

CHRISTIAN MONEY \$ENSE

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Squirming in the Seat

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The best stories in life are the true stories. I recently visited a church where the older members were quite adamant that the pastor should not teach about finances. In their opinion, his annual series on stewardship was too invasive, so they communicated their displeasure - by skipping the meetings and telling their fellow church members why.

Do you like it when your pastor teaches about money? Does the topic make you lean forward with interest or squirm in your seat? Many people are uneasy when their pastor talks about finances. Some people feel guilty because of past financial decisions. Others think the pastor has ulterior motives, namely increasing the offerings and his salary.

There are almost 2,400 verses in the Bible on the use of money. If you believe in expositional preaching, that means your pastor has to leap frog a lot of verses to avoid the subject. Would it shock you to know that God wants pastors to teach about wise stewardship? Through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul had some wise counsel for his young protégé, Timothy.

“Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed” (1 Tim 6:17-19, NASB).

Does God want your pastor to teach on biblical stewardship? Yes, but why? The answer has to do with the seat that you will sit in one day. The Bible makes it clear that each Christian will give an account for his or her deeds done after salvation. This is commonly called the “Judgment Seat of Christ” (2 Cor. 5:10). What type of questions will Jesus ask? Marriage relations? Yes. Internet use? Yes. How I used the money He gave me? Yes.

Christ will reward us for our good deeds done after salvation, but He will also corner us on our selfish deeds. When my deeds are laid bare before the Lord, I may want to squirm because of some of the choices I made. That is why pastors are called to talk about finances. Better to squirm now in the pew while you still have a chance to change things than to squirm at the Judgment Seat when it is too late.

Pastors do us a huge favor when they teach about biblical stewardship. The older church members in the true story above didn't realize that. Their pastor demonstrates his care for them by teaching them how to honor God with their finances.

BBC Foundation can help your church in this area. Call for information on our Stewardship Weekend educational ministry. We want to help you be prepared to give a good account to God.

BBC Foundation has been ministering to churches and individuals regarding biblical stewardship since 1992. Send your questions on finances and stewardship to: BBC Foundation, 538 Venard Rd., Clarks Summit, PA 18411. Phone: (800) 451-8668, website: bbcfoundation.org; e-mail: info@bbcfoundation.org