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# WHY TALK ABOUT MONEY IN THE CHURCH?

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“It bothers me that pastors talk about money at church,” said a member of a church. His comment made me think.

I suppose some would say, “Christians shouldn’t be talking about money; that’s being materialistic!” However, the Word of God tells us in 1 Corinthians 4:2 that *“it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.”*

The Word teaches us that God owns everything (Psalm 24:1), including what we think of as our own. We are expected to manage faithfully everything He entrusts to us.

How can we do that if no one teaches us God’s way of managing? That makes it imperative to teach it in church.

In the parable of the unfaithful manager, Jesus told a story of a manager who was wasting his boss’s resources. Then, surprisingly, He commended the manager’s shrewdness for using what was available to him in a way that would guarantee him a better future. Jesus was not commending the manager’s dishonesty; he was making the point that we, as “people of the light” should use whatever worldly wealth we have to guarantee a better future in eternity.

Jesus immediately followed His explanation with this statement: *“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”* (Luke 16:10).

Sometimes we overlook our indiscretions because of their small size, thinking they don’t matter that much. Jesus says otherwise.

And sometimes, like the dishonest manager, we rationalize our bad management by thinking no one will know the difference—no one is watching. But people did notice, and bad reports finally reached the owner.

As I travel and speak, many women tell me they don’t know what their husbands are doing with their money. If the wife—the person closest to him—doesn’t know, the pastor won’t know and certainly the deacons won’t!

The lack of accountability for our financial decisions results in a secret world. Dr. Luis Palau says, “The secret can be found in the hidden life (paraphrased).” True character is shown in those moments when we think no one is watching or can find out what we have done.

When we decide to evade taxes (consequently lying and cheating), when we decide to give an “love offering” to a government employee to speed up our process and put us “unofficially” in the front of the line, when we decide to smuggle



through customs the sound equipment we always wanted, when we decide to buy illegally copied music or computer programs because they're cheaper, we reveal our true principles and values. We are placing "our" time and money above our nation's law and even God's law.

It is useless to raise our hands, sing at the top of our lungs, and shout to the whole world that Jesus Christ is the Lord and King of our lives if when we get out of church we do whatever we please.

Paraphrasing Einstein, we will never get out of financial mediocrity unless we start living differently. If we are not faithful with little, who is going to entrust us with much? (Luke 16:11).

Today, more than ever, teaching stewardship is imperative in all our churches. Not doing it means that our Christian families will keep suffering under the yoke of financial slavery, and our churches will continue experiencing the lack of resources that characterize us now.