

## Lesson 1: The Journey Begins

The way most people handle money is in sharp contrast to God's financial principles. In Isaiah 55:8, God says it this way, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways." Since God has chosen to be invisible to us, many people fail to realize how closely He is involved with our finances. Although invisible, He is real, and how we view Him determines how we live. The Bible refers to God by more than 250 names. The name that best describes His involvement in our finances is "Lord" (think Final Authority).

In your journey of learning and applying God's financial principles, you are likely to experience a closer relationship with Him. You are also likely to experience a reduction in debt, an increase in saving and giving, and growing contentment, hope, and confidence about your financial future. God's ways are best, and His Word is powerful! Let the journey begin!

### The Trust Factor

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight." Proverbs 3:5-6

Scripture provides an accurate picture of who God is as well as what He wants for you and from you. This requires you to make a decision. Do you trust Him? Really? It may sound simple, but it's not easy. It is probably the single most important question you will ever ask yourself. You had to answer it at one level when you chose to become a follower of Christ. Now you discover that you will continue to answer it at ever-increasing levels the rest of your life.

In many of our daily decisions God is asking, "Do you trust me? Where are your limits?" Most of us subconsciously draw lines that say I trust you this far, but not way out in the dark where I can't see.

Think about it: how many choices do you have? You can trust:

- The deceptions of the enemy
- Your own judgment
- The crowd
- The wisdom of the Creator

Be like Joshua, who declared his trust when he immortalized the words, "But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

## **Bible Study**

“Who are you...that you forget the LORD your maker, who stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth?” Isaiah 51:12-13

God is Lord of the universe. “Lift your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one, and calls them each by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing” (Isaiah 40:26).

He is Lord of the nations. God established the nations. “He made every nation of men...and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live” (Acts 17:26).

He is Lord of the individual. “All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be” (Psalm 139:16).

God hung the stars in space, fashioned the earth’s towering mountains and mighty oceans, and determined the destiny of nations. Jeremiah observed, “Nothing is too hard for you” (Jeremiah 32:17).

## **Discussion Questions**

1. How do you show your trust in God through the way you live your life?
2. How do you know God cares for you and loves you?
3. What does God have to say about money and riches?
4. Do you handle your finance as if God is Lord over all?

## **Prayer Focus**

Lord, increase my vision of who you really are so I can trust you more and worship you more fully. Lord, please increase my trust in you and my reliance on you.