over them. Ask the Lord to forgive you and remove the curse of unforgiveness.
-
-
-

2. What do you believe about money? How has that affected your financial situation?

The first table gives some examples. Circle those that apply to you. Then write your own thoughts in the box below. Begin to renew your mind according to the Word of God.

CONCEPTS	CONCLUSIONS/EFFECTS
It all belongs to God	Good stewardship of God's money and resources
I work hard for MY money	Stingy, failure to give
Giving Honors God	Tithes and Freewill offerings are the norm and it's fun to give
Money buys happiness	False values, pursuit of earthly treasures
I'm entitled; the world owes me	I don't need to work, poor work ethic
Debt is normal - no problem	Legacy of debt
CONCEPTS/BELIEFS	CONCLUSIONS/EFFECTS

EXAMINE YOUR MIND. Ask the Lord to reveal to you any strongholds in your mind that need to be broken. List strongholds and find a verse that corrects each stronghold. For example if you struggle with always wanting more than you can afford, you might write down: "Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content" (1 Timothy 6:6-8, NKJV).

ASK THE LORD TO TAKE BACK ALL GROUND THAT WAS GIVEN OVER TO THE ENEMY. Ask the Lord to forgive you for each time you let the sun go down on your anger. Ask the Lord to take back all ground that was given over to the enemy through anger, lust, sexual sin, unforgiveness, etc. In Jesus' name pull down any strongholds that you have in your life. You may want to write these things down and then cross them out as a visual reminder that they are paid for and that the enemy no longer has possession of your territory. For example, "ANGER" is crossed out below because it was dealt with.

~~ANGER~~

WALK AS A CHILD OF THE LIGHT (Ephesians 5:8)

"What does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the Lord" (Deuteronomy 10:12-13, RSV).

- Read the Word on a daily basis.
- Establish godly accountability relationships.

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have completed all of the spiritual warfare sections in this book! By gaining a deeper understanding of breaking curses, blockages, strongholds, & judgments that try to control your finances, you now have the weapons and the armor to gain full victory.

Now step out on the water and put into practice what you diligently learned.

Special Note: You may have to work through these sections several times. Persist until all blockages are gone; then continue spiritual warfare as a permanent life pattern.

CHAPTER 10



"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age'."
(Matthew 28: 18-20, NIV)

"It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."
(Ephesians 4:11-13, NIV)

Instructions for Focus Group Leaders

CHAPTER 10

FOCUS GROUP LEADERS' INSTRUCTIONS

♦ THE FOCUS GROUP CONCEPT

Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus is ideally presented in a small focus group setting (such as a home or private meeting room), which is a private, secure and comfortable environment. Ideally, these focus groups will be under the covering of a local church or ministry and will report to a financial freedom coordinator, designated by that church or ministry.

The focus group approach has been tested and found to produce "good fruit."

♦ TRAINING LEADERS AND DISCIPLING FUTURE LEADERS

The concept of training leaders, or discipling future leaders, is centuries old and was most notably used by Our Lord, Jesus Christ.

This chapter is intended to provide guidelines and advice to the focus group leadership team. Ideally, this team will consist of a designated, trained, and committed leader or leadership couple and an assistant leader (or couple) in training (LIT). This concept of leaders and LITs has proven to be very successful in the "Married for Life" courses presented by 2=1 Ministry (formerly known as Marriage Ministries International), and has worked very well for this course.

As leaders train LITs, they are equipping them to serve as leaders of an upcoming focus group of their own. Leaders, and the sponsoring church or ministry, should seek LITs who are faithful stewards and committed to serve now and to be trained to lead future groups. Because the need for this training is so great, most LITs will not repeat as LITs but will be released and empowered to lead.

At the conclusion of the 7-week focus group, and the individual accountability sessions, the leaders should advise the sponsoring church or ministry coordinator if the LITs are recommended for full focus group leadership.

I. LEADERSHIP CALLING AND COMMITMENT

We trust that you feel a spiritual calling to help people get financially free. For some, this may involve leading just a few focus groups and for others it may be a longer term calling. All leaders have an incredible opportunity to sow the Word of God into their groups and to provide practical application tools that enable true financial freedom.

Leadership is a big commitment, as the team meets twice each week. Once for one to two hours to train, prepare the lesson, and to pray and do spiritual warfare; and again for the actual focus group session. Additionally, leadership will meet for post-course 90-minute follow-up accountability review sessions with each participant or participating couple.

We know God will bless you for your diligence and will equip and guide you, if you humbly seek His wisdom. His Word also promises you a reward. Proverbs 19:17 says, "He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and He will reward him for what he has done" (NIV).

II. WHO CAN LEAD A FOCUS GROUP?

1. Committed singles and committed married couples have both proven to make excellent focus group leaders.

- Single group leaders should have LITs who are either a married couple or another single of the same sex.
 - Married couples can make a powerful one-flesh team. We strongly recommend that spouses team-up since there is great power in couples that teach together and share from their hearts. Each spouse is encouraged to use his/her own style and gifts because this adds life to the focus group.
 - A leadership team might consist of a leader couple or a single leader plus an LIT couple or single LIT.
2. We encourage the sponsoring local church or ministry to provide *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* training as it is outlined in this book and to carefully screen, select, and monitor the leadership teams.
 3. The following are suggestions which the sponsoring church or ministry may want to use as "minimum qualifications" for the selection of focus group leaders and LITs:
 - Salvation
 - Baptism
 - Faithful tithing (ideally giving freewill offerings beyond the tithe)
 - Committed church or ministry members
 - Committed to learn and to teach this Bible-based course material, seeing the Bible and this book as the key references.

III. LEADERS' ROLE

1. The leaders are fully responsible for all aspects of this 7-week group training, to include completing the 7 to 21-day follow-up accountability sessions (90 minutes each) with individual group members and couples. Please include the LITs whenever possible in these accountability sessions as part of their training to lead their own focus groups.
2. The selection of the LITs is normally the leader's responsibility but is to be: discussed with, prayed about, and authorized by the covering local church or ministry. This is a serious decision! (The selection decision may fall to the local church, pastor, or ministry coordinator.)
3. Leaders select the place and establish the start time for the seven weekly 2 to 2½ hour sessions. You need a quiet environment — no phones and no children. Send an email or letter to each group member ASAP with directions and full details. Focus group members should ideally have received the letter, and at least one call or personal visit from the leaders, ten days prior to the first session. We also recommend that you phone students to confirm all details a few days before the first meeting. (The devil will attempt to confuse; so be proactive!)
4. Refreshments should be limited to beverages. The leaders may invite the group to share in the cost of soft drinks, coffee, iced tea, or lemonade. Please make sure cups and other complimentary supplies are available and set up the beverages beforehand to minimize delays during the short break. If you want to make an exception for Week 7, then plan extra time after the session closes or have a separate "Night Out" or picnic.

5. A weekly report form is provided along with an example. The leaders and LITs need to complete the report after each class and submit it promptly to the local church or ministry coordinator. This demonstrates accountability.
 - The original of the report and all offering checks should be mailed or hand delivered to the church or ministry coordinator ASAP. (No exceptions!)
 - The leaders and LITs should each keep a copy of the report, which is confidential, so they can pray about the group and monitor attendance and progress.
 - Leaders are responsible to fill out one *Focus Group Registration* form with all contact information for group members and leaders. One copy goes to the local church or ministry coordinator. The leaders and LITs should each keep a copy. This form provides current contact information that will prove valuable.
6. Course Registration and Fees. This book is the workbook or manual for the course. It will be essential for each focus group member to have his or her own book; married couples should share one manual and must do homework assignments together. The sponsoring church or ministry should control registration and decide what fees, if any, to collect. Obviously, the fee must include the cost of this book as a minimum. Most churches charge only the cost of the book since leaders are volunteers.

We encourage the use of checks for registration fees and for weekly offerings. Accountability is much easier and all focus group participants then have individual records. The course registration fee and cost of the book is normally not tax deductible. However, weekly offerings will normally be tax deductible (in the US) if checks are payable to a 501(c)(3) registered charity, ministry, or church.
7. Focus Group Size. Although there is no absolute set size for a focus group, we recommend approximately 14 people including the leaders and LITs. Most groups enjoy meeting in homes, or other private areas, and space is often a constraint. Group homework sharing is a key element of each weekly session, and if a group is too large, time and crowd intimidation can be concerns.
8. Weekly Offering. We strongly encourage the group's church or ministry covering to authorize a weekly offering. Actually, we suggest that it be in the form of "sowing alms" as taught in Chapter 2. Proverbs 19:17 says, "He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord, and He will pay back what he has given." (NKJV) In many focus groups, we have observed amazing success with alms being designated for the "Benevolence Fund" of the sponsoring church or for special offerings to an overseas ministry. **Checks or money orders should be used so there is no cash to handle, and the weekly report should be signed by one of the leaders and one LIT, to provide a measure of accountability.**
9. Weekly meetings with LITs. The leaders and LITs should agree to meet once a week (separate from the focus group meeting) to pray and do spiritual warfare for the group and to preview the coming week's lesson. This meeting is important and is reported on the first page of the weekly report.
10. Ideally, this *leadership session* will be held after the LITs have completed their homework and have read the next week's lesson. Then the leaders can review the homework assignment for the coming week with the LITs and discuss how the LITs will lead the homework sharing time or teach part of the lesson. Leaders should also discuss the upcoming lesson and clarify as needed.

11. Experience indicates that at least one, and ideally two, full hours are needed for this leadership session. It is acceptable to add time for a meal or snack, as the leadership team will definitely bond during the course.
12. Remember, the leaders are discipling the LITs so they can lead future focus groups.
13. If the LITs teach a specific weekly lesson, then the leaders should lead that week's homework sharing time. Many leaders elect to divide the lesson into sections. This can ease LITs into the process and add variety to the group. Leaders just need to ensure that the quality of the lesson is not compromised.
14. By preparing the LITs to lead, and then letting them present one or two weekly lessons or partial lessons, the leaders are building their confidence to lead a future focus group. Leaders should make certain their LITs are very well prepared!

15. Weekly calls/letters/or e-mails to focus group members. We find it very important to contact each participant during the week. This can be a telephone call, letter, e-mail, or a personal visit. The purpose is to encourage them and pray for them. This is a good opportunity to remind them to complete the weekly homework so they will be ready to share at the coming week's session.
16. Leaders and LITs may elect to divide this responsibility, but these weekly contacts are very important. Remember, the devil does not want anyone to get financially free - especially Christians!
17. 7 to 21-Day Follow-Up Accountability Sessions. These are private sessions, 90 minutes long, where one focus group member, or couple, at a time meets with the leadership team to review progress. **These private accountability sessions should be scheduled before students leave the Week 7 focus group.** They should bring all completed forms and be ready to discuss them. At the end of the session, the leadership team should pray for and release each student. (See Chapter 8 for details.)

IV. LEADERS IN TRAINING RESPONSIBILITY

As LITs, you will be blessed to be a blessing. Your leaders are going to sow tremendous effort, time, and prayer into your future. This is a serious role and you need to be fully committed to assist them in every possible way. **You will be counted on to lead at least one or two future focus groups and to help train future leaders.**

1. Make firm commitments to the time schedule of the course and arrive early to help the leaders set up for each class. LITs and leaders should pray and do spiritual warfare prior to each focus group. Be proactive, the devil will try to disrupt with problems involving strife, transportation, childcare, work schedules, etc.
2. Plan on staying after the class, for at least 30 minutes, to pray, recap the focus group session, count the offering, and to complete the weekly report. This is very important and can be a lot of fun as you bond with your leaders.
3. Make sure you do your homework ASAP and read the next lesson in advance. This will make your weekly leaders' meeting much more valuable and will prepare you, as LITs, to lead the weekly homework sharing time. When you preview the lesson, provide feedback to the leaders as it may help them with the upcoming lesson.

4. Unless the LITs have been through a previous focus group, or are very well prepared, it is normally not expected that they teach a whole weekly lesson. However, the leaders are encouraged to call on LITs for a testimony or for a special example, to get them more involved.
5. If the leaders feel the LITs are capable of teaching all or part of a lesson, then the lesson should be presented to the leaders by the LITs at the weekly leadership meeting. The focus group deserves a very good presentation.
6. LITs should study and take notes in preparation to lead a focus group in the very near future. The need is great and the experience is very rewarding!

V. GUARD AGAINST OUTSIDE MATERIAL

1. There are lots of teachings, tapes, and books on finance. We urge the leadership team to avoid using outside materials that may conflict, confuse, or sidetrack group members from this Bible-based teaching and the processes being taught in this course. Time constraints are another reason to stick closely to each weekly lesson.
2. If in doubt, please check with your covering church pastor or church/ministry coordinator in advance before using any outside material or other resources beyond the Bible and this course manual.
3. Do not allow group members to inject outside material or take over a session. Leaders must maintain order and control the flow of the teaching and the homework sharing.
4. **Under no circumstances are financial products, services, or specific investment-type recommendations to be made or permitted.**

VI. NO TIME FOR MAKE-UP SESSIONS

We encourage leaders to seek a full 7-week commitment from focus group members. These seven weeks will fly by and you will be hard pressed to squeeze in make-up sessions. However, leaders have the option to provide a make-up class for very special situations.

VII. GRADUATION CERTIFICATES

We encourage you to award special certificates for participants who successfully complete the course and the 7 to 21 day follow-up session. Make this a "big deal" and have fun with it. A sample certificate is provided in this chapter; use it as a guide and be creative. The sample is for EXAMPLE ONLY. There is a blank certificate that you can copy and fill out for each graduate, or you can create your own.

The first focus group in Fiji planned a major graduation event with certificates presented by the church pastor in front of the whole congregation. We've participated in many victory celebrations, graduations, and visited a Catholic Mass where graduates were acknowledged and gave heartwarming testimonies.

VIII. VISUAL AIDS & SOUND EFFECTS

We know people learn in different ways — hearing, seeing, touching, words, pictures, and sounds. That is why we included this section, which injects fun and joy into the learning process.

How many people do you know that get excited about attending a class on finances? Perhaps they think, "BORING!" Therefore, we include suggestions for visual aids and sound effects for instruction and to provide comic relief so people will relax and be more receptive to receiving God's truth about finances.

Basically, we want to build hope in people that freedom from debt is possible. We pray that people will allow God to change their hearts and thus bless their financial situations.

- ♦ **HEART VISUAL AIDS.** Throughout this course, we emphasize the point that God wants our hearts not our money. Therefore, heart visual aids are especially meaningful to focus group members. Valentine's Day is probably the best time of year to acquire heart supplies. Party stores have great sales on heart products after Valentine's Day!

SOME EXAMPLES OF HEART SUPPLIES ARE:

1. Heart balloons can be tied to chair backs. Mylar balloons may last for weeks! Tying balloons to chairs presents a festive atmosphere. When people come in, their hearts and minds are encouraged.
2. Heart jewelry. Ladies you can wear this while you teach. People will see the hearts during the entire class.
3. Clothing with hearts.
4. Candy with sayings on them like, "Love You," etc. You can put one on each person's chair.
5. Heart balloons on a stick with "Love" printed on them - they last for years.
6. Poster board cutout hearts in various sizes are available. (Ask your children to help you by cutting out construction paper hearts.) Tape a paper with "God" written on it to the center of one heart balloon and tape a large dollar bill on the other.

Talk about who or what has the most influence in their hearts. Ask participants, "Where is your treasure?" Leave this visual in front of the class. You can use it each week.
7. Fabric with hearts on it can be draped over a table.



- ♦ **PLAY MONEY** is available in packages at discount stores. Use some very large denomination bills, such as one thousand dollar bills. Grocery stores are also a good source for children's party favors and you can normally buy packs of small play money. Remember, be creative and have fun with it.

1. You can tape money to a table so people can see it. This may build hope in them to believe they can be debt free and have extra money.
2. Hang a wreath on the door with play money stuck all over it and a sign pinned to it saying, "Y'all Come In Expecting." (Sorry for the "Ya'll" but the authors live in Texas!) We build hope when we make responsible choices. By being good stewards, repenting for wrong choices, and being obedient to God's Word, we have a right to expect God's help and financial breakthroughs. Always give God the glory for every breakthrough, as all good gifts come from Him!

3. Place play money on each chair. It gets the group to "lighten-up."
4. We made a "money tree" by hanging play money by ribbons all over an artificial tree. Near it, we made a "credit card tree." We hung (expired) credit cards by ribbon onto that tree. We used anything that resembled a credit card for effect. These trees were called the "tree of life" and the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil." They served as weekly reminders to our focus groups.
5. You can use the small play money to throw up in the air while teaching on biblical giving, or when suggesting the use of cash versus credit cards, or to celebrate a breakthrough.

♦ **SOUND EFFECTS**

We use several "talking magnets" while teaching. People like the comic relief and it seems to relax them. We don't want people to think this is a stodgy, difficult class. Perhaps you can find something like these to use. Kitchen, bath, and grocery stores may be a source for these noisemakers.

1. For "good reports" and "breakthroughs," we sound a cheerful talking magnet with balloons on it that has people yelling, "Ole! Ole!" Find your own "fun" noisemakers.
2. When discussing creditors calling and past due bill notices, we sound a talking magnet that says, "You've got mail," and plays a little tune.
3. When debt is mentioned, or the overuse of credit cards, we push a "panic button" magnet that is the "Danger! Dive!" sound on submarines: "Wh-ooga! Wh-ooga!" We hope that sound will stay in their minds if they think about going into new debt. They laugh, but the point is made that debt equals danger.
4. We have a bag of noisemakers. When people come into the meeting, we remind them to pick up a noisemaker to use when they tell us about their breakthroughs. It gets them involved and builds hope and excitement in them. We have tambourines, maracas, clackers, drums, and shakers. Look in toy stores for ideas. Be creative.

♦ **OTHER VISUAL AIDS**

1. When teaching the Biblical Giving chapter, we use a piece of flexible conduit or pipe, to illustrate how God wants us to be "conduits for giving." He blesses us with finances as we freely give. We don't wait for God to give, we give first. Sometimes, however, our "conduit" is stopped up with problems. Write the following words on folded pieces of paper: unforgiveness, curse of poverty, disobedience, greed, and not tithing. Stuff those papers in one end of the conduit and play money in the other end. When they do not come out, look in the other end and begin taking out the papers one by one. Finally, unfold and read them. When they are all out, drop some more money back in and it will flow through the conduit and come out freely. This is a great illustration that depicts how God will bless us when we unplug our own pipelines!
2. For married couples, we use a big sign on brightly colored poster board. On the top half of the paper, we write, "Your spouse is not your enemy!" On the bottom half, write, "Satan is your enemy!" You can bend it in the middle and use the half that applies.
3. We found some prisoner hats (black and white striped) to wear when discussing debt bondage. The stripes resemble convict stripes. Yes, it is corny, but it will bring a laugh and drive home (again) the fact that debt equals bondage.

♦ **ATMOSPHERE**

Music changes the atmosphere. We recommend that you play up-beat Christian music before every focus group session, while the group is arriving, and again during the break.

Choose music with a message of hope. Look for exciting “get you going” songs! People may arrive with heavy hearts and defeated attitudes about their financial situation. We like to use songs about deliverance, having faith in God to change circumstances, and songs about breakthroughs!

♦ **BREAKTHROUGH REPORTS - HOORAY!**

Teach focus group members to expect breakthroughs. Have everyone fill out their **Breakthroughs** form weekly. (This form is included with each weekly homework section.) This will encourage them and sharing their breakthrough reports will definitely bless others. As leaders or LITs direct the homework sharing time, ask each person to report breakthroughs - small and large – and celebrate each one.

♦ **ENCOURAGE AND BUILD HOPE**

Keep this motivation in your heart and the Lord will show you more creative ideas that will work especially well for your group. Keep your eyes and ears tuned in to the Holy Spirit - great and fun ideas can come from anywhere! Leaders and LITs are the cheerleaders for their focus groups.

May the Lord Bless you for your diligence and commitment. Remember, the words of the book of James 1:17: “Every good and perfect gift is from above” (NIV).

IX. SEMINARS – FINANCIAL FREEDOM IN 7 WEEKS PLUS

Bill and Maureen have been blessed with the opportunity from their church to present several half-day seminars. These seminars are free to the community and have included highlights from the course and an introduction to the 7-week focus group concept. **We have also presented seminars in other states and are open to discussing how you can have a seminar in your church.**

We often invite others to assist in the teaching. Students are blessed and excited to hear testimonies from recent focus group graduates. Every effort is made to create an upbeat atmosphere (music, balloons, visual aids, play money, video inserts) and a seminar handout is provided.

These seminars are great, but they can only begin to introduce the material in the book and course. They should never be viewed as a substitute for focus group participation. We recommend that seminars be used to provide an opportunity for people to sign-up for a specific 7-week group.

It has been very exciting to observe another large church build their own leadership and seminar team. Our goal is to see this process grow, with churches becoming self-sustained and the ministry being presented on a regular and repetitive schedule.

X. FINAL TIPS TO LEADERS AND LITs

1. Have fun with your group. Be creative with visual aids, sound effects, balloons, posters, etc. Your group should look forward to each session.
2. God will bless you for sowing into the lives of others. Lean on the Holy Spirit.

3. Get comfortable with the Scripture verses used in this course. Include reading and praying the Word in your preparation time, in each class session, and each leaders' meeting.
4. Spiritual warfare is important. Kick the devil out before, during, and after all weekly meetings.
5. **Study the material well so you can teach without just reading the lessons. Please do not bore your group! Use appropriate examples, not rabbit trails, and stay on schedule.**
6. Get very comfortable with examples 1 and 2 (before and after) so you can easily explain what Bob and Mary Jones did in all cases.
7. Be on the lookout for future LITs and course leaders. Nourish them and mention them in your weekly reports. Pray for them.
8. **Leaders and LITs of focus groups are definitely not expected to be financial experts. You are not expected to be professional financial counselors. This is a teaching ministry. This course does not even require a high school diploma. Do not allow the devil to make you feel inadequate. Stick to the weekly lesson material and you will do well.**

XI. THANKS TO LEADERS AND LITS

We are excited about your commitment to lead or help lead a *Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus* focus group. You are sowing into the legacy of many future generations. Spread the news of this course to others and encourage them to enroll in future courses.

We thank you for your commitment and feel sure that, as you teach this course with all your hearts, God will look down, smile, and say, "Well done good and faithful servants."

XII. REPORTS

God is not the author of confusion and we all need some measure of accountability. For this course, the reports are simple but important.

1. **A Focus Group Registration** form is completed no later than Week 1. It is simply a list of every focus group member with accurate contact information that is easy to read, so it can be photocopied clearly. You will need this for contacts as the course progresses.

One copy of the completed form (printed or typed) goes to the church or ministry coordinator and both the leaders and LITs should retain a copy. (We recommend that each member of the leadership team have his own copy.)

A blank copy of the registration form is provided in this section. Please copy the form as needed or prepare your own (customized) form in conjunction with your church or ministry coordinator.

Please remember, your church or ministry coordinator may be simultaneously overseeing several focus groups. You can make their job easier with timely, easy-to-read reports.

2. **A Financial Freedom Weekly Report** is used to report highlights of each focus group session. The report is confidential but should provide enough information so that the church or ministry coordinator can get a "feel" for each participant's progress and can pray for specific areas of need.

This report also has a section (on the first page) which is used for a brief report of what took place at the (separate) weekly leadership meeting. This adds accountability to your leadership commitment.

The weekly report should be completed as soon as the weekly focus group dismisses. There is a section for recording the total weekly offering in the report. The offering should be counted, verified, and signed by one of the leaders and one of the LITs.

The leaders and LITs should retain a copy of the signed weekly report. The weekly report and offerings (checks) should be promptly mailed or delivered to the church or ministry coordinator. The report must be kept confidential.

A sample of the ***Financial Freedom Weekly Report*** is provided in this chapter.

3. **A Final Report to the church or ministry coordinator.** Accountability is a key element of the stewardship principle. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that the leadership team prepare a brief letter, approximately 30 to 60 days after the seventh and final weekly session, to the sponsoring church or ministry coordinator. No special form is needed. The sole purpose of this (letter style) report is to list all group members, including LITs, who faithfully completed the course and their 7 to 21 day accountability session. The letter should also list any focus group participants who have not completed the review.

It would also be appropriate to indicate how course completion (graduation) certificates were presented.

ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSIONS OF REPORTS. Reports may be submitted by e-mail or fax as deemed appropriate.

FINANCIAL FREEDOM IN 7 WEEKS PLUS

FOCUS GROUP REGISTRATION FORM

(Please Print or Type)

(Page 1 of 3)

Week One Meeting Date: _____

Scheduled Time: Start: _____ End: _____

Group Leaders: _____

Leaders in Training (LITs): _____

Address for Meeting: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Country _____

Directions to Meeting Place:

Group Members (For married couples, print both names; include all leaders)

Leaders _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

E-mail _____

Leaders in Training (LITs) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

E-mail _____

FINANCIAL FREEDOM IN 7 WEEKS PLUS
Focus Group Registration Form (Page 2 of 3)

Names _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Home Phone _____
Work Phone _____
Cell Phone _____
E-mail _____

Names _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Home Phone _____
Work Phone _____
Cell Phone _____
E-mail _____

Names _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Home Phone _____
Work Phone _____
Cell Phone _____
E-mail _____

Names _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Home Phone _____
Work Phone _____
Cell Phone _____
E-mail _____

Names _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Home Phone _____
Work Phone _____
Cell Phone _____
E-mail _____

Focus Group Registration Form (Page 3 of 3)

Names _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Home Phone _____
Work Phone _____
Cell Phone _____
E-mail _____

Names _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Home Phone _____
Work Phone _____
Cell Phone _____
E-mail _____

Names _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Home Phone _____
Work Phone _____
Cell Phone _____
E-mail _____

Names _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Home Phone _____
Work Phone _____
Cell Phone _____
E-mail _____

Names _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Home Phone _____
Work Phone _____
Cell Phone _____
E-mail _____

FINANCIAL FREEDOM IN 7 WEEKS PLUS WEEKLY REPORT for WEEK # _____

Provide this confidential report to your church or ministry coordinator.
Leadership retains copies. (Page 1 of 5)

WEEKLY LEADERSHIP MEETING REPORT SECTION

Leaders-Please only use this box to report on what happened in the weekly leadership meeting of the Focus Group Leaders & LITs.

City: _____ State: _____ Country _____

Meeting Date: _____

Start Time: _____ End Time: _____

Group Leaders: _____

Leaders in Training (LITs): _____

Comments from Leadership Meeting (Prayers, Needs, Lessons, & Homework): _____

FINANCIAL FREEDOM IN 7 WEEKS PLUS **WEEKLY REPORT (Page 2 of 5)**

Leaders and LITs- Use the following report space for brief, printed comments regarding the progress of each individual or couple. Include comments on leaders by LITs, and on LITs by leaders.

Meeting Date: _____ Start Time: _____ End Time: _____

Focus Group Members:

Please assess the progress of each individual or couple, including leadership. Indicate Attendance

Comments	Him	Her
#1 Names:		
#2 Names:		
#3 Names:		
#4 Names:		
#5 Names:		
#6 Names:		
#7 Names:		

**FINANCIAL FREEDOM IN 7 WEEKS PLUS
WEEKLY REPORT (Page 3 of 5)**

#8 Names:		
#9 Names:		
#10 Names:		
#11 Names:		
#12 Names:		

GROUP LEADERS PROGRESS (Comments by LITs):

Attendance	
Him	Her
—	—

LITs PROGRESS (Comments by Leaders):

Attendance	
Him	Her
—	—

**FINANCIAL FREEDOM IN 7 WEEKS PLUS
WEEKLY REPORT (Page 4 of 5)**

LEADERS COMMENTS REGARDING THE FOCUS GROUP SESSION:

WEEKLY OFFERING REPORT

Offering (Checks/Money Orders Only) Total: \$ _____

Offering dedicated to: _____

Offering Counted By:

Group Leader Signature (One): _____ Date: _____

LIT Signature (One): _____ Date: _____

Focus Group Prayer Concerns:

Please indicate any prayer concerns for each focus group member.

PRAYER CONCERNS

#1 Names:

#2 Names:

#3 Names:

**FINANCIAL FREEDOM IN 7 WEEKS PLUS
WEEKLY REPORT (Page 5 of 5)**

#4 Names:

#5 Names:

#6 Names:

#7 Names:

#8 Names:

#9 Names:

#10 Names:

#11 Names:

#12 Names:

FINANCIAL FREEDOM IN 7 WEEKS PLUS

WEEKLY REPORT for WEEK # ONE

Provide this confidential report to your church or ministry coordinator.
Leadership retains copies. (Page 1 of 5)

WEEKLY LEADERSHIP MEETING REPORT SECTION

Leaders-Please only use this box to report on what happened in the weekly leadership meeting of the Focus Group Leaders & LITs.

City: San Antonio State: TX Country United States

Meeting Date: 5/10/08 Time: 7 PM End Time: 8:45 PM

Group Leaders: Bill & Maureen Sitter

Leaders in Training (LITs): Bob & Mary Jones

Comments from Leadership Meeting (Prayers, Needs, Lessons, & Homework):

The 2 leadership couples prayed for our new focus group which starts in 5 days. We did spiritual warfare for each person who committed to our group. We agreed on who would call each participant as a reminder. We reviewed the focus group leaders' instructions section of the course manual and the leaders previewed the Week 1 lesson. LIT's will be ready to help with introductions, set up for the class, and lead the homework sharing time in the future.

FINANCIAL FREEDOM IN 7 WEEKS PLUS

WEEKLY REPORT (Page 2 of 5)

Leaders and LITs- Use the following report space for brief, printed comments regarding the progress of each individual or couple. Include comments on leaders by LITs, and on LITs by leaders.

Meeting Date: 5/15/08 Start Time: 7 PM End Time: 9:30 PM

Focus Group Members:

Please assess the progress of each individual or couple, including leadership. Indicate Attendance

Comments	Him	Her
#1 Names: Tom & Barbara Smith They really need this course and are believing for a breakthrough.	Yes	Yes
#2 Names: John & Mary Doe They are in deep stress over past due bills. But are prepared to change habits & learn.	Yes	Yes
#3 Names: Mike & JoAnn Difficulty They barely made it to class. Big argument on pending bankruptcy. But praise God, they are committed to 7-week course.	Yes	Yes
#4 Names: Larry & Louise Just Get Bye She had to work late. They really need help. Leaders prayed for them after class. They have hope in God.	Yes	Late
#5 Names: Dan & Debra Niceman She just got called out of town at the last minute. Dan says they have little debt and want to learn to lead. He will teach Debra this week's lesson & they'll do homework together.	Yes	No
#6 Names: John & Ann Greatpotential They have a great attitude and want God's best for their family. Seem open to learning good stewardship. May be future LITs. Leaders will monitor potential as weeks progress.	Yes	Yes
#7 Names:		

FINANCIAL FREEDOM IN 7 WEEKS PLUS
WEEKLY REPORT (Page 3 of 5)

#8 Names:		
#9 Names:		
#10 Names:		
#11 Names:		
#12 Names:		

GROUP LEADERS PROGRESS (Comments by LITs):

Attendance	
Him	Her
—	—

Bill & Maureen Sitter:

LITs feel that the course is in good hands and look forward to being mentored by the leaders.

Maureen's visual aids are great! Group felt comfortable and liked the music. It helped to have praise song words typed, large print, for all.

WEEKLY FOCUS GROUP MEETING REPORT (Page 2 of 3)

LITs PROGRESS (Comments by Leaders):

Attendance	
Him	Her
—	—

Bob & Mary Jones:

Leaders see great potential. They need mentoring and really seek to leave a godly financial legacy. We see a friendship bond forming.

FINANCIAL FREEDOM IN 7 WEEKS PLUS WEEKLY REPORT (Page 4 of 5)

LEADERS COMMENTS REGARDING THE FOCUS GROUP SESSION:

Overall, a very good start to this 7-week journey. Leadership team will call each couple before next week's session, to encourage and reinforce commitment.

WEEKLY OFFERING REPORT

Offering (Checks/Money Orders Only) Total: \$ 75.00

Offering dedicated to: Sponsoring Church Benevolence Fund

Offering Counted By:

Group Leader Signature (One): Bob Jones Date: 5/15/08

LIT Signature (One): Mary Jones Date: 5/15/08

Focus Group Prayer Concerns:

Please indicate any prayer concerns for each focus group member.

PRAYER CONCERNS

#1 Names:

#2 Names:

#3 Names:

**FINANCIAL FREEDOM IN 7 WEEKS PLUS
WEEKLY REPORT (Page 5 of 5)**

#4 Names:

#5 Names:

#6 Names:

#7 Names:

#8 Names:

#9 Names:

#10 Names:

#11 Names:

#12 Names:

Certificate of Graduation

This is to certify that

BOB & MARY JONES

*have successfully completed the Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus Course
and the Review Session and are Herby Awarded This Certificate*

April 28, 2007

Bill and Maureen Ditter

Certificate of Graduation

This is to certify that

*have successfully completed the Financial Freedom in 7 Weeks Plus Course
and the Accountability Session and are Herby Awarded This Certificate*

CHAPTER 11



"Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved (tested by trial), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing – rightly handling and skillfully teaching – the Word of Truth."

(2 Timothy 2:15, AMP)

Additional References

CHAPTER 11

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

There are many excellent Christian and secular resources in the area of finances. The following list is only the tip of the finance reference iceberg, and we encourage you to aggressively seek out and study good material. Your church and area Christian bookstores are a great place to start. **We exhort you to weigh all advice carefully using God's Word as the final authority.**

1. The Bible. It may be helpful to read multiple translations. There are far more than 1,000 applicable Scriptures concerning finances. Some scholars place the number at over 2,000.
2. Crown Financial Ministries. This is the new name for the combination of Larry Burkett's Christian Financial Concepts Ministry and Howard Dayton's Crown Ministries. This organization has provided excellent Christian financial resources for 25 years. Their resource catalog features an incredible assortment of training materials for ages three and up including: books, audio and video tapes, budgeting workbooks for teens and adults, board games, a three-compartment bank for children, group study materials, and budgeting and cash control software. This website features an online budget guide, mortgage calculator, credit card payment calculator, and a lease versus purchase calculator. Phone 866-424-4000. Website: www.crown.org
3. Ron Blue has published an excellent variety of Christian study materials. The authors of this course are especially thankful for his (now out of print) *Master Your Money Workbook* by Thomas Nelson Publishers.
4. The ministry 2=1 (formerly Marriage Ministries International) is an international ministry that provides a wonderful "Married for Life" course. Although not a finance course, it shows couples how to pray, to work together, and to do spiritual warfare as a one-flesh team. These powerful tools are very helpful in dealing with financial stress. Website: www.marriage.org
5. Pastor Rick Godwin of Summit Christian Center (Formerly Eagles Nest Christian Fellowship) provides excellent audio messages: "Money and the Bible"; "The Steward's Risk and Reward"; "Rising Above Mediocrity"; "First Fruits"; and "Three myths About Money." Phone: 800-675-3297. Website: www.rickgodwin.org
6. Alan Vincent produced two powerful audio series that clearly present God's instructions on money, prosperity, and much more. Alan also identifies Free Masonry as a powerful demonic force that attacks in the area of finances. We urge you to obtain "Prosperity" and "Money Talks" by contacting Outpouring Ministries, 8308 Fredericksburg Rd., San Antonio, TX 78229. Phone: 210-614-9330. E-mail: outpouring@outpouringmissions.org
7. Billy Graham is widely acclaimed as one of the world's most powerful evangelists. We commend readers of this book to the following paperbacks on Salvation and the Holy Spirit. *How to be Born Again* and *The Holy Spirit*. Both are published by Word Publishing and are available in Christian bookstores.
8. T.D. Jakes, Sr. provides a powerful pamphlet entitled *But I Can't Afford To Tithe*. Phone: 918-523-5590. Website: www.alburypublishing.com

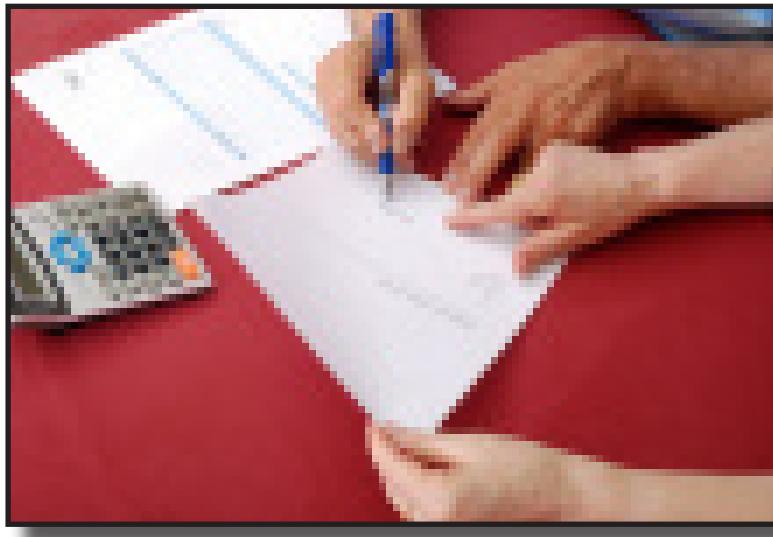
9. Kenneth Copeland Ministries provides excellent audio messages and books dealing with finances. A popular 1974 book, now re-printed, is *The Laws of Prosperity* published by KCP Publications. Website: www.kcm.org
10. Mary Hunt has written a number of popular books, including *The Complete Cheapskate* and *How to Debt Proof Your Kids* published by Broadman & Holman. She also produces a monthly newsletter entitled *The Cheapskate Monthly*. Phone: 800-550-3502. Website: www.cheapskatemonthly.com
11. Bruce Wilkinson is the author of two powerful, inspirational books published by Multnomah Publishers, Inc.: *The Prayer of Jabez* and *Secrets of the Vine*. Website: www.prayerofjabez.com
12. Terry Savage provides current practical financial advice in her book *The Savage Truth on Money*, published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. You may have seen her on Christian TV. Website: www.terrysavage.com
13. Marilyn Hickey Ministries offers an informative pamphlet on the subject of tithes, offerings, and alms: *God's Plan for Blessing You!* Phone: 303-770-0400. Website: www.mhmin.org
14. Dr. Edward L. Haygood of Agape Christian Fellowship in Los Angeles, CA, produced a helpful pamphlet entitled: *Why the Tithe?* Published by Harrison House.
15. Wilson J. Humber wrote a good paperback entitled *Dollars and Sense: Making the Most of What You Have*, published by Navpress. We thank him and others for the "Flexible Spending Plan" concept versus the "budget" concept.
16. John Ankerberg and John Weldon wrote: *The Secret Teachings of the Masonic Lodge*. This book provides a Christian perspective on Free Masonry and is published by Moody Press. The reader of this work will understand why Free Masonry is included in the list of occult activities, in Chapter 9: *Breaking Curses, Blockages, Judgments, & Strongholds That Control Our Finances*.
17. Robert Kiyosaki and Sharon Lechter C.P.A. authored a very popular paradigm-changing book entitled *Rich Dad Poor Dad*, and other recent books, published by TechPress. They also provide two (expensive but very educational) board games trademarked *Cash Flow 101* and *Cash Flow 202*. Phone: 800-308-3585. Website: www.cashflowtech.com
18. Craig Hill and Earl Pitts wrote a paperback, *Wealth, Riches and Money*, published by Family Foundation. Craig and Jan Hill's ministry, Family Foundations International, can be contacted at 303-797-1139. Website: www.familyfi.org
19. David Bach authored a book entitled *Smart Couples Finish Rich*, published by Broadway. Although not a Christian-oriented book, it contains some excellent practical advice. Website: www.Finishrich.com
20. The Fellowship of Companies for Christ International (FCCI) released an excellent 3 tape, audiotape set, entitled *Financial Freedom God's Way*. Phone: 405-917-1681. Website: www.fcci.org
21. Money Management Software. There are many PC-based software programs designed to help you control and keep track of spending. There are also debt-reduction software programs. Among the more popular budgeting software offerings are: Quicken and QuickBooks Pro, by Intuit; Money Matters Basic and Money Matters Deluxe from Crown Financial Ministries; and Microsoft's Microsoft Money program.

22. www.debtfreelegacy.com is available to provide a host of helpful and encouraging information: testimonies and endorsements, current events and upcoming seminars, powerful articles, and additional tools that will help people achieve true financial freedom and pass on that legacy.

"All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful for those who keep the demands of his covenant. For the sake of your name, O Lord, forgive my iniquity, though it is great. Who, then, is the man that fears the Lord? He will instruct him in the way chosen for him. He will spend his days in prosperity, and his descendants will inherit the land." (Psalm 25:10, NIV)

Note: We are grateful to God for His Word, to these authors, and to every other person who has, or who will, contribute sound financial teaching to the Body of Christ.

CHAPTER 12



"He who ignores discipline comes to poverty and shame, but whoever heeds correction is honored."
(Proverbs 13:18 NIV)

"If you therefore have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous mammon (money) who will enturst the true riches to you?...No servant can serve two masters...you cannot serve God and mammon."

(Quoted from Luke 16 Verses 11 and 13 NAS)

Financial Example # 1

PROJECTED INCOME AND BIBLICAL GIVING - EXAMPLE #1

NAME(S): Bob & Mary Jones

Date: June 20, 2007

Projected Income

INCOME SOURCES:	Amount Paid Monthly	(Mo. x 12) Subtotal for Year	Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Average Monthly Amount
Gross wages: husband	\$ 4,000	\$ 48,000		\$ 48,000	\$ 4,000
Gross wages: wife					
Dividends					
Interest					
Rent (Income less expenses)					
Business Income/"Increase"					
Retirement Funds					
Other					
TOTAL GROSS INCOME:	\$ 4,000	\$ 48,000	\$	\$ 48,000	\$ 4,000

Projected Giving

	Organization	Amount Paid Monthly	(Mo. x 12) Subtotal for Year	Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Average Monthly Amount
10% Tithe	Church	\$ 350	\$ 4,200		\$ 4,200	\$ 350
Freewill Offerings	Missions	\$ 10	\$ 120		\$ 120	\$ 10
Alms (Poor)						
Other Charities	Misc. Charities			\$ 600	\$ 600	\$ 50
Other Charities	United Way	\$ 5	\$ 60		\$ 60	\$ 5
Other Giving						
TOTAL GIVING:		\$ 365	\$ 1,380	\$	\$ 4,980	\$ 415

Once the income is calculated, the next step is to determine where it goes. Begin with giving. Project your giving for the year by considering each organization you support. This can be from specific giving goals, percentages of income, or past giving records. You may want to check your actual giving to date and then project what you plan to give for the rest of the year.

NOTE ON USING THIS FORM: This form will help you arrive at an average monthly amount which is crucial for your spending plan and cash flow management. Record the monthly amount in the first column and then multiply by 12 months for a yearly subtotal. In the third column, record amounts that do not occur every month. Add columns 2 and 3 together to get the total annual amount for column 4. Finally, divide the total annual amount by 12 to get the average monthly amount. Do this for each line item

LIST YOUR ASSETS - EXAMPLE #1

Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones

Date: June 20, 2007

TYPES OF ASSETS

1 . Liquid Assets (easily converted to cash)

Cash on hand	\$ 200
Checking account balance	\$ 1,800
Money market funds	\$
CDs (% interest rate)	\$
Savings (% interest rate)	\$ 5,000
Stocks & bonds	\$
Life insurance cash values	\$ 3,500
Other (describe)	\$
TOTAL Liquid Assets:	\$ 10,500

2. Non-liquid Assets

Home (market value)	\$ 75,000
Land (market value)	\$ 25,000
Net worth (value) of business	\$
Real estate investments (not home)	\$
Jet ski, camper, RV, boats, etc.	\$ 10,000
Automobiles at market value	\$ 20,000
Furniture & personal property (conservative market value)	\$ 10,000
Valuable collections (stamps, coins, etc.)	\$ 3,000
Retirement funds balance	\$ 20,000
Funds due from others (receivables)	\$
Other (describe)	\$
Other (describe)	\$
TOTAL Non-liquid Assets	\$ 163,000

3. Total Assets (1 + 2)

Total Assets (1 + 2)	\$ 173,500
-----------------------------	-------------------

DEBT REPAYMENT SCHEDULE - EXAMPLE #1

NAME(S): Bob and mary Jones

DATE: June 20, 2007

	LENDER	\$ BALANCE	\$ MONTHLY PAYMENT	INT. %	REMAINING PAYMENTS	PAY-OFF DATE
1	Credit Card A	\$4,000	\$67	18.0	300	6/30/2032
2	Credit Card B	\$2,000	\$33	18.0	300	6/30/2032
3	Car Loan	\$7,000	\$307	12.0	36	6/30/2010
4	Parent's Loan	\$3,000	\$50	0.0	60	6/30/2012
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
TOTAL:		\$16,000	\$457			

NOTE ON USING DEBT REPAYMENT SCHEDULE:

This form should include all debts with the exception of a primary home mortgage. The mortgage obligation is a debt and must be included as a liability when you complete the *List Your Liabilities* form. However, the mortgage payment is not included on this form because it will be included in the monthly housing expense category when you complete the *Estimated Monthly Living Expenses* form. If your list of debts exceeds the 15 spaces given, make extra pages. Do not despair, you are on the road to Financial Freedom.

LIST YOUR LIABILITIES - EXAMPLE #1

NAME(S): Bob & Mary Jones

DATE COMPLETED: June 20, 2007

LENDER (CREDITOR)	BALANCE DUE	INTEREST RATE %	PAYMENT SCHEDULE	
			PER MONTH	UNTIL (MO./YR.)
1. Credit Card A	\$ 4,000	18.00%	\$ 67	6/30/2032
2. Credit Card B	\$ 2,000	18.00%	\$ 33	6/30/2032
3. Car Loan	\$ 7,000	12.00%	\$ 307	6/30/2010
4. Mortgage	\$ 80,000	9.00%	\$ 675	6/30/2032
5. *Parent's Loan	\$ 3,000	0.00%	\$ 50	6/30/2012
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				
16.				
17.				
18.				
19.				
20.				
21.				
22.				
23.				
TOTALS:	\$ 96,000		\$ 1,132	

Note: This form should include all debts previously listed on the "Debt Repayment Schedule" plus the home mortgage if applicable. *In the USA, no interest loans may not be legal, but they often occur.

BALANCE SHEET AND NET WORTH STATEMENT EXAMPLE #1

Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones

Date: June 30, 2007

Note on Using this Form: Complete this form using data from your recently completed ***List Your Assets*** & ***List Your Liabilities*** forms. Then, subtract ***total liabilities*** from ***total assets*** & record your NET WORTH.

A. Assets

Liquid Assets: \$10,500

Non-liquid Assets: \$163,000

Total Assets: \$173,500

B. Less: Total Liabilities: (-) -96,000

C. Net Worth: (Total Assets - Total Liabilities) \$77,500

Comments:

ESTIMATED MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES - EXAMPLE #1

Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones

Date: June 30, 2007

Living Expenses Form (Page 1 of 3)		\$ Amount Paid Monthly	Mo. x 12 = Subtotal for Yr.	Amount Paid Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Total Annual Amt. Div. by 12 = Avg. Mo. Amt.
A. Housing						
Mortgage or rent payment	\$ 675	\$ 8,100			\$ 8,100	\$ 675
Insurance for home			\$ 500		\$ 500	\$ 42
Property taxes (not in house pmt.)			\$ 1,500		\$ 1,500	\$ 125
Electricity	\$ 60	\$ 720			\$ 720	\$ 60
Heating	\$ 50	\$ 600			\$ 600	\$ 50
Water	\$ 25	\$ 300			\$ 300	\$ 25
Garbage collection						
Telephone	\$ 50	\$ 600			\$ 600	\$ 50
Cleaning services	\$ 35	\$ 420			\$ 420	\$ 35
Repairs/maintenance						
Improvements & furnishings						
Supplies for home	\$ 10	\$ 120			\$ 120	\$ 10
Other						
TOTAL HOUSING EXPENSES:	\$ 905	\$ 10,860	\$ 2,000	\$ 12,860	\$ 1,072	
B. Food:	\$ 500	\$ 6,000	\$	\$ 6,000	\$ 500	
C. Clothing						
Husband	\$ 25	\$ 300			\$ 300	\$ 25
Wife	\$ 35	\$ 420			\$ 420	\$ 35
Children	\$ 50	\$ 600			\$ 600	\$ 50
TOTAL CLOTHING:	\$ 110	\$ 1,320	\$	\$ 1,320	\$ 110	
D. Transportation						
Auto insurance			\$ 600		\$ 600	\$ 50
Gas & oil & filters	\$ 200	\$ 2,400			\$ 2,400	\$ 200
Repairs/maintenance	\$ 24	\$ 288			\$ 288	\$ 24
Parking	\$ 12	\$ 144			\$ 144	\$ 12
Bus/train/subway						
Other						
TOTAL TRANSPORTATION:	\$ 236	\$ 2,832	\$	\$ 600	\$ 3,432	\$ 286

Living Expenses Form (Pg. 2 of 3)	\$ Amount Paid Monthly	Mo. x 12 = Subtotal for Yr.	Amount Paid Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Total Annual Amt. Div. by 12 = Avg. \$ Mo. Amt.
E. Entertainment/Recreation					
Dining out	\$ 50	\$ 600		\$ 600	\$ 50
Childcare	\$ 15	\$ 180		\$ 180	\$ 15
Newspapers/cable/magazines	\$ 20	\$ 240		\$ 240	\$ 20
Vacation			\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 208
Club dues/fees					
Classes/courses/activities					
Other	\$ 15	\$ 180		\$ 180	\$ 15
TOTAL ENTERTAINMENT:	\$ 100	\$ 1,200	\$ 2,500	\$ 3,700	\$ 308
F. Medical Expenses					
Medical/health insurance	\$ 50	\$ 600		\$ 600	\$ 50
Doctors	\$ 50	\$ 600		\$ 600	\$ 50
Dentists	\$ 10	\$ 120		\$ 120	\$ 10
Medicine	\$ 10	\$ 120		\$ 120	\$ 10
Other					
TOTAL MEDICAL:	\$ 120	\$ 1,440	\$ 1,440	\$ 1,440	\$ 120
G. Insurance					
Life (all family members)	\$ 135	\$ 1,620		\$ 1,620	\$ 135
Disability					
Other					
TOTAL INSURANCE:	\$ 135	\$ 1,620	\$ 1,620	\$ 1,620	\$ 135
H. Children					
School lunches	\$ 35	\$ 420		\$ 420	\$ 35
Allowances	\$ 30	\$ 360		\$ 360	\$ 30
School tuition					
Lessons/special fees/dues	\$ 25	\$ 300		\$ 300	\$ 25
Other					
TOTAL CHILDREN:	\$ 90	\$ 1,080	\$ 1,080	\$ 1,080	\$ 90

Living Expenses Form (Pg. 3 of 3)	\$ Amount Paid Monthly	Mo. x 12 = Subtotal for Yr.	Amount Paid Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Total Annual Amt. Div. by 12 = Avg. \$ Mo. Amt.
I. Gifts/Occasions:					
Christmas			\$ 650	\$ 650	\$ 54
Birthdays			\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ 17
Anniversary			\$ 50	\$ 50	\$ 4
Holidays other than Christmas					
Other			\$ 50	\$ 50	\$ 5
TOTAL GIFTS:	\$	\$	\$ 950	\$ 950	\$ 80
J. Miscellaneous					
Toiletries	\$ 20	\$ 240		\$ 240	\$ 20
Husband (lunches, etc.)	\$ 55	\$ 660		\$ 660	\$ 55
Wife (lunches, etc.)	\$ 35	\$ 420		\$ 420	\$ 35
Dry cleaning/laundry	\$ 35	\$ 420		\$ 420	\$ 35
Pet care (medical/tags/food)					
Beauty/barber	\$ 30	\$ 360		\$ 360	\$ 30
Other					
TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS:	\$ 175	\$ 2,100		\$ 2,100	\$ 175
TOTAL LIVING EXPENSES	\$ 2,371	\$ 28,452	\$ 6,050	\$ 34,502	\$ 2,876

Conclusions or Comments: This was Bob & Mary's first time to estimate monthly living expenses. They were surprised at some categories and will adjust in Example #2.

NOTE ON USING THIS FORM: This form will help you arrive at an average monthly amount which is crucial for your *Flexible Spending Plan* and cash flow management. Record the monthly amount in the first column and then multiply by 12 months for a yearly subtotal. In the third column, record amounts that do not occur every month. Add columns two and three together to get the total annual amount for column four; then divide column four by 12 to get an average expenditure, for each category, per month! Finally, add the average expense for each category (A-J) to arrive at your estimated monthly total living expenses.

Several expenses do not occur monthly, but must be planned for, such as: auto insurance, most gift categories, and home or auto repairs. It is important that these items be placed in the column labeled "Amount Paid Other Than Monthly." In Chapter 7, you will learn how to reserve for these in a "Freedom Account". Please use pencil and no decimal points. Remember, these are your best estimates for an average month. You will learn to adjust and correct, as you use this form several times.

MONTHLY CASH FLOW ANALYSIS - Example #1

Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones

June 30, 2007

Gross Income: \$ 4,000

Less Priority Expenses:

A. Giving (tithes, offerings & alms)	<u>\$ 415</u>
B. Taxes (from payroll records)	<u>\$ 750</u>
C. Debt (total of mo. payments)	<u>\$ 457</u>

Total Priority Expenses: (-) \$ (1,622)

NET SPENDABLE INCOME: (Gross income less A, B, & C =) \$ 2,378

MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES

A. Housing	<u>\$ 1,072</u>
B. Food	<u>\$ 500</u>
C. Clothing	<u>\$ 110</u>
D. Transportation	<u>\$ 286</u>
E. Entertainment/recreation	<u>\$ 308</u>
F. Medical	<u>\$ 120</u>
G. Insurance	<u>\$ 135</u>
H. Children	<u>\$ 90</u>
I. Gifts	<u>\$ 80</u>
J. Miscellaneous	<u>\$ 175</u>

TOTAL MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES: \$ (2,876)

MONTHLY CASH FLOW MARGIN: \$ (498)

(Net Spendable Income minus total (A-J) Living Expenses)

Commitments for Monthly Positive Cash Flow Margin:

A. Savings	<u>\$ _____</u>
B. Retirement	<u>\$ _____</u>
C. Extra Debt Payment	<u>\$ _____</u>
D. Additional Giving	<u>\$ _____</u>

Total Commitments for Positive Cash Flow: \$ _____

Uncommitted Monthly Cash Flow Margin: \$ _____

Comments: There is a serious negative monthly cash flow margin. Immediate corrective action is needed to avoid further debt, and to reduce expenses.

CHAPTER 13



"Everyone who comes to Me, and hears My words, and acts upon them, I will show you whom he is like: he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation upon the rock; and when a flood rose, the torrent burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built."

(Luke 6:47-48 (NAS))

Financial Example # 2

PROJECTED INCOME AND BIBLICAL GIVING - EXAMPLE #2

NAME(S): Bob & Mary Jones

Date: August 31, 2008

Projected Income

INCOME SOURCES:	Amount Paid Monthly	(Mo. x 12) Subtotal for Year	Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Average Monthly Amount
Gross wages: husband	\$ 4,000	\$ 48,000		\$ 48,000	\$ 4,000
Gross wages: wife					
Dividends					
Interest					
Rent (Income less expenses)					
Business Income/"Increase"					
Retirement Funds					
Other					
TOTAL GROSS INCOME:	\$ 4,000	\$ 48,000	\$	\$ 48,000	\$ 4,000

Projected Giving

	Organization	Amount Paid Monthly	(Mo. x 12) Subtotal for Year	Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Average Monthly Amount
10% Tithe	Church	\$ 400	\$ 4,800		\$ 4,800	\$ 400
Freewill Offerings	Missions	\$ 5	\$ 60		\$ 60	\$ 5
Alms (Poor)	Benevolence	\$ 5	\$ 60		\$ 60	\$ 5
Other Charities	United Way	\$ 5	\$ 60		\$ 60	\$ 5
Other Charities			\$ 60			
Other Giving						
TOTAL GIVING:		\$ 415	\$ 4,980	\$	\$ 4,980	\$ 415

Once the income is calculated, the next step is to determine where it goes. Begin with giving. Project your giving for the year by considering each organization you support. This can be from specific giving goals, percentages of income or past giving records. You may want to check your actual giving to date and then project what you plan to give for the rest of the year.

NOTE ON USING THIS FORM: This form will help you arrive at an average monthly amount which is crucial for your spending plan and cash flow management. Record the monthly amount in the first column and then multiply by 12 months for a yearly subtotal. In the third column, record amounts that do not occur every month. Add columns 2 and 3 together to get the total annual amount for column 4. Finally, divide the total annual amount by 12 to get the average monthly amount. Do this for each line item

LIST YOUR ASSETS - EXAMPLE #2

Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones

Date: June 20, 2007

TYPES OF ASSETS

1 . Liquid Assets (easily converted to cash)

Cash on hand	\$200
Checking account balance	\$1,800
Money market funds	
CDs (% interest rate)	
Savings (% interest rate)	\$5,500
Stocks & bonds	
Life insurance cash values	\$0
Other (describe)	
TOTAL Liquid Assets:	\$7,500

2. Non-liquid Assets

Home (market value)	\$75,000
Land (market value)	\$25,000
Net worth (value) of business	
Real estate investments (not home)	
Jet ski, camper, RV, boats, etc.	\$0
Automobiles at market value	\$20,000
Furniture & personal property (conservative market value)	\$10,000
Valuable collections (stamps, coins, etc.)	\$0
Retirement funds balance	\$20,000
Funds due from others (receivables)	
Other (describe)	
Other (describe)	
TOTAL Non-liquid Assets	\$150,000

3. Total Assets (1 + 2)	\$157,500

DEBT REPAYMENT SCHEDULE - EXAMPLE #2

NAME(S): Bob and mary Jones
DATE: June 20, 2007

	LENDER	\$ BALANCE	\$ MONTHLY PAYMENT	INT. %	REMAINING PAYMENTS	PAY-OFF DATE
1	Credit Card A		\$0			
2	Credit Card B		\$0			
3	Car Loan		\$0			
4	Parent's Loan		\$0			
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
TOTAL:			\$0	\$0		

NOTE ON USING DEBT REPAYMENT SCHEDULE:

This form should include all debts with the exception of a primary home mortgage. The mortgage obligation is a debt and must be included as a liability when you complete the *List Your Liabilities* form. However, the mortgage payment is not included on this form because it will be included in the monthly housing expense category when you complete the *Estimated Monthly Living Expenses* form. If your list of debts exceeds the 15 spaces given, make extra pages. Do not despair, you are on the road to Financial Freedom.

LIST YOUR LIABILITIES - EXAMPLE #2

NAME(S): Bob & Mary Jones

DATE COMPLETED: August 31, 2008

LENDER (CREDITOR)	BALANCE DUE	INTEREST RATE %	PAYMENT SCHEDULE	
			PER MONTH	UNTIL (MO./YR.)
1. Credit Card A	\$ -			
2. Credit Card B	\$ -			
3. Car Loan	\$ -			
4. **Mortgage	\$ 80,000	9.00%	\$ 675	6/30/2032
5. *Parent's Loan	\$ -			
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				
16.				
17.				
18.				
19.				
20.				
21.				
22.				
23.				
TOTALS:	\$ 80,000		\$ 675	

****Note: For Simplicity, we left the mortgage balance at \$80,000. In reality, the balance would be slightly lower, due to one year of principal payments.**

Note: This form should include all debts previously listed on the "Debt Repayment Schedule" plus the home mortgage if applicable. *In the USA, no interest loans may not be legal, but they often occur.

BALANCE SHEET AND NET WORTH STATEMENT EXAMPLE #2

Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones

Date: June 30, 2007

Note on Using this Form: Complete this form using data from your recently completed ***List Your Assets*** & ***List Your Liabilities*** forms. Then, subtract ***total liabilities*** from ***total assets*** & record your NET WORTH.

A. Assets

Liquid Assets: \$7,500

Non-liquid Assets: \$150,000

Total Assets: \$157,500

B. Less: Total Liabilities: (-) 80,000

C. Net Worth: (Total Assets - Total Liabilities) \$77,500

Comments:

ESTIMATED MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES - EXAMPLE #2

Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones

Date: August 31, 2008

Living Expenses Form (Page 1 of 3)		\$ Amount Paid Monthly	Mo. x 12 = Subtotal for Yr.	Amount Paid Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Total Annual Amt. Div. by 12 = Avg. \$ Mo. Amt.
A. Housing						
Mortgage or rent payment	\$675	\$8,100			\$8,100	\$675
Insurance for home				\$500	\$500	\$42
Property taxes (not in house pmt.)				\$1,500	\$1,500	\$125
Electricity	\$60	\$720			\$720	\$60
Heating	\$50	\$600			\$600	\$50
Water	\$25	\$300			\$300	\$25
Garbage collection						
Telephone	\$40	\$480			\$480	\$40
Cleaning services						
Repairs/maintenance	\$25	\$300			\$300	\$25
Improvements & furnishings						
Supplies for home	\$10	\$120			\$120	\$10
Other						
TOTAL HOUSING EXPENSES:	\$885	\$10,620			\$12,620	\$1,052
B. Food:	\$425	\$5,100			\$5,100	\$425
C. Clothing						
Husband	\$20	\$240			\$240	\$20
Wife	\$30	\$360			\$360	\$30
Children	\$45	\$540			\$540	\$45
TOTAL CLOTHING:	\$95	\$1,140			\$1,140	\$95
D. Transportation						
Auto insurance					\$600	\$600
Gas & oil & filters	\$100	\$1,200			\$1,200	\$100
Repairs/maintenance	\$12	\$144			\$144	\$12
Parking	\$12	\$144			\$144	\$12
Bus/train/subway						
Other						
TOTAL TRANSPORTATION:	\$124	\$1,488			\$600	\$2,088
						\$174

Living Expenses Form (Pg. 2 of 3)	\$ Amount Paid Monthly	Mo. x 12 = Subtotal for Yr.	Amount Paid Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Total Annual Amt. Div. by 12 = Avg. \$ Mo. Amt.
E. Entertainment/Recreation					
Dining out	\$25	\$300		\$300	\$25
Childcare	\$5	\$60		\$60	\$5
Newspapers/cable/magazines	\$10	\$120		\$120	\$10
Vacation			\$720	\$720	\$60
Club dues/fees					
Classes/courses/activities					
Other	\$10	\$120		\$120	\$10
TOTAL ENTERTAINMENT:	\$50	\$600	\$720	\$1,320	\$110
F. Medical Expenses					
Medical/health insurance	\$50	\$600		\$600	\$50
Doctors	\$50	\$600		\$600	\$50
Dentists	\$10	\$120		\$120	\$10
Medicine	\$10	\$120		\$120	\$10
Other					
TOTAL MEDICAL:	\$120	\$1,440		\$1,440	\$120
G. Insurance					
Life (all family members)	\$35	\$420		\$420	\$35
Disability					
Other					
TOTAL INSURANCE:	\$35	\$420		\$420	\$35
H. Children					
School lunches	\$35	\$420		\$420	\$35
Allowances	\$30	\$360		\$360	\$30
School tuition					
Lessons/special fees/dues	\$25	\$300		\$300	\$25
Other					
TOTAL CHILDREN:	\$90	\$1,080		\$1,080	\$90

Living Expenses Form (Pg. 3 of 3)		\$ Amount Paid Monthly	Mo. x 12 = Subtotal for Yr.	Amount Paid Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Total Annual Amt. Div. by 12 = Avg. \$ Mo. Amt.
I. Gifts/Occasions:						
Christmas				\$360	\$360	\$30
Birthdays				\$120	\$120	\$10
Anniversary				\$50	\$50	\$4
Holidays other than Christmas						
Other				\$24	\$24	\$2
TOTAL GIFTS:	\$	\$	\$	\$554	\$554	\$46
J. Miscellaneous						
Toiletries	\$15	\$180			\$180	\$15
Husband (lunches, etc.)	\$35	\$420			\$420	\$35
Wife (lunches, etc.)	\$20	\$240			\$240	\$20
Dry cleaning/laundry	\$20	\$240			\$240	\$20
Pet care (medical/tags/food)						
Beauty/barber	\$20	\$240			\$240	\$20
Other						
Other						
TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS:	\$110	\$1,320	\$		\$1,320	\$110
TOTAL LIVING EXPENSES	\$1,934	\$23,208	\$	\$3,874	\$27,082	\$2,257

Conclusions or Comments: This was Bob & Mary's first time to estimate monthly living expenses. They were surprised at some categories and will adjust in Example #2.

NOTE ON USING THIS FORM: This form will help you arrive at an average monthly amount which is crucial for your *Flexible Spending Plan* and cash flow management. Record the monthly amount in the first column and then multiply by 12 months for a yearly subtotal. In the third column, record amounts that do not occur every month. Add columns two and three together to get the total annual amount for column four; then divide column four by 12 to get an average expenditure, for each category, per month! Finally, add the average expense for each category (A-J) to arrive at your estimated monthly total living expenses.

Several expenses do not occur monthly, but must be planned for, such as: auto insurance, most gift categories, and home or auto repairs. It is important that these items be placed in the column labeled "Amount Paid Other Than Monthly." In Chapter 7, you will learn how to reserve for these in a "Freedom Account". Please use pencil and no decimal points. Remember, these are your best estimates for an average month. You will learn to adjust and correct, as you use this form several times.

MONTHLY CASH FLOW ANALYSIS - Example #2

Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones

Date: August 31, 2008

Gross Income: \$ 4,000

Less Priority Expenses:

A. Giving (tithes, offerings & alms)	\$ 415
B. Taxes (from payroll records)	\$ 750
C. Debt (total of mo. payments)	\$ -

Total Priority Expenses: (-) \$ (1,165)

NET SPENDABLE INCOME: (Gross income less A, B, & C =) \$ 2,835

MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES

A. Housing	\$ 1,052
B. Food	\$ 425
C. Clothing	\$ 95
D. Transportation	\$ 174
E. Entertainment/recreation	\$ 110
F. Medical	\$ 120
G. Insurance	\$ 35
H. Children	\$ 90
I. Gifts	\$ 46
J. Miscellaneous	\$ 110

TOTAL MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES: \$ 2,257

MONTHLY CASH FLOW MARGIN: \$ 578

(Net Spendable Income minus total (A-J) Living Expenses)

Commitments for Monthly Positive Cash Flow Margin:

A. Savings	\$ 100
B. Retirement	\$ 100
C. Extra Debt Payment	\$ 100
D. Additional Giving	\$ 50

Total Commitments for Positive Cash Flow: \$ (350)

Uncommitted Monthly Cash Flow Margin: \$ 228

Comments: Now that high interest debt has been eliminated, this family has a balanced spending plan and is on the way to paying off the mortgage. They have \$228 per month in uncommitted cash flow and have the freedom to rework their spending plan as needed.

CHAPTER 14



"Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds; for riches do not endure forever, and a crown is not secure for all generations."
(Proverbs 27:23-24(NIV))

Cash Flow Control Example

TRACKING USE OF MONTHLY POSITIVE CASH FLOW MARGIN (FORM CF-2)
"Keeping Track of God's Cash Flow"

Recommendation: Enlarge forms with 11X17 photocopies.

Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones Date Completed: August 31, 2008

For Month: August 2008 Year: 2008

**EXAMPLE B: ONE YEAR AFTER COMPLETION
 BASED ON DATA FROM BOB & MARY JONES'
 CF-1 FORM**

Actual Net Spendable Income:	\$ 2,835
Less Actual (A-J) Living Expenses:	\$ (2,080)
Actual Cash Flow Margin this Month:	\$ 755
Planned CF From Monthly CF Analysis Form:	\$ 578
Temporary Surplus or Deficit () this Month:	\$ 177

Below, Record Daily Transactions & Totals:

Uses For Positive Cash Flow Margin

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	Actual Tot.
<i>"Freedom Acct."</i>																															177	
<i>Ex. Debt Repay.</i>																															100	
<i>Savings</i>																															100	
<i>Extra Giving</i>																															50	
<i>Retirement</i>																															100	
<i>Money Market</i>																															228	
<i>Other ()</i>																																
TOTALS:	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	755		

Step 1: Add each daily column to get a daily total.

Step 4: Add the monthly totals down. The total must equal step 2 total.

Step 2: When the month is complete add the daily (1-31) totals across & record in actual total space

Step 5: To check your calculations, the actual total monthly cash flow must equal the Actual Cash Flow Margin value in the box at the top of this form.

Step 3: Also, when month is complete, add across for each category (example "Freedom Account") and record total in appropriate total space for that category.

Step 6: Now proceed to Form CF-3: Yearly Cash Flow Summary.

Comments/Action Needed: Bob & Mary waited until near the end of the month to use most of their positive cash flow, this gave them some extra reserve funds during the month.

The \$177 temporary surplus was deposited into their special "Freedom Account" checking account for non-monthly, but planned, expenses.

YEARLY CASH FLOW SUMMARY (FORM CF-3)
"Keeping Track of God's Money Annually"

EXAMPLE C

Name(s): Bob & Mary Jones

Date Completed: June 30, 2007

Year: 2007

Actual Summary by Month (From Monthly Cash Flow Control Forms: CF-1 & CF-2)

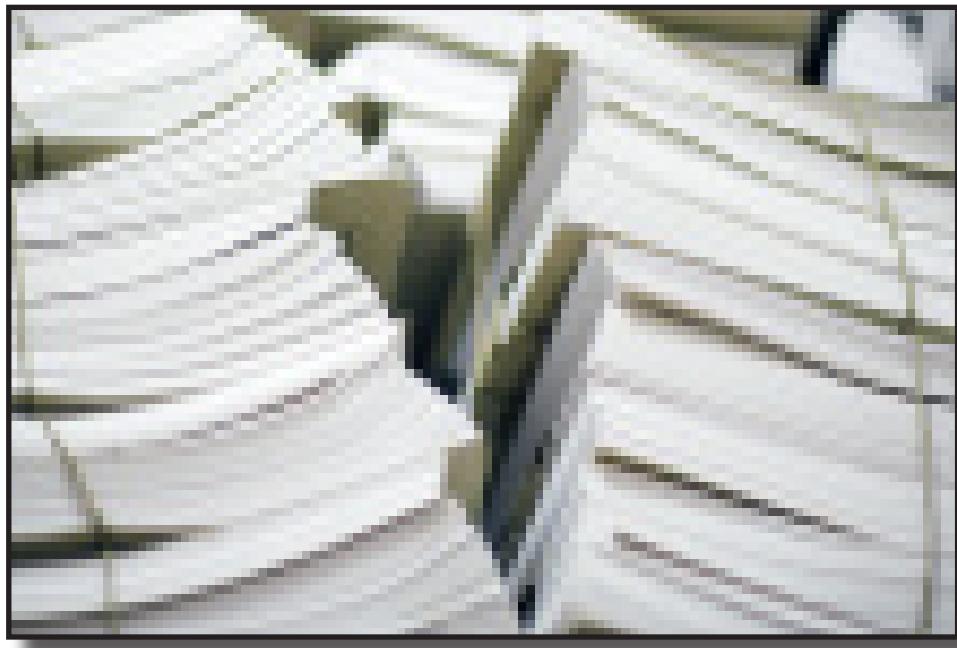
Advice on using this Form: Use a very sharp pencil & have a calculator & eraser handy. Round all values to nearest whole dollar; no decimals.

Net Spending	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Year Total	Year Plan	Diff.
<i>Monthly Income</i>								\$4,000							
<i>Less Giving</i>								-\$415							
<i>Less Taxes</i>								-\$750							
<i>Less Debt Repay.</i>								\$0							
1. Equals Net Spend:								\$2,835							
Living Exps. (A-J)	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Year Total	Year Plan	Diff.
A-Housing								\$885							
B-Food								\$425							
C-Clothing								\$90							
D-Transportation								\$184							
E-Ent./Rec.								\$98							
F-Medical								\$130							
G-Insurance								\$35							
H-Children								\$92							
I-Gifts/SPEC. Occ.								\$35							
J-Miscellaneous								\$106							
2. Sub Total (A-J):								\$2,080							
Cash Flow Uses:	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Year Total	Year Plan	Diff.
"Freedom Account"								\$177							
Ex. Debt Repayment								\$100							
Saving								\$100							
Extra Giving								\$50							
Retirement								\$100							
Money Market								\$228							
Other (Explain)								\$0							
								\$0							
								\$0							
3. Sub Tot. CF Uses:								\$755							
4. TOTAL: (2 + 3 = 4) (4 Should = 1)								\$2,835							

Comments/Action Needed: This is just an example. A family can start their plan in any month. Do not put off starting; any month is a great time to begin!

Advice on using this Form: Use a very sharp pencil & have a calculator & eraser handy. Round all values to nearest whole dollar; no decimals.

CHAPTER 15



"The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty."

(Proverbs 21:5 (NIV))

"Jabez cried to the God of Israel, saying, Oh that you would bless me and enlarge my border, and that your hand might be with me, and You would keep me from evil so it might not hurt me! And God granted his request."

(1 Chronicles 4:10 (Amplified))

Blank Forms

SPECIAL NOTE - RESTRICTED FORM COPY PERMISSION

Owners of this book have granted permission to photocopy these blank forms (only) and only for personal use.

PROJECTED INCOME AND BIBLICAL GIVING

NAME(S): _____

Date: _____

Projected Income

INCOME SOURCES:	Amount Paid Monthly	(Mo. x 12) Subtotal for Year	Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Average Monthly Amount
Gross wages: husband					
Gross wages: wife					
Dividends					
Interest					
Rent (Income less expenses)					
Business Income/"Increase"					
Retirement Funds					
Other					
TOTAL GROSS INCOME:	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

Projected Giving

	Organization	Amount Paid Monthly	(Mo. x 12) Subtotal for Year	Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Average Monthly Amount
10% Tithe						
Freewill Offerings						
Alms (Poor)						
Other Charities						
Other Charities						
Other Giving						
TOTAL GIVING:		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

Once the income is calculated, the next step is to determine where it goes. Begin with giving. Project your giving for the year by considering each organization you support. This can be from specific giving goals, percentages of income or past giving records. You may want to check your actual giving to date and then project what you plan to give for the rest of the year.

NOTE ON USING THIS FORM: This form will help you arrive at an average monthly amount which is crucial for your spending plan and cash flow management. Record the monthly amount in the first column and then multiply by 12 months for a yearly subtotal. In the third column, record amounts that do not occur every month. Add columns 2 and 3 together to get the total annual amount for column 4. Finally, divide the total annual amount by 12 to get the average monthly amount. Do this for each line item

FINANCIAL VISION AND FAITH GOALS

Form may be used for 1 year or longer - you decide for each goal.

Name(s): _____

Date: _____

**Target Dates may vary for each goal.

BIBLICAL GIVING GOALS

Target Period: _____

To pay the 10% tithe plus give & sow _____ % of our increase for offerings & alms.

To make additional gifts each year of _____ to _____.

First Action Step:

First Action Step By (Month & Year):

SAVING GOALS

Target Period: _____

Type of Savings Account

(Do Not Include Investments)

Amount

Annual Return

Date

\$ _____	% _____	_____
\$ _____	% _____	_____
\$ _____	% _____	_____
TOTAL: \$ _____	% _____	_____

First Action Step:

First Action Step By (Month & Year):

EDUCATION FUND GOALS

Target Period: _____

A college or special education fund will exist for each of our children/grandchildren:

Child	Type of College	Approximate Annual Cost	Approximate Total Cost	Goal Amount
_____	_____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

First Action Step:

First Action Step By (Month & Year):

FINANCIAL VISION AND FAITH GOALS

(Page 2 of 4)

DEBT REPAYMENT GOALS

To have paid off the following debts:

Creditors	Total Owed	Target Pay-Off Date
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____

First Action Step:

First Action Step By (Month & Year):

MAJOR PURCHASES

Target Period: _____

To have paid cash for the following major purchases/expenditures: (new home, car, vacations, etc.)

Purchase/Expenditure	Goal Amount	Target Date
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____
	\$ _____	_____

First Action Step:

First Action Step By (Month & Year):

LIFESTYLE GOALS

Target Period: _____

For the next _____ years, to:

- Check One:**
- Maintain Present Level (Giving, Saving & Spending).
 - Enlarge Spending Plan (Giving, Saving & Spending).
 - Cut Back on Lifestyle and Spending Plan.

Strategy/Plan to achieve the lifestyle goal checked above:

First Action Step:

First Action Step By (Month & Year):

FINANCIAL VISION AND FAITH GOALS

(Page 3 of 4)

START A BUSINESS

Target Period: _____

To start a business which will require an approximate investment of: \$ _____

Business Description: _____

First Action Step: _____

First Action Step By (Month & Year): _____

INVESTMENT GOALS

Target Period: _____

To have the following investments (stocks, bonds, mutual funds, real estate, savings, etc.):

Type of Investment	Amount	Annual Return	Date
_____	\$ _____	% _____	_____
_____	\$ _____	% _____	_____
_____	\$ _____	% _____	_____
_____	\$ _____	% _____	_____
_____	\$ _____	% _____	_____
_____	\$ _____	% _____	_____
TOTAL:	\$ _____	% _____	_____

First Action Step: _____

First Action Step By (Month & Year): _____

OTHER GOALS

Target Period: _____

(List, explain & estimate values if applicable)

First Action Step: _____

First Action Step By (Month & Year): _____

FINANCIAL VISION AND FAITH GOALS

(Page 4 of 4)

ESTATE PLANNING:

Target Period: _____

To pass on the following estate (describe basics):

First Action Step:

First Action Step By (month & year):

CONGRATULATIONS:

Once godly goals are established, you are ahead of 95% of the people in the world.

The very next step is to begin taking your First Action Steps to accomplish the goals that God has given you. These may be very small steps. For example, a savings plan goal may start by you opening a savings account with a \$5 deposit. It may seem small, but in reality it is a huge action step -- so don't delay.

MOVE IN FAITH:

You need to move in faith. You prayed and set these goals knowing that God has a wonderful plan for you (Jeremiah 29:11). God has the resources. You need to supply the faith and the diligence to be a good and faithful steward. Then let God be God. He is your pilot and your provider.

REVIEW/REVISE ANNUALLY:

Make a commitment to review your goals at least once a year, maybe at the start of the New Year. Thank God for progress and for breakthroughs! Set new goals, or revise; these are YOUR goals.



Married Couples: Be sure to do your goal setting, and goals review, as a one flesh couple.



SINGLES: Seek a godly, trusted accountability partner.

DEBT REPAYMENT SCHEDULE

NAME(S): _____
DATE: _____

	LENDER	\$ BALANCE	\$ MONTHLY PAYMENT	INT. %	REMAINING PAYMENTS	PAY-OFF DATE
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
TOTAL:						

NOTE ON USING DEBT REPAYMENT SCHEDULE:

This form should include all debts with the exception of a primary home mortgage. The mortgage obligation is a debt and must be included as a liability when you complete the *List Your Liabilities* form. However, the mortgage payment is not included on this form because it will be included in the monthly housing expense category when you complete the *Estimated Monthly Living Expenses* form. If your list of debts exceeds the 15 spaces given, make extra pages. Do not despair, you are on the road to Financial Freedom!

LIST YOUR ASSETS

Name(s):

Date: _____

TYPES OF ASSETS

1 . Liquid Assets (easily converted to cash)

Cash on hand	\$
Checking account balance	\$
Money market funds	\$
CDs (% interest rate)	\$
Savings (% interest rate)	\$
Stocks & bonds	\$
Life insurance cash values	\$
Other (describe)	\$
TOTAL Liquid Assets:	\$

2. Non-liquid Assets

Home (market value)	\$
Land (market value)	\$
Net worth (value) of business	\$
Real estate investments (not home)	\$
Jet ski, camper, RV, boats, etc.	\$
Automobiles at market value	\$
Furniture & personal property (conservative market value)	\$
Valuable collections (stamps, coins, etc.)	\$
Retirement funds balance	\$
Funds due from others (receivables)	\$
Other (describe)	\$
Other (describe)	\$
TOTAL Non-liquid Assets	\$

3. Total Assets (1 + 2)

LIST YOUR LIABILITIES

NAME(S): _____

DATE COMPLETED: _____

LENDER (CREDITOR)	BALANCE DUE	INTEREST RATE %	PAYMENT SCHEDULE	
			PER MONTH	UNTIL (MO./YR.)
1.	\$		\$	
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				
16.				
17.				
18.				
19.				
20.				
21.				
22.				
23.				
TOTALS:	\$		\$	

Note: This form should include all debts previously listed on the "Debt Repayment Schedule" plus the home mortgage if applicable.

BALANCE SHEET AND NET WORTH STATEMENT

Name(s):

Date:

Note on Using this Form: Complete this form using data from your recently completed ***List Your Assets & List Your Liabilities*** forms. Then, subtract ***total liabilities*** from ***total assets*** & record your **NET WORTH**.

A. Assets

Liquid Assets: \$ _____

Non-liquid Assets: \$ _____

Total Assets: \$ _____

B. Less: Total Liabilities: (-) \$ _____

C. Net Worth: (Total Assets - Total Liabilities) \$ _____

Comments:

ESTIMATED MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES

Name(s): _____

Date: _____

Living Expenses Form (Page 1 of 3)		\$ Amount Paid Monthly	Mo. x 12 = Subtotal for Yr.	Amount Paid Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Total Annual Amt. Div. by 12 = Avg. \$ Mo. Amt.
A. Housing						
Mortgage or rent payment						
Insurance for home						
Property taxes (not in house pmt.)						
Electricity						
Heating						
Water						
Garbage collection						
Telephone						
Cleaning services						
Repairs/maintenance						
Improvements & furnishings						
Supplies for home						
Other						
TOTAL HOUSING EXPENSES:		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
B. Food:		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
C. Clothing						
Husband						
Wife						
Children						
TOTAL CLOTHING:		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
D. Transportation						
Auto insurance						
Gas & oil & filters						
Repairs/maintenance						
Parking						
Bus/train/subway						
Other						
TOTAL TRANSPORTATION:		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

Living Expenses Form (Pg. 2 of 3)	\$ Amount Paid Monthly	Mo. x 12 = Subtotal for Yr.	Amount Paid Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Total Annual Amt. Div. by 12 = Avg. \$ Mo. Amt.
E. Entertainment/Recreation					
Dining out					
Childcare					
Newspapers/cable/magazines					
Vacation					
Club dues/fees					
Classes/courses/activities					
Other					
TOTAL ENTERTAINMENT:	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
F. Medical Expenses					
Medical/health insurance					
Doctors					
Dentists					
Medicine					
Other					
TOTAL MEDICAL:	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
G. Insurance					
Life (all family members)					
Disability					
Other					
TOTAL INSURANCE:	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
H. Children					
School lunches					
Allowances					
School tuition					
Lessons/special fees/dues					
Other					
TOTAL CHILDREN:	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

Living Expenses Form (Pg. 3 of 3)	\$ Amount Paid Monthly	Mo. x 12 = Subtotal for Yr.	Amount Paid Other Than Monthly	Total Annual Amount	Total Annual Amt. Div. by 12 = Avg. \$ Mo. Amt.
I. Gifts/Occasions:					
Christmas					
Birthdays					
Anniversary					
Holidays other than Christmas					
Other					
TOTAL GIFTS:	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
J. Miscellaneous					
Toiletries					
Husband (lunches, etc.)					
Wife (lunches, etc.)					
Dry cleaning/laundry					
Pet care (medical/tags/food)					
Beauty/barber					
Other					
Other					
TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS:	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
TOTAL LIVING EXPENSES	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Conclusions or Comments:					
<p>NOTE ON USING THIS FORM: This form will help you arrive at an average monthly amount which is crucial for your <i>Flexible Spending Plan</i> and cash flow management. Record the monthly amount in the first column and then multiply by 12 months for a yearly subtotal. In the third column, record amounts that do not occur every month. Add columns two and three together to get the total annual amount for column four; then divide column four by 12 to get an average expenditure, for each category, per month! Finally, add the average expense for each category (A-J) to arrive at your estimated monthly total living expenses.</p> <p>Several expenses do not occur monthly, but must be planned for, such as: auto insurance, most gift categories, and home or auto repairs. It is important that these items be placed in the column labeled "Amount Paid Other Than Monthly." In Chapter 7, you will learn how to reserve for these in a "Freedom Account". Please use pencil and no decimal points. Remember, these are your best estimates for an average month. You will learn to adjust and correct, as you use this form several times.</p>					

MONTHLY CASH FLOW ANALYSIS

Name(s): _____ Date: _____

Gross Income: \$ _____

Less Priority Expenses:

A. Giving (tithes, offerings & alms) \$ _____

B. Taxes (from payroll records) \$ _____

C. Debt (total of mo. payments) \$ _____

Total Priority Expenses: (-) (\$ _____)

NET SPENDABLE INCOME: (Gross income less A, B, & C =) \$ _____

MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES

A. Housing \$ _____

B. Food \$ _____

C. Clothing \$ _____

D. Transportation \$ _____

E. Entertainment/recreation \$ _____

F. Medical \$ _____

G. Insurance \$ _____

H. Children \$ _____

I. Gifts \$ _____

J. Miscellaneous \$ _____

TOTAL MONTHLY LIVING EXPENSES: (\$ _____)

MONTHLY CASH FLOW MARGIN: \$ _____

(Net Spendable Income minus total (A-J) Living Expenses)

Commitments for Monthly Positive Cash Flow Margin:

A. Savings \$ _____

B. Retirement \$ _____

C. Extra Debt Payment \$ _____

D. Additional Giving \$ _____

Total Commitments for Positive Cash Flow: (\$ _____)

Uncommitted Monthly Cash Flow Margin: \$ _____

Comments (What will you change?):

MONTHLY CASH FLOW CONTROL FORM (CF-1)
 Financial Freedom Plan: "Keeping Track of God's Money"

Name(s): _____ Date Completed: _____ Year: _____

Recommendation: Enlarge form with 11X17 photocopies.

Projected/Plan (From Cash Flow Form)										Actual This Month										Comparison															
Monthly Gross Income					Week 1					Week 2			Week 3			Week 4		Week 5		Month Total		Month Plan		Month Actual		Plus/Minus ()									
Less Total Giving																																			
Less Taxes																																			
Less Debt Repayment																																			
Net Spendable Income																																			
Totals:										Totals:										Totals:															
LIV. EXPENSES: A-J: (See Living Expenses Form)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	Actual Month Total	Month Plan Total	Month Diff.	
A. Housing																																			
B. Food																																			
C. Clothing																																			
D. Trans.																																			
E. Ent/Rec.																																			
F. Medical																																			
G. Insurance																																			
H. Children																																			
I. Gifts/Spec Occ																																			
J. Misc.																																			
Total (A-J):																																			

RECAP MONTHLY DATA

Actual Net Spendable Income: \$ _____
 Less Actual (A-J) Living Expenses: \$ _____
 Actual Cash Flow Margin this Month: \$ _____
 Planned CF From Monthly CF Analysis Form: \$ _____
 Temporary Surplus or Deficit () this Month: \$ _____

Comments/Action Needed: _____

After completing this form, proceed to form CF-2 to display & track your uses of positive cash flow. Note: If CF is Negative or Zero, then form CF-2 will not yet apply: proceed to annual summary form (CF-3).

Advice on Using Form: Only use a very sharp pencil; don't use decimals, instead round-up to nearest dollar; use brackets () to indicate minus numbers; fill in all possible blanks; and recheck math, if possible use a calculator with adding machine tape.

TRACKING USE OF MONTHLY POSITIVE CASH FLOW MARGIN (FORM CF-2)

"Keeping Track of God's Cash Flow"

Name(s): _____ Date Completed: _____

For Month: _____ Year: _____

From Form CF-1 you determined your monthly cash flow margin.
Only if it is positive, use the box to the right to repeat the
"Recap Monthly Data" numbers for CF-1.

Actual Net Spendable Income:

\$ _____ Less Actual (A-J) Living Expenses:

\$ _____ Actual Cash Flow Margin this Month:

\$ _____ Planned CF From Monthly CF Analysis Form:

\$ _____ Temporary Surplus or Deficit () this Month:

Below, Record Daily Transactions & Totals:

Uses For Positive Cash Flow Margin

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	Actual Tot.
Freedom Acct."																																
Ex. Debt Repay.																																
Savings																																
Extra Giving																																
Retirement																																
Money Market																																
Other ()																																
TOTALS:																																

Step 1: Add each daily column to get a daily total.

Step 2: When the month is complete add the daily (1-31) totals across & record in actual total space

Step 3: Also, when month is complete, add across for each category (example "Freedom Account") and record total in appropriate total space for that category.

Comments/Action Needed:

Step 4: Add the monthly totals down. The total must equal step 2 total.

Step 5: To check your calculations, the actual total monthly cash flow must equal the Actual Cash Flow Margin value in the box at the top of this form.

Step 6: Now proceed to Form CF-3: Yearly Cash Flow Summary.

YEARLY CASH FLOW SUMMARY (FORM CF-3)
"Keeping Track of God's Money Annually"

*Recommendation: Enlarge forms with
11X17 photocopies.*

Name(s): _____

Date Completed: _____

Year: _____

Actual Summary by Month (From Monthly Cash Flow Control Forms: CF-1 & CF-2)

Advice on using this Form: Use a very sharp pencil & have a calculator & eraser handy.

Round all values to nearest whole dollar; no decimals.

Net Spending	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Year Total	Year Plan	Diff.
Monthly Income															
Less Giving															
Less Taxes															
Less Debt Repay.															
1. Equals Net Spend:															
Living Exps. (A-J)	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Year Total	Year Plan	Diff.
A-Housing															
B-Food															
C-Clothing															
D-Transportation															
E-Ent./Rec.															
F-Medical															
G-Insurance															
H-Children															
I-Gifts/SPEC. Occ.															
J-Miscellaneous															
2. Sub Total (A-J):															
Cash Flow Uses:	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Year Total	Year Plan	Diff.
"Freedom Account"															
Ex. Debt Repayment															
Saving															
Extra Giving															
Retirement															
Money Market															
Other (Explain)															
3. Sub Tot. CF Uses:															
4. TOTAL: (2 + 3 =4) (4 Should = 1)															
Comments/Action Needed:															

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