

Building a Sustainable Leadership Life

Lesson 10: Building a healthy financial world

Welcome to the final session of this roadmap of Building a Sustainable Leadership Life. I'm hoping that you're getting a lot out of this material to help your sustainability over the decades in Christian leadership.

In Session 10 we're going to look at how to build a healthy financial world. Like some of the other sessions here I'm endeavouring to skim across the mountain tops of these areas, stimulate your thinking, get you focussed on some key areas which you can expand through your world. I've picked some key topics and the mountain tops of key topics to help you build a sustainable financial world.

Honour the Lord

Here's a key scripture around this area. Honour the Lord with your wealth - a great proverb from Solomon. Honour the Lord with your wealth and the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge and wisdom and I believe we need to approach our financial world with a heart towards Christ to honour him, to respect him, to admire him for the wealth, whatever level of wealth, is given into your life.

I think you have to position yourself as a Christian leader, as someone who brings their finances, their treasures, their investments, their properties, their cars, their possessions and says Jesus I'm a steward, you're the owner. Help me to honour you in managing my wealth well. I think that position will get you started in the right heart area. Because as Jesus said, you can't serve God and mammon.

Let's look at some pragmatic areas about finance that will make you a sustained Christian leader.

1. Use a budget

First I'd say, use a budget. Know where you spend your money. Track where your expenditure goes, what you spend on household items, what you do in regards to saving, on holidays, on gifts, on housekeeping, on all the various things where your money goes. Track the expenditure of your money. Use wisdom for expenditure and as a good friend of mine Dr Phil Pringle says, use faith for income. Be wise with your expenditure, use a budget.

2. Be a saver

Have an attitude towards money where you're going to save money. Be a saver. Work towards saving 10% of your income. You might be at a stage of life where you think my

goodness, there's no way I can save that much, I'm spending everything I get. Well, start with 1%.

1% of your income, set it aside into a separate account then just watch it accumulate, leave it there, don't touch it, don't spend it, leave it there for 2 or 3 years. It will accumulate and you'll get encouraged that you can save. When you can lift it to 2%, 3%, 4%, 5%. Di and I over our years have gradually become better savers. Now we save more than 10% of our income. That's because we've got the habit going. Start somewhere and build it up.

3. Practice generosity

Be a person who has an open hand with an open heart. Be a tither into the church, give to missions funds, give to building funds, give into honorariums and love offerings, help out needy people, help out poor people, sponsor Compassion kids, have an open heart and an open hand with your finance.

Be known as a generous person. Don't get a reputation for being stingy. People who are generous have, I believe and the Scripture says this, a generous liberal soul and a generous soul will be well watered. I think there's a joy in generosity that you cannot get any other way. There's a joy connected to giving that I think is just part and parcel of being a great Christian leader.

And generosity will keep your heart and spirit free from the love of money which you need to stay free from if you're going to sustain leadership life over the decades.

4. Get out of debt

I'm talking about credit card debt and personal debt. Get out of debt and stay out of debt, get your home loan / mortgage as low as you can as soon as you can. Once you're in debt, the Bible says that the borrower is a slave, a servant, to the lender. When you borrow from someone, a bank or a person, you are their servant. You must serve them. So when you get out of debt, you don't have to serve that lender anymore.

Next steps

So some next steps on building a healthy financial world, or a strong financial world. Again I'm skimming over the mountain tops because I want to give you some key planks that you'll have to deep dive down into to build into your world, but let me stimulate your thinking with this short exposition of having a healthy financial world with these key things.

Set up a budget

If you don't have a budget, establish one. Look at how you're spending, what you're spending. Work it out. It's good for you to know where your money is going. Don't just treat it as one big pool of money that you put money into and pull money out of. Work out where your money is going and that way you can also control your expenditure.

Open a savings account

If you don't have a separate savings account that you put money into to save, open a savings account. You can get very inexpensive online accounts. Open it up and save just 1% of your income. If you can't do that, save 0.5%. Just put a little bit in there and watch the power of accumulation and compound interest.

Lower your debt

If you're in credit card debt, set yourself to pay it off. Also you can save money that you then use to pay off your debt as well. A saving habit can even build into a lowering of debt habit until you wipe that debt off, you control your expenditure. You may even have to cut credit cards up and live with what you've got within your means.

I know these things are tough but I think if you want to be a sustained leader over the decades you have to build a healthy financial world.

Well that's the end of this roadmap. I hope it's been helpful to you in giving you some good ideas of how to build sustainability over the long haul because I want you to last as a Christian leader over the long haul. That over the years, in season and out of season, you will see fruitfulness for all your labours in Christ. God bless you in your leadership life.