

stewardship

Stewardship

“At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. [3] And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald…“Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.” Revelation 4:2-3,11

Our glorious God and Creator is seated on His throne, ruling from heaven over all humanity. We were created by Him and for Him. All of our life is lived before Him as His stewards. He gives us life, breath, gifts, and purpose, namely to glorify Him.

“He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, [14] in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. [15] He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. [16] For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. [17] And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. [18] And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. [19] For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, [20] and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.” Colossians 1:13-20

We belong to the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, who perfectly rules and carries out the will of His Father. We were created for the Lord Jesus, to serve and glorify Him. We are His ambassadors and stewards.

All of our lives and our resources belong to our God and Lord. We belong to Him. All that we have is given to us by Him so that we might use it to serve and worship and glorify Him. How can we use all of our time, talents and treasures for the glory of our God and King? Let’s spend the month of February thinking about that question. How can all of my calendar be used to serve the King who purchased me? How can all of my treasures be used for the mission of my Lord? How can all of my life be a living sacrifice, offered up to the Creator of all that He might use it for His will and kingdom and glory? All that God gives us we give back to him, as a farmer puts seed in the soil, trusting God to take what we give Him and use it for His glory. We sow and water but God causes the growth of His kingdom, His church, for His glory and for the good of His people.

It’s not enough that each of us would live our lives for His glory and kingdom. We must train the next generation of followers of Christ to also live for His glory as His stewards. Christ is worthy of the worship and service of all of us and of every generation and every people group! May He use these sermons, these stewardship classes, and these study guides to shape us and strengthen us as His stewards!

Nathan for the Growth Guide Team (Toby & Jenni Rainbow wrote the stewardship class section; Lynn Yount edited the whole growth guide; Howard Amland also reviewed the guide and contributed a teaching box; Lana Pustovit published it; Seth Weber did the graphics; Dan Jarms & Brian Sayers contributed the ideas and passages for the sermons).

Schedule

Sermons

February 1	The Call to Stewardship: Love God and Love Your Neighbor
February 8	How To Budget Your Life
February 15	Christlike Generosity

Stewardship Equipping Classes

(Faith Bible Church, Wednesdays, 6:30pm-8:00pm)

February 11	Strategize (Stewardship & Budget)
February 18	Stabilize (Emergency Fund, Insurance, and Debt)
February 25	Save, Invest, Give

Growth Group Meetings

Week of February 1	Discuss the sermon on the call to stewardship
Week of February 8	Attend Stewardship Class on Wednesday, February 11
Week of February 15	Attend Stewardship Class on Wednesday, February 18
Week of February 22	Attend Stewardship Class/Q+A on Wednesday, February 25
Week of March 1	Discuss the sermon from February 15 and the stewardship classes

Information

The Wednesday evening classes will be livestreamed on Faith Bible Church's YouTube channel, so your group can watch it live or later wherever you are meeting.

You can text in questions to be addressed during Q+A by texting this number: 509-553-0773

For more help, fill out a Connect Card or contact Toby at trainbow@fbchurch.org.

For more resources, see the resource section/appendix.

Lesson 1: **The Call to Stewardship - Ambassadors**

Sermon on February 1, 2026

Launching Question

Have you ever entrusted something that was yours to someone else so that they could care for it temporarily? For example, if you have children or pets, did you ever entrust them to someone else to care for them? What are some of the main principles to keep in mind when you are taking care of something that belongs to someone else?

Central Teaching and Application

God is the Creator and Ruler of all, and He is calling us to be the stewards of all His creation by loving Him and loving our neighbor as ourselves.
*Live as God's steward by loving Him and loving your neighbor as yourself.

Revelation 4

1. What do you see about the One seated on the throne in this scene of heaven?

2. What is emphasized in Revelation 4:11 and Psalm 24:1?

Discussion Question

3. If God is the Creator and Ruler of all things and deserves all praise and glory, what is our role in creation? What is our purpose or job as people made in His image?

Deuteronomy 6

4. What do you learn about God from Deuteronomy 6? Make a list of all the truths about God that Moses is emphasizing and teaching here.

5. What does Moses command them to do in this chapter? Make a list of the commands that you see in this chapter.

Discussion Questions

6. Consider what is known as the *Shema* in Deuteronomy 6:4-5. The Lord our God is one. He is the only one. What are some of the things that Moses reminds them that God has done for them as the one and only God, their God?

7. What is the connection between the Lord being one and the command for us to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength?

8. Consider Matthew 22:37-40. What is the connection between loving God and loving your neighbor?

2 Corinthians 5:14-21

9. How does Paul think about himself in regard to other people? What form does his stewardship take? What word does he use?

10. What principles of being an ambassador do you learn from Paul in 2 Corinthians 5?

Application

11. What are some different categories of things that we are accountable to God for as stewards?

12. How does seeing God rightly make you think rightly about your life? How can you renew your view of who God is?

13. How can you grow in loving God with all your heart and soul and mind and strength as His steward?

14. What practical steps can you take to love others well as an ambassador of God? How does knowing God has loved you through Christ empower and shape your love for others?

Prayer Requests

Lesson 2: **Budgeting Your Life - Servants**

Sermon on February 8, 2026

Launching Question

Many wise people have said that your life is the sum of a million small moments, that how we fill the seconds and minutes will in the end have an eternal, lasting result. Do you agree? If this is true, what should we do? What will the result be?

Central Teaching and Application

Christ is our Lord and King, and we are His servants.
*We should live our lives considering His will in each moment, making the best use of our days.

Ephesians 5:15-6:9

1. What commands does Paul give the Ephesians in 5:15-21? Make a list of what you see.

Discussion Questions

2. What does it mean to look carefully at how you are living, seeking to be wise?

3. What does making the best use of the time have to do with the days being evil and seeking to do the will of the Lord?

4. What is the will of the Lord, according to Ephesians 5:18-21?

5. How does Colossians 3:16-17 help us to understand how we can be filled with the Spirit?

6. What does Ephesians 5:22-6:9 teach us about how we can use our lives and our time to serve the Lord?

Application

7. Consider your calendar for the past month. Make a list of the things you spend your free time doing.

8. As you consider how you spend your time, what do you think fits well into the category of wise, doing the will of the Lord, Spirit-filled living?

9. What would you say is unwise and is not doing the will of the Lord? Is there something that is not direct sin, but it is keeping you from making the best use of the time?

Productivity

"Productivity is effectively stewarding your gifts, talents, time, energy, and enthusiasm for the good of others and the glory of God." Tim Challies defines productivity this way in his helpful book *Do More Better - A Practical Guide To Productivity.* If you are wanting to work more on this category of effectively stewarding your life, he has some great resources at https://www.challies.com/books/do-more-better/ including a productivity worksheet that you can download and fill out. Of course, reading his book would be an excellent way to work on this, but even if you do not read the book, the tools at the bottom of his webpage can be helpful in evaluating what your main responsibilities are and what the related tasks and roles are under each responsibility. As you identify these, you can better plan and prioritize your calendar and schedule for faithful and fruitful living as a servant and steward of the Lord.

Psalm 90

10. Consider in this passage how eternal God is and how fleeting and short our days are. Write a prayer that expresses your heart in light of being a servant of God with all your days and hours and minutes.

Prayer Requests

Lesson 3: **Generous like Jesus - Stewards**

Sermon on February 15

Launching Question

What are some of the benefits you have seen in your own life when you have been able to be generous with others in some way?

2 Corinthians 8-9

1. What do you learn from the example of the Macedonian churches in 2 Corinthians 8:1-7?

2. What motivations and principles related to giving do you observe in 2 Corinthians 8:8-15?

3. What evidence of genuine love do you see described in 2 Corinthians 8:16-24?

4. What aspects of giving do you see exemplified in 2 Corinthians 9:1-5?

5. Make a list of the principles about giving that Paul teaches in 2 Corinthians 9:6-15.

Tithing vs Generous Giving by Howard Amland

Some Christians believe that as New Testament believers, the responsibility to tithe (give 10% of your earnings) is not specifically required because we are not under the Mosaic Law but under grace. However, we actually bear a much greater responsibility for generous giving, especially when we acknowledge God owns everything — not just the "first fruits" (or 10%)! Therefore, since we have been transformed by Christ Jesus, we are called to a much higher level of giving that is not motivated by law or obligation. Our giving is a vital part of our worship and demonstrates our love to God through financially supporting His church and furthering the spread of the gospel locally and globally. We have a weekly offering time in our Sunday services (even though many give online) because our purpose is to worship our Great Provider rather than simply the passing of collection plates.

If you're new or unsure about how much, how often, or why to give financially, please consider Paul's encouragement to give generously in his writings to the Corinthians. In 1 Corinthians 9:13, he refers to the tithe which supported the temple priests and workers and then in 9:14 he says, "In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel." Therefore, even though a specific percentage is not stated within these verses, we can infer from Paul's teaching here that ten percent is a good starting point for regular giving to the church.

The best example we have for how Christians should financially support God's work on earth is found in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9. The Macedonian churches in Berea, Philippi, and Thessalonica experienced severe persecution, hardship and poverty and yet they pleaded with Paul to share in helping the Jerusalem saints in their time of need. Paul cites the Macedonians' exemplary giving to encourage the Corinthians to give similarly as God blesses and provides. Motivated by God's grace, the Macedonian Christians gave joyfully, voluntarily, proportionately, sacrificially, and generously to their local churches and also to the impoverished in Jerusalem.

At Faith Bible Church, let us strive to emulate the Macedonians model since we are blessed and privileged to give generously as we worship and serve our Lord together.

Discussion Questions

6. What did Jesus do to become poor? How does Jesus becoming poor so that we might become rich through his poverty relate to our own generosity to love others?

7. 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 describes how those who sow bountifully will reap bountifully. Based on the context, what does he mean by this? What kinds of bountiful reaping should followers of Jesus expect when they sow bountifully?

Biblical Principles Related to Giving

This section is quoted from the Stewardship Class 3 from the giving section, written by Toby Rainbow.

"While no specific amount is prescribed in the New Testament, Scripture does provide guidance on how to approach giving. Giving to the local church should be regular, proportional, and not under compulsion; with a grateful, surrendered heart that trusts God's provision.

- **First**: Proverbs 3:9 – "Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce."
- **Regular and Proportionate**: 1 Corinthians 16:2 – "On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper."
- **Sacrificial**: Luke 21:1-4 – Jesus explicitly praises the widow because her gift was sacrificial, not because of the amount.
- **Cheerful**: 2 Corinthians 9:7 – "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

Haggai 1:2-11

8. Why is the Lord rebuking His people who have returned to the land of Israel in this section of Haggai?

9. What principles do we learn from the Lord's rebuke and exhortation related to providing for His worship in His house?

Discussion Question

10. How does the building of God's house for Israel, the temple, relate to our situation now in the church age, where God dwells in His people, not in a building? What would be the contemporary application of these principles?

Application

11. What are your convictions about giving to the Lord?

12. How have these passages and this sermon challenged or shaped your convictions?

Prayer Requests

STEWARDSHIP CLASS

Written by Toby & Jenni Rainbow

Introduction

The ultimate goal in the life of the believer is to glorify God. Everything we do should point people to the truth of the gospel and to display our faith. One of the most visible ways that our priorities are displayed is through the use of our resources. Finances can be a challenging area in the life of a believer because finances are the practical means by which many of our sinful desires can be pursued. It takes ongoing and intentional effort to manage this area of our lives. There are two main things that influence the way people manage their resources. The first is an accurate biblical perspective of stewardship. The second is the practical knowledge to inform and enable the believer to execute on their convictions. This class is intended to foster an accurate biblical perspective of earthly resources and provide the practical knowledge to help live that out.

Almost all major financial missteps occur due to a lack of information and/or perspective. The desire of this class is to help establish an understanding of biblical stewardship that will encourage an effective management of your resources for God's glory. There is great joy and freedom that comes with healthy financial management, and we appreciate the opportunity to partner with you on that journey.

We will be covering three key elements of financial management:

- Strategize (Stewardship & Budget)
- Stabilize (Emergency Fund, Insurance, and Debt)
- Save, Invest, Give

Stewardship Class 1 – **Strategize**

Stewardship

Definition: Oxford Dictionary and Google's AI summary says…"the job of supervising or taking care of something, such as an organization or property," emphasizing the responsible management and care of resources, assets, or even people entrusted to one's charge, rather than ownership. It's about acting as a caretaker ensuring things prosper or remain healthy over the long term.

We noted in the introduction that the critical elements of financial management are perspective (understanding) and knowledge. Biblical stewardship is managing what God has entrusted to us for His glory ensuring maximum effectiveness. A correct understanding of stewardship will help you set biblical priorities and will establish thought patterns that motivate you to think, plan, and act with eternal purposes. As believers, we need to have a long-term (eternal) perspective and strive to use our resources to impact things that neither moth nor rust will destroy (Matthew 6:20). The following elements are critical for a proper understanding of biblical stewardship:

1. God created everything and as Creator, He owns everything: our money, time, and possessions. They are not our own. Even the talents and abilities that help us earn and purchase worldly possessions are gifts from Him.
    - To the LORD your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. (Deuteronomy 10:14)
    - The world is mine, and all that is in it. (Psalm 50:12)

2. We have been entrusted with His resources to manage effectively for His glory.

3. The purpose of our lives is to glorify God.
    - Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth, everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory. (Isaiah 43:6-7)
    - So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. (1 Corinthians 10:31)

4. Financial decisions display our motivations and show our trustworthiness. Every financial decision is an opportunity to glorify God. Our desire for worldly pleasures often influences our financial decisions.
    - So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own? (Luke 16:11-12)

Budgeting (Biblical Perspective)

1. Without a budget, the result will most likely be inconsistency and inefficiency with your money.
2. A budget is a reflection of your priorities, a snapshot of your values. It should reflect an eternal perspective.
3. A budget is how we take what God has given us to steward and formally plan out how we will use it to glorify Him. This is how we turn our words into action. We turn our theoretical priorities into ones we live out.
4. The material things of this earth are temporary and will not last, but what we do for Christ and the gospel will last for eternity (Matthew 6:19-20).
5. The budget is a tool that helps fight our natural desires for worldly pleasures by setting limits and establishing accountability for how we spend (Matthew 6:24).

Budgeting (Practical Knowledge)

A budget is simply deciding how you are going to spend your money before you spend it. It takes thought and planning and lots of practice but should produce intentionality and consistency in how your resources are spent in order to accomplish your desired outcome. A budget is not evaluating how you have already spent your money to see how things look.

- Ideally, budgets should be established and then revisited/updated regularly. It is often done as income is generated.
- All income should be allocated to a category (giving, saving, expenses).
- Budgets are fluid; they will change as life changes.
- All members of the household need to understand the budget, and (if married) both spouses should have equal input. Kids can also be involved in this, as it is good for them to know that money is finite.
- Your budget is a reflection of your values, so use your budget to build the priorities that you want your household to have.
- It can be hard to know what expense amounts are reasonable. We have included some guidelines in the budget example.

Priority Example: Each of these families spends the same amount each month. What are the top priorities for each family based on their budget?

Family 1	Family 2	Family 3
• Mortgage: $1200 • Home Up-Keep: $50 • Yard/Landscaping: $25 • Groceries: $500 • Dining: $100 • Insurance: $475 • Car Payment 1: $700 • Car Payment 2: $550 • Gas: $800 • Entertainment: $1200 • Media/Streaming: $350 • Vacation: $0 • Giving: $50	• Mortgage $1200 • Home Up-Keep: $50 • Yard/Landscaping: $25 • Groceries: $1500 • Dining: $1550 • Insurance: $275 • Car Payment 1: $0 • Car Payment 2: $0 • Gas: $300 • Entertainment: $50 • Media/Streaming: $50 • Vacation: $0 • Giving: $1000	• Mortgage: $3250 • Home Up-Keep: $250 • Yard/Landscaping: $225 • Groceries: $500 • Dining: $100 • Insurance: $275 • Car Payment 1: $0 • Car Payment 2: $0 • Gas: $300 • Entertainment: $50 • Media/Streaming: $50 • Vacation: $1000 • Giving: $50

#1 _____ _____ _____

#2 _____ _____ _____

Class Questions

1. Do you believe your current budget (or spending) is an accurate reflection of your desire to glorify God?

2. What makes a budget glorifying to God?

3. What would need to change in order for your budget or spending to be glorifying to God?

4. What do you do, or what can you do, to encourage a biblical perspective of money in your household?

5. How would you describe your current budget/spending?

6. How does affirming that God owns everything and we are simply managers or stewards change the way we view and consume our resources?

Homework

- Pray daily for God to give you a heart of stewardship, a desire for eternal purposes, and the discipline to live those out practically.

- For the next session, if you have a budget, review it and evaluate how well it reflects the priorities that you want your household to have. If you don't have a budget, start the process of building one. Reviewing the last few months of spending using your bank statements can help give an understanding of spending and provide a starting point to building your budget numbers.

Review Questions from Session 1

- How does your budget look? Is it current and a reflection of your values?
- Do you have a plan to apply and encourage stewardship in your household?
- What is the biggest hurdle that keeps you from maintaining, or following, a budget?

Stewardship Class 2 – **Stabilize**

Emergency Fund, Insurance, and Debt

Having an eternal perspective and embracing biblical stewardship means that we desire to manage the resources God has given us to the best of our abilities, allowing us to have the greatest impact with those resources. Emergencies, major events, and debt can often cripple a household financially, or materially alter a financial plan, if you are not adequately prepared. This section is intended to provide guidance that will help minimize or mitigate the impact of these events on your finances. Bad things will happen in life, and we should try to be as prepared as possible.

Emergency Fund (Perspective)

1. One of the greatest examples of planning ahead is the story of Joseph (Genesis 41:35-36).
2. Scripture encourages planning and calls out the foolishness of a lack of planning (Luke 14:28-30).

Emergency Fund (Knowledge)

1. If you don't already have an Emergency Fund, the very first step in your financial plan should be to set aside between $500 and $1,500 depending on your income level.
2. Once established and debt has been eliminated, we recommend building the emergency fund to cover 3-6 months of expenses.
3. An emergency fund should be easily accessible when needed, but it should be kept separately from normal funds used for normal expenses (usually a savings or money market account). An emergency fund is not an investment, so availability and stability should be prioritized over getting a high rate of return.

Insurance (Perspective)

1. Scripture speaks strongly about our need to take care of our family. Insurance is a means to reduce the risk of major financial events that can prevent us from doing that well (1 Timothy 5:8).
2. Insurance helps ensure that if we harm others, they are appropriately compensated (Exodus 21:33).

3. Scripture has serious warnings about not repaying our debts. Insurance reduces the chances that events occur that prevent us from being able to repay our debts (Psalm 37:21).
4. Some insurance fulfills legal requirements from the government (Romans 13:1).

Insurance (Knowledge)

Insurance plays a critical role in personal financial planning by transferring risk from individuals to insurers. The goal is not simply to purchase policies but to understand which risks pose the greatest threat to financial stability and how to manage them wisely. We want to obtain insurance that fits into our current financial plan (premiums/cost) and provides coverage that adequately reduces the financial impact of unique life events. We recommend utilizing an insurance agent to help you navigate this topic and ensure your policies and coverage are appropriate.

Appendix 1 outlines the primary types of insurance and provides guidance on how people can determine what kinds of coverage they need and how much. Here are the main types of insurance and some high-level considerations for each of them. Appendix 1 has more detailed technical information.

1. **Health Insurance** - Protects against high medical costs caused by emergencies or ongoing medical care needs. Plans vary widely in deductibles, premiums, and networks.

2. **Auto Insurance** - Covers vehicle-related damage, injuries, and liability. It is important to understand the differences between liability, collision, and comprehensive protection.

3. **Homeowners and Renters Insurance** - Protects property and personal belongings; includes liability coverage. Homeowners insurance covers both the structure and belongings; renters insurance covers belongings only.

4. **Life Insurance** - Provides financial support to dependents after death. The need varies based on time of life and family makeup. Term life insurance is affordable and suitable for most families.

5. **Disability Insurance** - Replaces income if you cannot work due to illness or injury. Long-term disability coverage is critical, especially for a single-income household.

6. **Umbrella (Liability) Insurance** - Provides extra liability coverage beyond home and auto policies and protects against major lawsuits and large claims.

It’s important to note that proper insurance is never a waste of money, even if we never have to use it.

Slay Debt

Scripture condemns the poor or ineffective use of resources (Matthew 25:26-27) and promotes the wise use of resources. Debt is a very prominent way to restrict our ability to make financial decisions. Debt decisions often commit resources for long periods, reducing our flexibility and taking away the opportunity to make other decisions over time.

Debt (Perspective)

1. The Bible doesn't say that it's a sin to borrow, but it does give many warnings about the dangers of debt (Proverbs 22:7).
2. Serious warning about the non-payment of debt (Psalm 37:21).
3. Serious warning about co-signing a loan (Proverbs 17:18).
4. Debt can be a warning sign of a heart idol: <u>It may be an indicator that you desire something so much that you are unwilling to wait until you have the resources to acquire it.</u>

Debt (Knowledge)

Debt can be defined as money that is owed to another person. It is the practice of borrowing money from someone else for something that we want right now but don't have the cash to pay for it outright. For some people, their credit score is a driver of their financial decisions. While a credit score is important for some key life activities, like purchasing a home, a credit score is not an indicator of financial success. It is a measure of how well you pay your debts. It does not consider how much money you have saved or invested, only how much credit you have available, how much outstanding debt you have, and how well you make payments on your debt. If you inherited 10 million dollars tomorrow, your credit score would not change. It should not be the main driver of your financial decisions.

1. **Types of Debt – Not all debt is equal**
    - Consumer Debt – Credit Cards, Payday Loans
        - Credit cards are not always a bad choice, but they require wisdom and self-control. It's important that you are honest with yourself and avoid credit cards if you have a tendency to misuse them. You don't "feel" the spending as much with a credit card because it doesn't immediately hit your bank account, so they most often lead to higher spending. If you don't pay them off every month, they are probably having a negative impact on your finances.
        - The average American has $6,500-$7,000 in credit card debt. The average interest rate is 23% and the interest paid in 2025 was over $160 billion. Credit card companies are winning and they can be very dangerous if not used with discernment and self control.
        - Credit Card "Traps"
            - "I use them as an emergency fund"
            - "I use them for the point system / airline miles"
            - "I pay them off every month"
            - "It's a good way to teach young adults how to handle money"
            - "It will help with my credit score"

- Personal Loans – Car, Boat, RV
    - Automobiles are the highest cost asset you purchase that will lose value, often fairly quickly.
- Mortgage Debt – Home Loan
- Home Equity Line of Credit (HELOC)
- Student Loans
- Small Business Debt
- Income Generating Debt – Rental Property, Rental RV, Uber Vehicle

2. **Getting out of Debt**

   There is only one way to get out of debt: Pay off your debts. Unless you happen to have the money sitting around (or inherit it), you will need to bring in more money than you spend. There are only two variables in the debt payoff equation: income and expense. Income – Do you need a side hustle or a higher paying job? Do both spouses need to work for a while? Should you pause retirement saving or change the withholding on your W-4?

   - Expense – What expenses can you eliminate or reduce (temporarily or permanently)?
   - "Snowball" – Start with the smallest debt and roll the payment to the next debt after it's paid off. The advantage of this is encouragement. It helps you make progress more quickly. If you have adequate motivation, paying off the highest interest rates first can be a viable option.
   - Commitment - The only way to be successful, especially when debt is significant, is to be committed to the plan and willing to sacrifice in the short term for the long-term benefit.

Purchases (Perspective)

Scripture calls out the risks associated with possessions and comfort (Luke 12:15, 1 John 2:16).

Purchases (Knowledge)

1. Wants vs. Needs
2. Decision Making
    - Wait before you purchase
    - Seek wisdom from a trusted source prior to the purchase
3. Negotiating – This is an often-missed opportunity when purchasing items. The American culture does not barter as a common practice, but in most of the world this is a day-to-day activity.

Class Questions

1. What impact have financial emergencies had on your household?

2. Which types of insurance do you not have, have but don't need, or need to evaluate coverages?

3. What is the main motivation for your household to have debt (what has gotten you into debt)?

4. Have you experienced an instance where your debt has had an impact on your ability to give, serve, or respond to God's leading? If so, what was it?

5. If you have no debt, that is the most significant benefit to being debt free? If you have debt, what is your biggest motivation to get out of debt?

Homework

- Review your insurance coverages and determine if they are appropriate and meet all your needs.

- If you have debt that is impacting your ability to give or serve, make a plan for how you will pay off that debt. Consider seeking wise counsel from someone at Faith for encouragement and help with doing this.

Review Questions from Session 2

- Have you reviewed your current insurance coverages? What did you discover?
- Is there any additional information you need or any topics from the last session that you need help understanding or pursuing?
- What is your greatest hurdle in avoiding debt and making wise purchases?
- Does your household have any guidelines around when/how to make major purchases?

Stewardship Class 3 – **Saving, Investing, and Giving**

The first two sessions were designed to encourage a biblical understanding of our resources. The sessions were also designed to help inform the practical aspects of managing those resources. All of the information was designed to help get you into a financial position that enables saving, investing, and giving. The effective stewardship of God's resources usually results in a greater ability and freedom to make decisions about how to spend those resources. Saving can provide us with greater opportunity to help others and maintain financial stability in our lives, but it must be done with a humble heart that desires to serve and honor Christ. The key to saving is a focus on a long-term perspective and commitment to sacrifice now in order to accomplish your long-term goals.

Saving (Perspective)

Ron Blue says it well when he states that the only way to be financially successful is to live on less than you make and do it for a long time.

1. Scripture encourages the wisdom of saving (Proverbs 21:20).
2. We are encouraged to save while resources are available (Proverbs 6:6-8).
3. There are clear warnings about putting our trust or hope in our resources (Proverbs 11:28) and cautions against pride (1 Timothy 6:17).

Savings (Knowledge)

Key aspects of savings are typically for:

1. Emergency Fund (Covered in Session 2)
2. Saving for larger purchases - Financing purchases has become an accepted method for purchasing almost any kind of item or experience, including TVs, pets, and vacations. Saving up

and paying cash for items eliminates the payment of interest and is a more effective way of acquiring anything. It takes patience and self-discipline and often requires delayed gratification for financial benefit. A $25k car financed over 6 years at 7% will add over $5k in interest.

3. Establishing extra funds for giving and generosity

It can be a great joy to have money set aside for giving so that you can provide assistance when you see someone in need, without causing significant negative impact to your financial plan or position. There is an opportunity to display brotherly love and impact other people's lives when we are able to meet the practical needs of others.

Retirement / Investing (Perspective)

1. Scripture encourages the idea of diversity (Ecclesiastes 11:2, Proverbs 28:20). Diversity reduces the risk of major losses by not putting all your eggs in one basket.

2. We are encouraged to responsibly use what we've been given (Matthew 25:14-30). If we want to be good stewards of the resources that God has given us, we need to be responsible in how we manage the money we acquire and save.

Investing / Retirement (Knowledge)

1. **Tax Consequences** – The tax-related impacts on investment options are very important to understand.
2. **Investment Types** – Names like IRA, 401k, 403b describe the tax treatment of those investments, but you have a variety of investment options that can be used "inside" of an IRA or other tax-related investment account. See Appendix 2 for more detailed information on investment types.
3. **Hard Assets** (Property, precious metals, collectables) – Can be good long-term investments and may have ongoing cost and cash flow considerations (for rentals, property).
4. **Matching Options** - Take advantage of any "matching" that your employer provides.
5. **Compounding Interest** – Time is critical when investing. Investing early, even in small amounts, makes a monumental difference in the long term. See the example in Appendix 2 that describes the power of compounding interest.
6. **Inflation** - Inflation is the gradual increase in prices over time, which erodes the purchasing power of money and reduces the long-term value of the dollar. As inflation rises, each dollar buys fewer goods and services, meaning that money held in cash or low-return assets steadily loses real value. Over long periods, even modest inflation can significantly diminish wealth, which is why investments that historically outpace inflation—such as stocks, real assets, or inflation-protected securities—play a critical role in long-term financial planning.

Tithing/Church Giving (financially)

Tithing is part of an Old Testament mandate of giving their “first fruits” to support the Levitical priesthood, as an act of worship and to help the poor. A tithe (tenth) was collected for the priests and Levites (Numbers 18:24), another for the sacred festival (Deuteronomy 14:23) and another for the orphans, widows and poor (Deuteronomy 14:28-29). The first two were annually given and the last was given every three years, averaging to 23-24% a year.

A tithe is not specifically commanded in the New Testament in the same way it was in the Old Testament. While the ceremonial law ended with Christ’s fulfillment of the Law, the principle of participating in the work of God through financial giving to the local church remains. Giving of time and talents is not the same as financial giving. Those are a vital part of the life of the believer, but they do not substitute for giving to meet the practical needs of the local church. There are many aspects of giving that are valuable to the believer and address other commandments in Scripture.

1. As a member of a local church, giving is a commitment to and participation in meeting the practical needs of the Church.
2. Giving to the local church is an acknowledgement of God’s ownership (stewardship) by giving back what He has given us.
3. Giving to the local church helps believers participate in our commanded role to “love one another” and to help take care of those in the church (Acts 2:45).

While no specific amount is prescribed in the New Testament, Scripture does provide guidance on how to approach giving. Giving to the local church should be regular, proportional, and not under compulsion; with a grateful, surrendered heart that trusts God’s provision.

- **First**: Proverbs 3:9 – “Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce.”
- **Regular and Proportionate**: 1 Corinthians 16:2 – “On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper.”
- **Sacrificial**: Luke 21:1-4 – Jesus explicitly praises the widow because her gift was sacrificial, not because of the amount.
- **Cheerful**: 2 Corinthians 9:7 – “Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

Generosity

God is a generous giver. Generosity is a byproduct of a changed heart. Because God has granted us the ultimate gift, forgiveness through the sacrificial death of His only Son, we should be generous with the resources He has given us. Generosity requires us to prioritize others and de-prioritize the things that can fulfill our worldly pleasures.

Beyond giving to the local church, generosity is an excellent way to show the world the love of Christ and to be a light to everyone around us. Having resources available so that we can be generous when an opportunity arises is a great goal for Christians to consider as they manage their finances.

Other ways to give and be generous:

- Missionaries (Global partners)
- Social services in the community
- Christian education
- Other biblical programs and causes
- Hospitality

Class Questions

How does savings align with the priorities in your household? What have you done within your budget and spending to help yourself be able to save?

1. Why do you save – wise preparation, fear of the future, or desire for control?

2. Does saving go against Scripture's call to not worry about tomorrow?

3. How would you describe your giving? Is it first, regular, proportional, sacrificial, and cheerful?

4. If you aren't giving in the way you desire, what are the things that are hindering you from fulfilling that desire?

5. Do you give in a way that demonstrates trust in God's provision or do you give only after all your wants and needs are met?

6. What steps can you take to free up time and resources with the purpose of serving/loving others?

Homework

- Take time to talk about your convictions related to giving and generosity with your spouse or a mentor.

- Set a goal for a way you want to grow in faithful stewardship and seek help and accountability with following through on that goal.

Appendix 1 – **Insurance**

Health Insurance

Health insurance is one of the most essential forms of coverage because medical expenses are both unpredictable and potentially catastrophic. Plans vary widely in premiums, deductibles, copayments, and provider networks.

Key considerations

- Budget vs. coverage trade-off: Lower premiums often mean higher out-of-pocket costs.
- Chronic conditions or medications: Individuals with ongoing medical needs should prioritize broader coverage.
- Emergency coverage: Ensure access to urgent and specialist care.
- Health Savings Accounts (HSAs): A Health Savings Account (HSA) is a tax-advantaged account available to individuals enrolled in a High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP), designed to help pay for medical expenses while also offering long-term savings benefits. Contributions to an HSA are made with pre-tax dollars or are tax-deductible, grow tax-free, and can be withdrawn tax-free for qualified medical expenses, giving HSAs a unique tax advantage. Funds roll over year to year and can be invested, allowing the account to function as both a healthcare fund and a supplemental retirement savings vehicle. When deciding whether to open an HSA, individuals should consider their overall health, ability to cover the higher deductible of an HDHP, expected medical costs, and tax situation. HSAs tend to be most beneficial for people with relatively predictable or lower healthcare expenses who want to reduce taxes and build long-term savings, but they require financial discipline to manage out-of-pocket costs effectively.

Auto Insurance

Most states require at least liability insurance, which covers damage or injury caused to others. Comprehensive and collision coverage protect the policyholder’s own vehicle.

Key considerations

- State minimums are often inadequate: Liability limits should be high enough to protect personal assets.
- Vehicle value: Newer or financed vehicles usually require comprehensive and collision coverage.
- Driving habits and location: Higher risk of accidents or theft may justify more coverage.

Homeowners or Renters Insurance

Homeowners insurance covers the structure, personal belongings, and liability for accidents occurring on the property. Renters insurance covers personal belongings and liability, but not the building.

Key considerations

- Replacement cost vs. actual cash value: Replacement cost is more expensive but far more protective.
- Disaster coverage gaps: Floods and earthquakes typically require separate policies.
- Liability protection: Should be high enough to cover legal claims from injuries on the property.

Life Insurance

Life insurance provides financial support to dependents in the event of a policyholder's death. The two primary types are term life and whole life.

Key considerations

- Term life insurance: Cheaper, straightforward, and a good choice for most families.
- Coverage amount: Typically 10–12 times annual income to support dependents, replace lost earning power, and cover debts.
- Whole life insurance: Includes investment components; generally not needed unless for estate planning or if you have specialized financial strategies.

Disability Insurance

Disability insurance protects income if a person becomes unable to work. Unfortunately, this is often overlooked, despite the high likelihood of long-term disability during a working career.

Key considerations

- Long-term coverage is key: Short-term coverage is helpful, but long-term coverage is critical since a long-term disability can be financially devastating.
- Benefit period: Ensure you understand how long the policy pays out. Look for coverage until you reach an age that allows you to access retirement funds or other governmental assistance.
- Own-occupation vs. any-occupation: Own-occupation policies are more protective, paying benefits if you cannot perform your specific job rather than expecting you to find another job in an unrelated field.

Liability Insurance (Umbrella Policies)

An umbrella policy provides additional liability protection above home and auto limits, often at a relatively low cost.

Key considerations

- Asset protection: If you own a home, investments, or savings, umbrella insurance provides inexpensive peace of mind.
- Coverage level: Common limits are $1–5 million and they protect you from a broad spectrum of risks.

How to Decide What Insurance and How Much Coverage You Need

A sound insurance strategy is built on evaluating risk, financial vulnerability, and personal circumstances. It is wise to find and work with an insurance agent that can help you determine the right policies and coverages for your unique situation.

1. **Identify the biggest financial risks** - Ask: What events could cause catastrophic financial harm? (Often: medical crises, disability, liability lawsuits, or premature death)
2. **Consider dependents and obligations** - People with families, mortgages, or business responsibilities require more coverage than those without.
3. **Evaluate your assets and income** - Higher income and greater assets increase exposure in lawsuits and raise the need for liability and life insurance.
4. **Assess current savings** - Insurance fills the gap between what you can self-insure (pay for yourself) and what you cannot.
5. **Balance cost and protection** - Choosing insurance is often a trade-off between premium cost and financial security. Prioritize policies that protect against high-cost, low-frequency events, not minor inconveniences.

Appendix 2 – **Investing**

Investing / Retirement (Knowledge)

1. **Tax Consequences**

    - Tax free (limited options, typically tax-exempt bonds)
    - Tax Deductible/Deferred - Tax-deductible investments reduce your taxable income today. When you contribute to a tax-deductible account, the amount contributed is subtracted from your income for tax purposes, lowering the taxes you owe in the current year. Key benefits are immediate tax savings. This type of investment is most useful for high earners. The higher your tax bracket, the more valuable the deduction. Common examples are Traditional IRAs and Traditional 401(k) or 403(b).
    - Tax Advantaged – You get no tax deduction up front. You pay taxes now, but lock in tax-free growth forever. Dividends, interest, and capital gains are never taxed if the rules are followed. Qualified withdrawals (generally after age 59½ and meeting holding requirements) incur no federal income tax. Example is the Roth IRA or Roth 401(k) or 403(b).

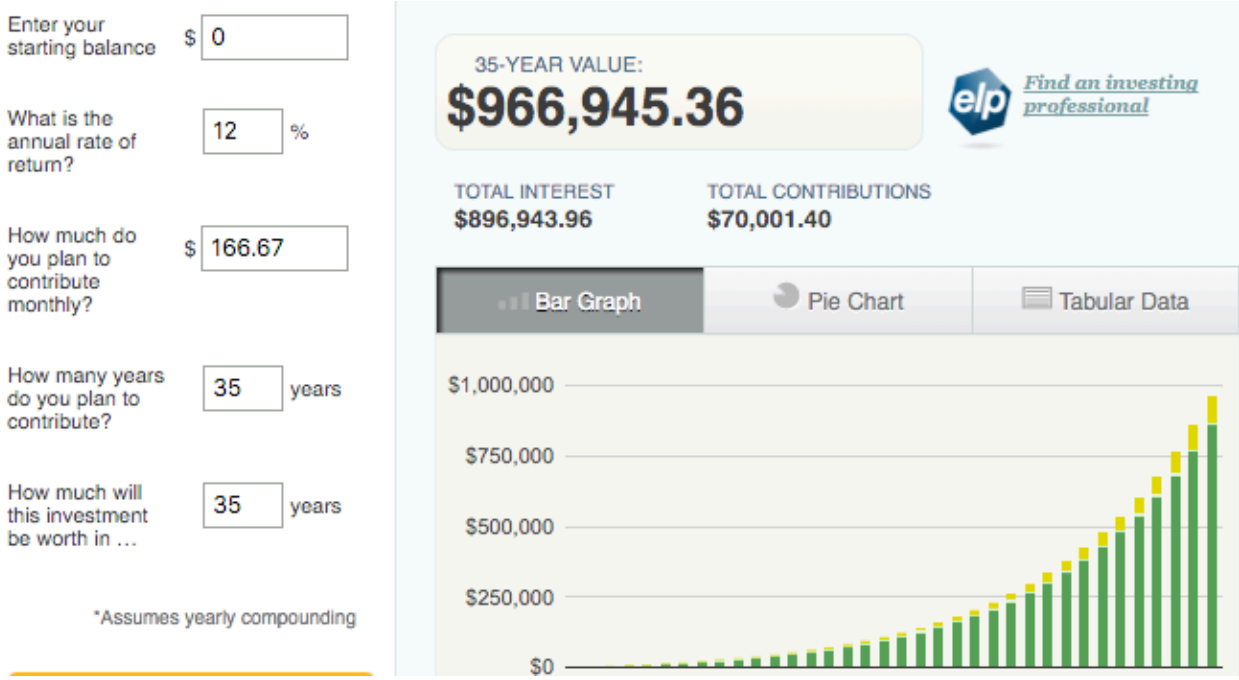
2. **Investment Types** – Names like IRA, 401k, 403b describe the tax treatment of those investments, but you have a variety of investment options that can be used “inside” of an IRA or other tax related investment account.

    - Mutual funds – Typically one of the best investment methods.
    - Single Stock – Higher risk, more volatile.
    - Speculative/Cryptocurrency – High risk. Potential for very high returns, but speculative and not typically backed by any real assets or income.
    - Bonds – More stable, but typically lower returns.

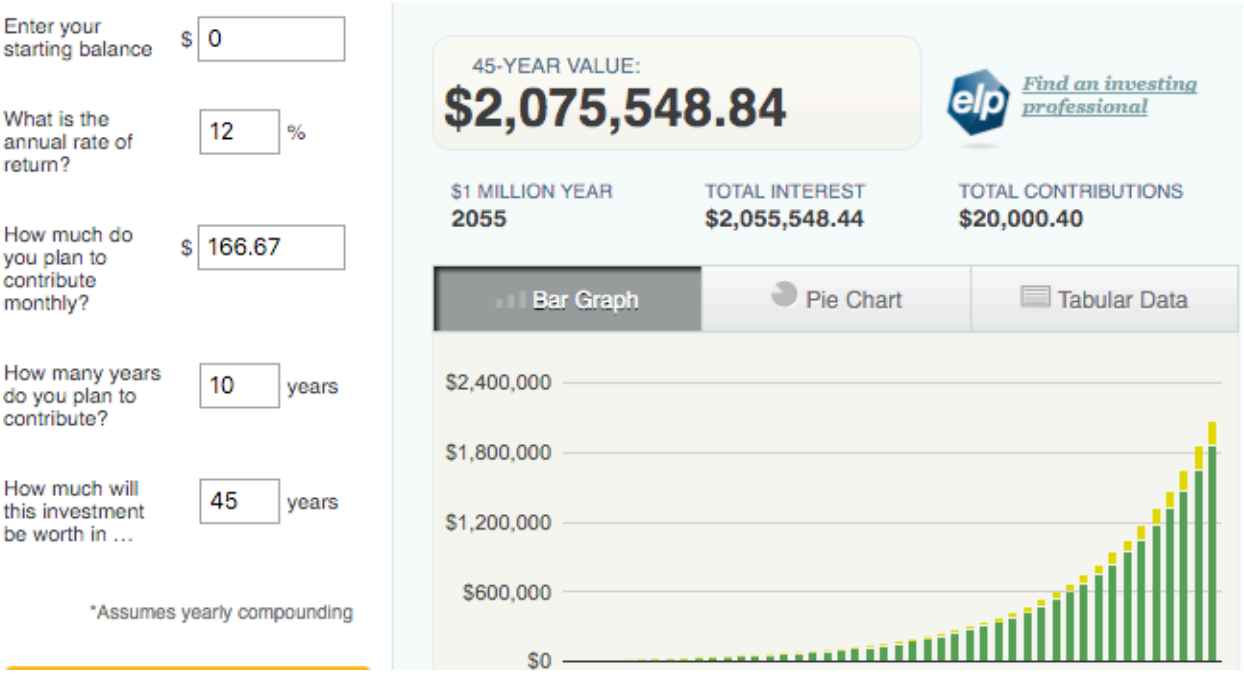
3. **Compounding Interest**

    Time is the key element for investing, and the sooner/earlier you invest, the greater the end product. Let’s compare two people. (see next page)

First, a person waits and starts investing at age 30 and they decide to invest $2,000 every year until age 65.



The second is a 20-year-old who invests $2,000 a year for only 10 years and then stops.



By starting 10 years earlier, the first individual was able to make more than double even though he invested $50,000 less. Saving and investing are practical ways to show our commitment to stewardship and to set ourselves up, so we have resources to be generous with.

Resources

Sample Budget Spreadsheet (page 1)

	Payday 1	Payday 2	Month Total	% of Income	Suggested %
	1-Jan	15-Jan			
Income	$ 100.00	$ 100.00	$ 200.00	%	
Giving					
Faith Bible Church	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Other Giving	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Giving Total	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.00%	10-15%
Savings					
To Savings			$ -		
Total Savings	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.00%	10-15%
Housing					
Mortgage/Rent	$ -	$ -	$ -		
HELOC	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Home Maintenance			$ -		
Housing Total	$ -	$ -	$ -	0%	25-35%
Utilities					
Power	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Water/Sewer	$ -	$ -	$ -		
TV/Internet	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Cell Phone	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Lawn	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Garbage	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Total Utilities	0	0	$ -	0%	5-10%
Food					
Groceries	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Dining	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Online	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Food Total	0	0	$ -	0%	5-15%
Transportation					
Gas	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Insurance	$ -	$ -	$ -		
License/Maint	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Transportation Total	0	0	$ -	0%	10-15%
Clothing					
Clothing	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Shoes	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Clothing Total	$ -	$ -	$ -	0%	2-7%
Medical					
Ortho	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Afforable Optics	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Medical	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Medical Total	$ -	$ -	$ -	0%	5-10%

Sample Budget Spreadsheet (page 2)

	Payday 1	Payday 2	Month Total	% of Income	Suggested %
	1-Jan	15-Jan			
Income	$ 100.00	$ 100.00	$ 200.00	%	
Personal					
Insurance	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Misc. Household	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Tuition	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Kids Misc.	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Gifts	$ -	$ -	$ -		
His Spending	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Her Spending	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Amazon	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Total Personal	$ -	$ -	$ -	0%	5-10%
Recreation					
Entertainment	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Subscriptions	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Other	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Recreation Total	$ -	$ -	$ -	0%	5-10%
Debts	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Credit Card	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Auto Loans	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Student Loans	$ -	$ -	$ -		
Other	$ -	$ -	$ -		
	$ -	$ -	$ -	0%	5-10%
Total Expenses	$ -	$ -	$ -	0%	
Income - Expenses should = 0	$ 100.00	$ 100.00	$ 200.00		

Scan the QR code to be taken to our website to download this **Sample Budget Spreadsheet** in an editable spreadsheet form.

Money Management Apps

Here are some popular tools to help you track income and expenses, make a budget, and see where your money goes:

- **Mint** – Free and widely known for tracking spending, budgets, and credit score in one place.
- **You Need A Budget (YNAB)** – Focuses on proactive budgeting and assigning money to jobs before spending. This does not have a free version; it requires a subscription.
- **Monarch Money** – All-in-one finance dashboard that tracks spending, budgets, goals, and investments. This does not have a free version. It has a free trial but requires a subscription after the trial.
- **EveryDollar** – Zero-based budgeting app that helps plan every dollar. This has a free basic tier but connecting accounts and mobile tracking has a cost.
- **PocketGuard** – Easy budgeting and bill tracking, with focus on “safe to spend” amounts. This has a free basic tier with expanded capabilities with a cost.
- **Goodbudget** – Envelope-style budgeting tool for planning and dividing funds. This has a free basic tier with expanded capabilities with a cost.

These cover net worth, investments, retirement, etc:

- **Empower** (formerly Personal Capital) – Tracks budgets and investments, net worth, and retirement planning. The budgeting and tracking tools are free, but advisory services are paid.
- **My Money** (Yahoo Finance) – Newer tool that aggregates accounts, cash flow, credit score, and net worth. This has a free financial dashboard.

Apps that provide unique features beyond basic budgeting:

- **Qapital** – Helps automate savings through rules (e.g., round-ups) to reach goals. This has a free trial but requires a subscription for long term use.
- **Rocket Money** – Finds subscriptions and recurring payments you can cut to save money. This has free basic features with optional paid upgrades.
- **AI/Smart Finance Tools (e.g., Cleo, Origin)** – Use AI to offer insights and personalized saving/smart planning tips. Cleo has a free version, but premium features require a subscription. Origin offers a free trial but requires a subscription for long term use.

Books



The Treasure Principle – Randy Alcorn (160 pages)

Master Your Money – Ron Blue (249 pages)

Managing God's Money – Randy Alcorn (272 pages)

Money, Debt, and Finances – Jim Newheiser (360 pages)

Money, Possessions, and Eternity – Randy Alcorn (528 pages)

People/Services

Real Estate/Financial Planning	Jim Greenup	509-994-4141	jgreenup@greenuphomes.com
Counseling	Brian Sayers	509-326-9455	bsayers@fbchurch.org
Insurance	Kevin Wright	509-447-0426	kevin@riverbendins.com
Real Estate	Chris Connelly	509-499-6319	chrisconnelly@windermere.com
Taxes	Toby Rainbow	509-714-4865	tobyrainbow@yahoo.com
Career	Walt Takasaki	509-868-6249	wtakisaki@gmail.com

GROUPS

FAITH BIBLE CHURCH

440 W. Cora, Spokane, WA 99205 509.326.9455 fbchurch.org