

# Financial Principles of the Church

*"The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil." 1 Tim. 6:10 (ASV)*

Nothing flows through our hands more rapidly or unpredictably than money. It is the most common cause of marital strife, divorce, and many other difficulties with family, friends, and business. It effects and reflects upon every area of our being; our physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual condition is greatly impacted and often measured by money.

How conservatively or liberally each of us handle our financial affairs may vary, yet every believer is a steward of God's trust and must understand and follow the basic Biblical guidelines outlined below. The successful operation of a Ministerial Trust depends on faithful adherence to these sound financial stewardship principles. Violation of these principles will likely compromise the integrity of the ministry and may constitute mismanagement, malpractice, misappropriation of funds, or embezzlement.

## **1. Understand Stewardship** *"Study to show thyself approved." 2 Tim. 2:15 (Webster)*

Every true believer is a minister; an executive officer of a ministry commissioned by God (Col. 4:17). As a minister of God, you do not own anything. The *Manager* of a Ministerial Trust is merely an agent of its trustee and serves as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the ministry. *Assistant Managers*, also agents of the trustee, aid the *Manager* in administrative duties as delegated by the *Manager*. Such delegation of authority, however, does not supersede the line of succession established by the original Trust Agreement.

Other managing agent positions are *Traveling Missionary Evangelists* and *Overseer/Directors* of the corporation sole trustees. Even when appointed for life, managing agents maintain their positions only through faithful performance of duty. These high-level administrative positions require careful due diligence. Faithful stewards always keep assets and liabilities separated. Strict conservative economy will assure a sufficient debt-free increase for the charitable, educational, scientific, and religious purpose of the ministry.

## **2. Remain Debt Free** *"The borrower is servant to the lender." Prov. 22:7*

The Ministerial Trust is not to go into debt under any circumstances. Debt is simply owing more than you can pay. If you have the money, or some other means to make a fair exchange without a lingering obligation, then pay it. If you do not have adequate funds or other valuable consideration to exchange, then don't make the purchase. That would be a debt. A loan or a pledge may be made if it is backed by uncommitted security as collateral. That is not a debt, it is an investment. Over-commitment on collateral is called pound breach and is a crime.

A Promissory Note or Performance Contract, with terms acceptable to both parties and supported by sufficient security to satisfy the exchange, is a form of just compensation, and not debt. The terms of the note, contract, or agreement must be consistent with all other principles of faithful stewardship. Any form of exchange involves a contract, whether written, verbal, or implied. A contract is an agreement where one party gains at the advantage of another. Fraud is where one party gains at the loss of another by using trickery or deceit. A Ministerial Trust may not engage in fraud.

### 3. Show an Increase *"Behold, I have gained beside them five talents more." Matt. 25:20*

In the parable of the ten talents, two of the servants increased their money by 100% while the third servant did nothing with his. He didn't even try. Because of their wise investments, the two were entrusted with even greater gain, position, and influence. The one with no increase at all was stripped of what little he had and cast out.

Change is inevitable, but growth is optional. If we do not grow consistent with the changes around us, we will automatically decrease by comparison. No decision is a decision to do nothing. Do not bury the resources that are available to you. Put them to work wisely for the increase of the Church to the advancement of the work of God that it may be said of you, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant. . . enter into the joy of thy lord." Matt. 25:21.

### 4. Be Charitable *"Let all your things be done with charity." 1 Cor. 16:14*

"The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." 2 Cor. 9:6. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts 20:35. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon (trust in money as God)." Matt. 6:24. "In tithes and offerings. . . ye have robbed me. . ." Mal. 3:8, 9. "Let him that stole steal no more. . . give to him that needeth." Eph. 4:28. If God can give through you, He can give to you.

"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. . . Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Matt. 25:34-36, 40.

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With every financial transaction all *Elements of Commerce* shall be followed and not one of the *Reasons an Agreement May Be Void* should exist.

#### Essential Elements of Commerce

1. **Grace** (extra time)  
allowing more than is deserved
2. **Mercy** (relief from judgement)  
requiring less than what is just
3. **Clean Hands Doctrine**  
avoid the appearance of evil
4. **Fair Business Practice**  
fair play and reliability
5. **Just Compensation** (win/win)  
equitable consideration
6. **Full Disclosure** (discovery)  
materially complete information
7. **Equal Protection of the Law**  
due process for all
8. **Duty of Care** (due diligence)  
fiduciary duty to check it out
9. **Good Faith Action** (relevance)  
bonafide signature

#### Reasons an Agreement May Be Null & Void

1. **Under Duress**  
unwelcome outside pressure
2. **Coercion** (torture)  
to force or compel against one's will
3. **Intimidation** (implied threat)  
sufficient cause to fear lawlessness
4. **Threat** (groundless warning)  
an unreasonable ultimatum
5. **Fraud** (win/lose) while using trickery or deceit  
one party gains at the loss of another
6. **Lack of Informed Consent** (being mislead)  
lies, half-truths, innuendos, info. withheld
7. **Under the Age of Majority** (not of legal age)  
any minor not yet emancipated
8. **Otherwise Incompetent**  
while drunk, insane, retarded, or asleep
9. **Undue Influence** (wrongful interference)  
any unwarranted imposition