

Money Matters for Youth

Integrating Faith and Finances

Canadian edition



Abundance
CANADA

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Foreword

Abundance Canada is a national public charitable foundation and teaching ministry that promotes faithful, joyful giving. The activities of AC include providing resources about Christian financial stewardship, working with people in the area of charitable gift and estate planning, and managing charitable funds for individuals, churches and other charities.

Abundance Canada has adapted this resource for Canadian youth. It was originally made available through Everence, an Anabaptist financial services organization in the United States. AC and Everence both provide stewardship education from an Anabaptist/Christian perspective. Abundance Canada is pleased to offer this resource to encourage youth to responsibly use God's gifts to live out their faith with their finances.

Introduction

Regardless of the setting, money seems to be the last remaining taboo—the one thing we won't discuss. Even in church, where we discuss life, death and everything else, we most often don't talk about money—except when a church needs to raise more of it.

Money affects most parts of our lives. We have so many choices—often more choices than dollars available. From a spiritual perspective, money is too important to ignore. It can bring us closer to God, or move us further away.

In a culture where the main message about money is *spend, spend, spend* (and figure out later how to pay for it), we need reminders about the importance of balance, about using our money for sharing and saving.

I encourage you to use this resource to think about and discuss the topic of money with others—how you spend it, earn it, share it and save it. God bless you on this journey.



Darren Pries Klassen
Executive Director, Abundance Canada

Getting Started

This resource has been designed for seven 45-minute Sunday school or youth events. Each session begins with an introductory activity. A spiritual connection follows. Key teaching points are listed with suggested activities. The sessions have been written within a structure for leaders to follow. Feel free to adapt and choose activities that are appropriate for your youth and setting. Please be sure to preview all suggested online/DVD content to ensure the appropriateness for your church. It is suggested that each youth have a notebook or paper that can be used as a journal for these sessions. A flip chart or white board is also recommended.

Resource list for sessions (books, videos, music CDs, websites)

- *First Things First*, workbook produced by Abundance Canada, available in hard copy through any AC office or online at abundance.ca
- *Go For Broke* (video clip), available for purchase as download from sermonspice.com
- *My Money Talks: Songs for Worship*, CD by Bryan Moyer Suderman, smallTall Music, 2007* Order from smalltallmusic.com
- *The Power of Enough: Finding Contentment* by Lynn A. Miller, Mennonite Mutual Aid, 2007* Order from abundance.ca
- *Three Simple Rules: A practical manual guaranteed to improve your finances*, book by Theo Boers, 2005* Order from www.threerules.org
- *Basic Trek: Venture into a World of Enough*, book by Dave Schrock Shenk, Herald Press, 2002* www.generousgiving.org

Additional resources (books, videos, websites)

- *Dealing with Overwhelming Debt*, Close to Home series brochure, Faith and Life Resources, 2008*
- *Don't Sit On Your Stuff: Bible Study for Youth* with Ted and Lee, DVD by Third Way Media Youth Bible Studies, 2002*
- The [Financial Consumer Agency of Canada](http://FinancialConsumerAgencyofCanada.ca) site contains credit card information and calculators
- The Canadian Foundation for Economic Education site: moneyandyouth.cfee.org
- *Money Sanity Solutions: Linking Money & Meaning*, book by Nathan Dungan, Share Save Spend, 2010
- *Moneytalk: Living Generously*, book by Mark Vincent & Michelle Hershberger, from Genera, on Why Bible Studies, Faith and Life Press, 2000*
- Credit counseling websites: www.nomoredebts.org and www.creditcanada.com
- *Simply Enough: Straight Talk from Tony Campolo & Shane Claiborne* on Simple, Just Living, DVD series, Alternatives for Simple Living, 2007*
- Government of Canada website geared for youth managing finances: youth.gc.ca/eng/topics/money/manage_finances.shtml

*Available for loan from Anabaptist Resource Consortium commonword.ca

Session 1: Money Matters

Objectives

- provide background for the biblical and cultural teachings about money
- reflect on assumptions about money.

Supplies

- Bibles
- flip chart, markers
- journals or paper, pens
- copies of [Fun Facts sheet, p. 5](#)
- two bells or squeaky toys (optional)
- small pieces of paper
- basket

Introduction

1. **Write on a flip chart or read aloud this quote from William C. Durant:** *Money is only loaned to a man. He comes into the world with nothing and leaves with nothing.*
Invite responses. Do people act/live as if this is true?
2. **Tell the following story of William Durant.**
William Durant was a business tycoon who started various car companies including General Motors in 1908. He was a high school drop-out and started with very little money. In a very short time, Durant became very wealthy and powerful. Then, heavily invested in the stock market, he lost most of his money in the collapse of 1929 and was bankrupt by 1936. He is said to have managed a bowling alley in Flint, Michigan in the last years of his life.
3. **Ask:** After hearing this story, does it change how you read his quote? Do you know a story about a person who looked like they had everything then “lost it all”?

Spiritual Connection

- Have a youth read Ecclesiastes 5:8-15. How does this compare to the Durant quote? What is the message for Christians in this passage?

Activities

1. **Money Autobiography.** Invite youth to write a money autobiography. As the leader, you could choose one of the questions and prepare a response as an example. Have the youth reflect on the following questions as a quiet journal activity. Alternatively, you could interview youth on video and watch it together.
 - What are some of your earliest memories related to money?
 - How do you earn money now? How do you spend it?
 - How would you describe your family’s economic situation?
 - Who manages money in your family? Is it discussed?
 - What financial goals or hopes do you have?
2. **Fun Facts.** Make copies of the [Fun Facts sheet, p.5](#). Option: Divide the group into two teams. Pass out a bell or squeaky toy for each side to use to “buzz in” their answers as in a game show.

3. Money Words game. Pass out several small pieces of paper to each person. Have youth write a financial word or money term on each paper. Collect the papers. Divide the class into two teams. Toss the papers in a basket. Each team will send forward one person at a time to be “It”. “It” will draw a paper with a money term from the basket. “It” uses words to describe the term, without using the term or its derivatives, in order for their team to guess the term. It is like the game Catch Phrase or Taboo. “It” describes as many terms as the group can guess in a minute. Then the other team gets a turn for one minute. This continues until all the words are guessed.

Answer Key for Fun Facts:

1. 1821
2. 1858
3. \$6 and \$7
4. 50-cent
5. Silver
6. Silver dollar
7. \$100 and \$1000
8. 1987 and 11
9. 1996 and 20
10. 1 billion
- 11.

Currency	Answers
\$5	1-2 years
\$10	1-2 years
\$20	2-4 years
\$50	4-6 years
\$100	7-9 years

12. All have

Fun Facts

How much do you know about Canadian money?

1. Canadian banks started issuing their own bank notes in 18 _____.
2. The first Canadian coinage was approved in the year _____, struck at the Royal Mint in London, England.
3. In 1871, Molson’s Bank (which no longer exists) issued bank notes for the unusual amounts of \$_____ and \$_____.
4. The first coin produced in Canada was a _____ piece, on January 2, 1908.
5. The five-cent piece, commonly known as a nickel, has only been made of nickel since 1922. Previously, it was made of _____.
6. Which coin was first produced in 1935, to mark the silver jubilee of King George V of Great Britain, the grandfather of Queen Elizabeth II? _____.
7. Today the highest denomination of a bank note is \$_____, but in 1935 there was a bill for the high amount of \$_____!
8. In order to cut costs of producing currency, the Loonie was introduced in the year _____. It has _____ sides.
9. The Toonie was introduced in _____ and the coins last _____, mes longer than the bill they replaced.
10. The Royal Canadian Mint in Winnipeg mints more than _____ coins each year. The life span of Canadian currency varies, based on the frequency of use. According to the Bank of Canada, how long do the following bills last?

Currency	Amount of time in circulation before it is replaced (in years)
\$5	
\$10	
\$20	
\$50	
\$100	

11. Check the items that have appeared on Canadian currency:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Snowy Owl | <input type="checkbox"/> American Robins | <input type="checkbox"/> Parliament buildings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canada Goose | <input type="checkbox"/> Sir Wilfrid Laurier | <input type="checkbox"/> line from “In Flanders Fields” |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Windsor Castle | <input type="checkbox"/> maps of Canada | <input type="checkbox"/> excerpt from a Gabrielle Roy novel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Osprey | <input type="checkbox"/> Queen Mary | <input type="checkbox"/> children playing hockey |

Session 2: It All Belongs to God

Objectives

- recognize that God owns everything
- gain an understanding of the word *steward*

Supplies

- Bibles
- flip chart, markers
- journals or paper, pens
- CD player or computer with Internet access and sound

Introduction

1. Biblical financial principles (drawn from *Three Simple Rules*)
Put the following words representing financial principles on a flip chart:
 - work hard
 - be honest
 - give back
 - save
 - be content
 - pay your taxes
 - understand debt
 - simplify
2. Have youth read the following Bible passages aloud or work in small groups to match the biblical references with the financial principles:
 - Luke 12:15
 - 1 Timothy 6:18-19
 - Colossians 3:23-24
 - Proverbs 22:7
 - Hebrews 13:5
 - Luke 20:25
 - Psalm 15:1-2
 - Proverbs 21:20

Discuss other possible financial principles found in the Bible.

Answer key to Biblical Financial Principles:

- work hard—Colossians 3:23-24
- be honest—Psalm 15:1-2
- give back—1 Timothy 6:18-19
- save—Proverbs 21:20
- be content—Hebrews 13:5
- pay your taxes—Luke 20:25
- understand debt—Proverbs 22:7
- simplify—Luke 12:15

Spiritual Connection

- Play a song or video that honours God’s creative acts such as “Generous God” by Bryan Moyer Suderman or “God of Wonders” by Chris Tomlin. You may want sing together a creation hymn such as “I Sing the Mighty Power of God” or “For the Beauty of the Earth.”

Key Teaching Points

1. Read Genesis 1:26-30 and Genesis 2:4-15. What does this say about God? What does it say about our relationship to creation and to God?
(God created everything. God made humans in God’s image. God calls humans to be responsible for creation. God blessed humans. God calls humans to be fruitful, to fill the earth and subdue it. God gives humans food. It is God who created and who owns everything. God is a generous provider.)
2. Talk about words such as create, bless, give, work, care, responsibility. What do these say about what God expects of humans as part of creation?
3. One way of understanding the relationship between humans and creation is to see ourselves as God’s stewards (or managers). A steward is someone who is given responsibility over another person’s possessions. A steward is responsible for what is not theirs and is expected to keep the owner’s best interest in mind.
4. Look at stories of stewards in the Bible. Joseph went from being enslaved to managing everything in the household of one of Pharaoh’s officials Genesis 39:1-6. Jesus uses the image of a steward in Luke 12:42-44 and Luke 16:1-13.
5. Discuss or journal about the following questions:
 - Has God put you in charge of anything? If yes, how do you manage it?
 - What would God want you to do with God’s money? (as opposed to what should you do with your money)
6. Have youth complete the [My Stuff chart p.22](#). How can they view their possessions as belonging to God?

Session 3: Budgeting

Objectives

- gain a basic understanding of budgets
- understand the purpose and value of budgets

Supplies

- copies of [Spending Scenarios, p. 10-11](#)
- copies of [Monthly Finances, p. 25](#) or Monthly Income and Expenses Analysis in [First Things First](#), p. 68
- copies of Daily Spending Record in [First Things First](#), p. 63
- copies of Priorities Chart in [First Things First](#), p. 43-44
- journals or paper, pens
- chart paper or white/black board and markers/chalk.

Introduction

Copy and cut apart the spending scenarios. Divide the group into pairs and distribute at least one Youth Spending Scenario and one Adult Spending Scenario to each pair. The pair should work to agree on a solution. After a few minutes, ask them to reflect on the process. Was it realistic to be forced to make choices like these? Was it easy to come to agreement? Why or why not? What additional solutions were not given as options?

Spiritual Connection

1. Every day people have to make tough choices based on needs and wants. We all need to be reminded of the need to think about what are needs and what are wants. Studies show that distinction has all but disappeared for most people. For example, many things considered wants a decade ago, such as cell phones, are now considered needs. Everyone needs to work within the limits of what they earn and the amount of debt with which they are willing to live. Use the Considerations When Making Spending Decisions exercise in [First Things First](#), p. 18 as a guide for questions to ask before spending. What other questions could be asked before spending?
2. Read 1 Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19 together. What spending values are in this text?
3. What tough money decisions have you made lately? Pray together and ask God for wisdom in the many decisions we make.

Key Teaching Points

1. Write “budget” and “spending plan” on the board or chart paper. Ask for definitions of these words. Ask: Do your families use budgets? Is this a familiar concept? Do youth have negative or positive associations with budgeting? What are some benefits of using a budget?
(A budget is a tool that enables us to control our money rather than the other way around. A spending plan is a way to reach financial goals. Budgets set clear limits, control spending and debt, allow for giving and saving, help to establish priorities and help you accomplish more with less.)
2. Hand out copies of the [Monthly Finances \(see page 25\)](#). Look at the categories together and discuss which are relevant to youth. Ask youth to take sometime to think about what they earn and what they spend. Point out that there should be enough income to cover all the expenses (last calculation in the right hand column). Challenge youth to keep track of their spending using one of the expense trackers listed in the supplies list.

3. Budgets help us attain financial goals, but that doesn't mean the result is guaranteed or immediate. Ask: What kind of income would you need to live at the level you have budgeted? Where do you want to spend? Where will you cut back? Will your list of priorities include giving to charity?

On the back of the handout, have youth write a list of items they'd be willing to give up or areas in which they could save to manage their budget. Also have youth rank the items on the expense list in order of priority for them.

4. You may want to use this session as a time to review banking basics such as the differences between a chequing and a savings account. Information about banking basics can be found in the supplemental materials referenced in the resources section.

Activity

1. Pass out paper and pens. Have each person write a mock letter with a question about finances to an advice column (e.g. "Dear Ms. Moneybags" or "Dear Donald Trump"). This could be a question about a shopping dilemma, a conflict with parents about money or any other money related concern. It can either be a real or fictional scenario (outrageous letters are welcome!).

Have youth read their letters or hand them in to be mixed up in the group. Volunteers can offer straight up or humorous responses (in character, please).

2. In journals have youth write about what they have been taught about finances. They may also compose a [Needs vs. Wants prayer p.23](#).
3. You may want to hand out copies of the blank priorities chart from [First Things First](#) p. 43-44 and invite youth to create their own priorities chart to start building a solid financial foundation.
4. Have youth complete the [Spender Quiz p.24](#).

Youth Spending Scenarios

<p>You want to replace your current MP3 player. You have \$200 in savings. You choose to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use all of your saved money • put it on your birthday wish list • bid on a used one on eBay or find one on Kijiji • use some of your savings and borrow some money from your sister 	<p>You back into a pole in the school parking lot, putting a dent in the car. You choose to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pretend it didn't happen • report it to your insurance company • pay to have dent repaired out of your emergency savings • ask your parents to pay for the repair • charge the repair to your credit card 	<p>You want to play tennis with the team next year. You want to take lessons to prepare. You choose to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ask your friend on the tennis team to practice with you a few times • take some extra babysitting jobs to pay for lessons • ask for your parents to pay for your lessons
<p>You want new jeans. The pair you like cost \$90, and your parents gave you \$50 for buying jeans. You choose to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • get less expensive jeans • wait for a big sale • pay the other portion out of your savings • beg your parents for more money 	<p>Your cell phone breaks. To replace it. You choose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the "free" replacement phone (which means signing a new 2-3 year contract) • ask your parents to pay for the new phone, arguing that it's a need • choose the phone you can afford and pay for it out of your savings • choose an expensive phone and charge it 	<p>For your 16th birthday your parents offer \$3,000 toward the purchase of a car for you. You choose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a \$3,000 car • a \$2,500 car and use the extra cash for the title/license fees/gas • to add the \$3,000 to your own savings and buy a nicer car • to beg for more money from your parents • to share the family cars for a while • to buy a \$7,000 car, borrowing the additional amount from your grandparents

Adult Spending Scenarios

<p>You and your spouse both completed post-secondary education. You both have student loans that you need to repay. You choose to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use your savings to pay off the student loans in full • use your savings for a down payment on a house and make monthly student loan payments • take an extra job and make double payments until the loans are paid off • go to grad school so you can defer the loans • make the monthly payments and use your savings for a vacation. 	<p>You and your spouse are expecting your first child. You choose to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • both continue working and use one income to cover the daycare expenses • live on one income and have one person be the primary care giver for the child • have one person work part-time while grandma babysits for free • have one person work part-time swapping child care with another family in the same situation 	<p>Your friends are going on a cruise and have invited you and your spouse. You have \$500 in savings, earmarked for emergencies. It cost \$1,500 to go on the cruise. You choose to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tell your friends “thanks, maybe we’ll go next time” • charge the whole amount on a credit card so you can both go • take a short-term loan out to pay for the trip. You’ll pay it back with your Christmas bonus • use your savings and charge the rest • suggest that you and your friends go on a less expensive group trip
<p>You have three children and are buying Christmas gifts. You have \$300 to spend on all the children. Your oldest wants a video game system. You choose to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spend \$100 per child, no game system this year • buy the game system and a small gift for each child • increase your gift budget • offer the game system as the gift but have the child pay for part of it 	<p>You want to turn on the air conditioner in July, but it will raise your electric bill \$100. With your careful budget, you know you don’t have that extra cash in July. You choose to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • go without AC • turn it on, that’s what credit cards are for • turn it on and use savings to pay the extra • turn it on but not use any other electricity for the month 	<p>Your child wants to go on a mission trip with the youth group. It costs \$500 and the only place you have that money is in your emergency savings account. You choose to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take the money from savings because this is a good opportunity • offer to pay half if your child comes up with the other half • borrow the money from your parents • use your vacation money, no family trip this year

Session 4: Debt

Objectives

- understand the concept of debt
- gain tools for making wise decisions in relation to debt

Supplies

- Bibles
- journals or paper, pens
- flip chart, markers
- video clips: *Go for Broke* from www.sermonspice.com, *Escape from Federal Debt Penitentiary* at www.godtube.com, *Lost Generation* at www.youtube.com, or other similar video

Introduction

- Show a video that represents consumerism such as *Go For Broke*, [Escape from Federal Debt Penitentiary](#) or [Lost Generation](#).
- Write this quote on the board:
Financial problems are not a result of not making enough money; they are a result of spending too much money.
Ask for response to this quote.
Do youth agree or disagree? Does this seem like a cultural or biblical teaching?

Spiritual Connection

- Read the following passages aloud in the group:
 - Psalm 37:16-24
 - Proverbs 22:1-9
 - Matthew 6:9-15
 - Romans 13:7-8
- What do these passages suggest about debt?
- What is the connection between our financial and spiritual lives?

Key Teaching Points

1. Ask youth to list examples of debt. Record responses on the flip chart. Explain key debt categories:
 - a. consumer debt—often credit card purchases; car loans; electronics
 - b. student debt—loans for post-secondary or graduate education
 - c. mortgage debt—loan to purchase a house
 - d. business debt—loan to start or enhance a company

For a summary on debt, see [First Things First](#), p. 24-28.

In general, consumer debt is considered bad debt. People end up paying high interest rates which in turn means they are paying a lot more for the items they purchased. Student debt is considered good debt in that it is debt you take on to increase your earning potential. Some student loans have a fairly low interest rate compared to other types of debt. Mortgage debt can also be seen as good debt since your home typically appreciates in value. Any money invested in an item that

appreciates (house) can be called good debt. So, “good” debt is debt on the money it takes to make money (school, business) or debt on something that appreciates (property). In this way, debt can be a tool that provides opportunity to grow an investment. One caution with mortgage debt is not to borrow for more house than you can afford in case interest rates go up significantly.

Invite responses. Have youth ever considered any kind of debt good or bad? What are the effects of carrying debt long-term? Some of the consequences of debt might be stress, less giving, increased work hours, lack of peace, poor credit rating, limited purchasing power.

2. Use this as an opportunity to discuss the basics of credit, including credit ratings and the use of credit/debit cards. Information on these topics can be found in the materials referenced in the [resource list on page 2](#).

Activity

1. On the flip chart or in journals, have youth label 4 boxes with a type of debt—consumer, student, mortgage and business.
2. Have youth list a specific example for each category.
3. Invite them to list, in the respective boxes, the *pros* and *cons* of each type of debt. This may be done as an individual, small group, or whole group exercise.

Example

<p>Consumer Paying for Christmas gifts with a credit card</p> <p>(+) having the items to give at Christmas (+) showing my love for my family and friends (+) joy of shopping</p> <p>(-) can overextend my budget (-) will cost me much more than the purchase price through the interest charges (-) limits my spending for other needs</p> <p>**I would not buy Christmas gifts with a credit card. I would give alternate gifts that year.</p>	<p>Student Going to graduate school for an MBA</p> <p>(+) gaining new skills (+) having the education expected in my field (+) providing more opportunity for higher paying jobs.</p> <p>(-) takes time/pay from current job (-) no guarantee of a new job</p> <p>** If I enjoyed my current work, I would need to carefully consider the likelihood of advancement or new job opportunities before I'd invest time and money into additional training.</p>
<p>Mortgage Primary residence ownership</p> <p>(+) investing instead of throwing money into rent (+) investment should appreciate (+) meets a basic need</p> <p>(-) can overextend my budget (-) responsible for upkeep and repairs which can have significant costs (-) no guarantee of appreciation</p> <p>**I would take a mortgage with the goal of paying it off in less than 25years.</p>	<p>Business Starting a tea shop</p> <p>(+) being my own boss (+) investment could appreciate (+) living out a dream</p> <p>(-) can overextend my budget (-) no guarantee of success</p> <p>**I would take a business loan with the appropriate support systems for success.</p>

Session 5: Planning for the Future

Objectives

- develop an understanding of saving

Supplies

- Bibles
- flip chart, markers
- journals or paper, pens

Introduction

- Invite youth to create a *Thankfulness Page* in their journals to record things they are thankful for. They can list at least five tangible items and three intangible items. If you do this activity as a whole group make sure all youth have a chance to respond with one tangible and one intangible item for which they are grateful.

Spiritual Connection

- When all youth have had a chance to share, offer a prayer of thanks to God for these gifts. Invite youth to pray aloud if they wish.

Key Teaching Points

1. Ask: *Why do people save money? What are some of the benefits of saving?*

Make a list of the reasons on the flip chart.

Describe the three categories of saving: emergency fund, short-term savings, and long-term/retirement savings. The easiest way to save money is to make it part of the financial routine - plan to save in a budget and set the amount aside.

Having goals, both short- and long-term financial goals, also motivates saving. Ask what kinds of financial goals the youth currently have. Invite them to contemplate a short-term (smart phone, portable media player, new jeans, shoes) and a long-term (college, house down payment) financial goal.

2. Ask youth to distinguish between saving and hoarding. (Saving is wise planning for future expenses, both known and unknown. Hoarding is defined as secretly storing up or stockpiling). If you can find an article online about hoarding, share it with the group. Read Luke 12:13-21 together. Discuss how this passage relates to saving and hoarding.
3. Remind youth that it is important to keep perspective when goal setting and saving. Write this quote on the flip chart: *Wealth will always be lost; either it leaves us while we live or we leave it when we die.* Invite responses.

Read Matthew 6: 19-21 or Psalm 49 aloud. What does this passage say about wealth and saving?

Activities

1. Divide into small groups. Give each group a topic (Housing, Transportation, Food, Clothing, Entertainment).

Ask each group to brainstorm ways to save money for their designated spending category. Have each group share highlights and innovative ideas with the whole group. The following chart gives ideas for each category.

<p>HOUSING Renting Sharing a home with multiple families Making a larger down payment Not running the air conditioner Keeping the temperature set low in the winter Using compact fluorescent light bulbs Having newer windows Insulating attic space</p>	<p>TRANSPORTATION Sharing vehicles Buying older cars Not leasing vehicles Biking/walking Using public transportation Keeping cars tuned up Limiting trips</p>
<p>FOOD Sticking to the shopping list Using coupons Buying store brand items Buying bulk Planting a garden Cutting out junk food Buying sale items</p>	<p>CLOTHING Limiting the amount of new pieces you buy Shopping sales Shopping at thrift stores Shopping at consignment stores Limiting brand shopping Buying during the off-season Welcoming hand-me-downs</p>
<p>ENTERTAINMENT Limiting eating out Renting or borrowing movies Inviting people to your home Playing board games/cards Touring local attractions Using parks Window shopping Browsing in a bookstore Using the library</p>	<p>GIFTS Limiting the amount you spend per person Shopping sales/off-season Making gifts Baking gifts Honoring the person through time together Giving personalized coupons Doing a name exchange instead of buying for everyone Making your own cards</p>

1. Invite youth to find a money mentor to interview. This would involve contacting a person whom they admire and to ask them for advice, tips or anecdotes that would be helpful to consider as they begin to make significant financial choices.
2. Plan a retreat. You may want to plan a longer session to write money autobiographies. You can find youth retreat ideas around money autobiographies in *Soul Care: How to Plan and Guide Inspirational Retreats*, edited by Rose Mary Stutzman (Herald Press, 2003, pp. 247 - 256), and *Dollar\$, Faith and Centsibility: A Young Adult Stewardship Retreat* by Mark Diller Harder, Clayton Grassick, Jeff Steckley and Mike Strathdee.

Session 6: The Standard of Giving

Objectives

- understand biblical teachings on tithing and giving

Supplies

- Bibles
- flip chart, markers
- journals or paper, pens
- video clips (see Introduction)
- computer with Internet access and sound

Introduction

- Show a short video clip from an online source, such as [World vs. Christian: Tithing, God's Pie](#), or [Tithe Rap by 12 Stone Church](#) from www.youtube.com. You can also listen to the song “My Money Talks” on the CD My Money Talks (see [resource list on p. 2](#)).

Spiritual Connection

- Discuss the video or song. What does it imply about Christians? What is the challenge for Christians? What does it say about the world?

(Where you spend your money reflects what you value most. Christians struggle with making good/giving choices. Christians are called to care for others using financial resources. The world is watching how Christians spend their money.)

Key Teaching Points

1. Ask youth to share with the class what they hear at church about giving or tithing. What do their parents or families teach about giving? Do they discuss tithing? If so, when?
2. Scripture teaches of a *standard of giving* (adapted from www.generousgiving.org). Look up the following passages and read them aloud as a group. On the flip chart, have a youth write a word or phrase that highlights the command or call of the passage.
 - Luke 3:11—share with others
 - Acts 4:32, 34-35—believers shared everything; not concerned with personal ownership; used money, but for the needs of anyone in the group
 - Romans 12:13—share with others
 - 2 Corinthians 8:13-15—priority of equity and needs being met
 - 2 Corinthians 9:10-11—riches are for generosity
 - James 2: 15-16—faith must include action that cares for others’ needs
3. The Bible calls the people of God to be generous and to mirror God’s generous spirit. It is in response to what God has done for us that we act generously. It is an action of faith that we share, trusting God will provide for our needs. We strive to be more Christ-like and one of those qualities is generosity. Have the group look up and read aloud the following passages which speaks to the generosity of God. Youth can write these references in their journals with a phrase explaining each verse.
 - Deuteronomy 6: 10-12—do not forget God’s provision in the past
 - Matthew 7:11—God provides good gifts

- Luke 6:34-35—love is acting generously
 - Luke 6:38—the measure you use will be used for you
 - John 3:16—God gave the ultimate gift in Jesus
 - Romans 8:32—God provides for our needs
 - 2 Corinthians 9:8-11—we have so we can give to others
 - 1 Timothy 6: 17—hope in God, not wealth
 - John 3:16-18—love involves action, caring for others in need.
4. Talk about ways to give. Encourage youth to list various ways that they give or ways they can challenge themselves to give. How do they plan to share, save and spend their money? What are the non-monetary ways that they give (volunteering, random acts of kindness)? What motivates them to give? You may want to reference Nathan Dungan’s website, www.sharesavespend.com.

Activity

Act out the parable of the workers in the vineyard as told in Matthew 20:1-16. Have volunteers play the parts of the narrator, owner of the vineyard, four pairs of workers, and the supervisor. If the group is large enough, have youth act as the “clock,” using their bodies to designate the time mentioned in the passage.

After acting out the parable, invite reflections on the message of the passage.

- a. What does this parable say about God as portrayed by the vineyard owner? God is generous.
- b. What does it say about working? We can work/or pay, and not worry about others’ reward.

Session 7: Enough is Enough

Objectives

- understand the concept of contentment
- reflect on personal contentment

Supplies

- Bibles
- journals or paper, pens
- [First Things First](#) by Abundance Canada
- *Basic Trek: Venture into a World of Enough* by Dave Schrock Shenk
- *My Money Talks* CD by Bryan Moyer Suderman
- *The Power of Enough* by Lynn Miller

Introduction

- Share the following quote:
Credit cards have made it possible to buy things we don't need, with money we don't have, to impress people we don't like.

Invite youth to think about purchases they may have made to impress others. Was it worth the expense? Did having this item make you more popular or accepted?

Have them share aloud any examples they can think of where people have purchased items for status. These examples could be personal, but could also be from television shows or movies. As an additional activity, have youth complete [Gotta Have It! \(see p. 20-21\)](#). There are [propaganda techniques on page 21](#) that companies use to persuade consumers to buy their products.

Spiritual Connection

- Ask youth to define contentment. Have someone read aloud Philippians 4:10-13. What does this passage tell us about giving? What does it say about how we should define contentment?

Key Teaching Points

1. Talk with the group about conflicts they have experienced between cultural values and Christian values. Lynn Miller, in *The Power of Enough*, identifies one particularly damaging cultural myth. He points to the idea that “a little more money will solve my problems.” Most of us spend all that we earn, and often more than that. More money can actually translate into more things, not reducing debt or stress.
2. Make the connection between contentment and knowing the value of things (what they mean to us). When we are content, we don't use things to assert power or position. We don't rely on things to make us happy. Instead, possessions take their rightful place in our lives.

The reality is that things often carry meaning. That's why we buy (or are tempted to buy) certain brands or items. The problem with possessions having meaning is that we cannot always control what that meaning conveys to others. What are the “best brands” that have the most value right now?
3. If you have access to the book *The Power of Enough* by Lynn Miller, read chapter 5 to prepare for this session. This chapter has a great illustration about how a thing can change meaning depending on context.

4. We are not born content, but we can learn to be content (or contentment can be earned). Ask youth to respond. Read aloud the following passages:
 - Hebrews 13:5-6
 - 1 Timothy 6:6-11

Activity

1. Ask youth to think about what one more thing they might need in their lives to be content. Is this realistic?
2. Read quotes from “Pursue Contentment,” p. 32 in [First Things First](#).
3. Listen to “To Be Content,” on the My Money Talks CD.
4. Write this quote on the flip chart and encourage youth to record this in their journals:
People who are always thinking of the reward of faith will never be content in the life they have. But, people who are always thinking of the journey of faith will never be dissatisfied with what life brings.
(Lynn Miller)
 - Ask youth to respond to the following questions in their journals:
 - What does contentment mean to them?
 - What financial goals do they have?
 - How will they determine when enough is enough?
5. Choose one or two stories from *Basic Trek: Venture into a World of Enough* (e.g. the section entitled *Travel lightly on this earth*). Ask youth to consider what essentials they would need to pack if they needed to move to a different location for one year. You could play this as the children’s game *I’m packing my suitcase and I am bringing...* with each person adding their item to the imaginary suitcase. How much is enough?

Gotta Have It!

Examining TV Commercials

What's your favourite commercial?

What is appealing about it?

What product is it marketing?

What are the benefits of brand purchases?

The following are propaganda techniques designed to sell a product. List one commercial for each technique.

- cool factor
- bandwagon
- celebrity testimonial
- emotion
- expert testimonial
- repetition
- slogan

Gotta Have It!

Propaganda Techniques

- **Assertion:** An enthusiastic or energetic statement presented as a fact, although it is not necessarily true. The advertisers often imply that the statement requires no explanation or back up, but that it should merely be accepted without question.
- **Bandwagon:** An appeal to the subject to follow the crowd, to join in because others are doing so as well. Bandwagon propaganda is, essentially, trying to convince the subject that one side is the winning side, because more people have joined it. The subject is meant to believe that since so many people have joined, that victory is inevitable and defeat is impossible. Since the average person always wants to be on the winning side, he or she is compelled to join in. However, in modern propaganda, bandwagon has taken a new twist. The subject is to be convinced by the propaganda that since everyone else is doing it, they will be left out if they do not.
- **Card stacking:** Involves only presenting information that is positive regarding an idea or proposal and omitting information contrary to it. Although the majority of information presented by the card-stacking approach is true, it is dangerous because it omits important information.
- **Glittering generalities:** Words that have different positive meaning for individual subjects, but are linked to highly valued concepts. When these words are used, they demand approval without thinking, simply because such an important concept is involved. For example, when a person is asked to do something in “defense of democracy” they are more likely to agree. The concept of democracy has a positive connotation to them because it is linked to a concept they value. Words often used as glittering generalities are honour or glory.
- **Lesser of two evils:** An attempt to convince people of an idea or proposal by presenting it as the least offensive option. This technique is often implemented during wartime to convince people of the need for sacrifices or to justify difficult decisions.
- **Plain folks:** An attempt to convince the public that these views reflect those of the common person and that they are also working for the benefit of the common person.
- **Simplification (stereotyping):** Reducing a complex situation to a clear-cut choice involving good and evil. This technique is often useful in swaying uneducated audiences.
- **Testimonials:** Quotations or endorsements, in or out of context, which attempt to connect a famous or respectable person with a product or item. Testimonials are very closely connected to the transfer technique, in that an attempt is made to connect an agreeable person to an item.
- **Transfer:** An attempt to make the subject view a certain item in the same way as they view another item, in order to link the two in the subject’s mind. Although this technique is often used to transfer negative feelings for one object to another, it can also be used in positive ways. By linking an item to something the subject respects or enjoys, positive feelings can be generated for it.

My Stuff

List the contents in your bedroom. Highlight the ones you have purchased with your own money. Estimate the purchase price of the various items you've listed.

Item	Estimated Purchase Price

Needs vs. Wants

The Prayer

Example	Scripture Matthew 6:24-34 (NIV)	Your Prayer
<p><i>Creator God,</i></p> <p><i>You are my God, my master; and I love you.</i></p> <p><i>Forgive me for the worries that I carry...for stressing about having my daily needs met.</i></p> <p><i>I am amazed by the beauty and sustenance of your creation.</i></p> <p><i>God, I bring to you my concern for my dad's health, my sister's work situation, and my own conflicts. I offer these things into your hands.</i></p> <p><i>I am so grateful that you know me and my needs. Thank you for hearing my prayers.</i></p> <p><i>May your kingdom come; your will be done.</i></p> <p><i>Help me through this day.</i></p> <p><i>Amen</i></p>	<p>No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.</p> <p>Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?</p> <p>Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?</p> <p>Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?</p> <p>So do not worry, saying, "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink?" or "What shall we wear?" For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.</p> <p>But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.</p> <p>Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.</p>	

Spender Quiz

Adapted from *Spending and Saving: What's God Got to do with it?* www.threerules.org

Are you a spender or a saver? Circle the answer that describes your response for each situation:

1. Your friends invite you to the mall, so you:
 - A. go with them simply to hang out and help them shop. You leave your money at home.
 - B. grab your cash and GO! Shopping is a great way to relax after a long day at school.

2. You start working part time after school and finally have your own income, so you immediately:
 - A. keep a little bit of cash for yourself and save the rest.
 - B. open a bank account with a debit card so you can buy things even when you don't have the cash with you.

3. You've been saving to go on a summer mission trip with your youth group and your friends invite you on a ski trip in January. You:
 - A. ask for extra hours at work, so that you can pay for the ski trip without dipping into your mission trip money.
 - B. spend your mission trip savings on the ski trip. You figure your parents will probably help out with the mission trip later and you want to ski NOW.

4. You want to buy a car and your parents agreed to chip in \$2,000, so you:
 - A. find a car that costs \$2,000, even though it's pretty old and junky, and buy it with their money.
 - B. find a sweet-looking car that costs \$5,000 and talk your grandparents into loaning you the additional \$3,000. You promise to pay them back with interest.

5. You know you want to go to college or university after high school, so you:
 - A. start saving some of your money NOW, for tuition and expenses later.
 - B. decide that college or university is years away and you'll deal with those expenses later.

If you chose **A** most often, you tend to be a saver. You plan ahead, and work at financial independence. If you chose **B** most often, you tend to be a spender. You like immediate results and aren't afraid to ask for financial assistance.

These preferences aren't inherently good or bad, but it's important to consider your natural preferences when thinking about your long-term financial goals.

Monthly Finances

MONTHLY INCOME

Salary #1 (take-home)	
Salary #2 (take-home)	
Investments	
Other	
TOTAL INCOME	

MONTHLY EXPENSES

Giving 1% - ?	
Church giving	
Other charity	
TOTAL GIVING	

Saving 10% - 20%	
Short-term	
Long-term	
TOTAL SAVINGS	

Debt 0% - 10%	
Credit cards	
Loans/notes	
Other	
TOTAL DEBT	

Housing 30% - 40%	
Mortgage/rent	
Insurance	
Taxes	
Hydro	
Heating	
Water	
Phone & Internet	
TV	
Maintenance	
Other	
TOTAL HOUSING	

Transportation 12% - 20%	
Car payments	
Gas & oil	
Insurance	
License and fees	
Maintenance & repairs	
Other	
TOTAL TRANSPORTATION	

Insurance 3% - 10%	
Life	
Medical	
Other	
TOTAL INSURANCE	

Household 22% - 40%	
Groceries	
Bank fees	
Household items	
Furniture & appliances	
Hospitality & gifts	
Extended family support	
TOTAL HOUSEHOLD	

Personal 8% - 15%	
Clothing	
Toiletry/hair care	
Allowances	
Other	
TOTAL HOUSEHOLD	

Education 5% - 15%	
Tuition	
Textbooks/subscriptions	
Other	
TOTAL EDUCATION	

Professional services 4% - 15%	
Childcare	
Medical/dental	
Other	
TOTAL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	

Discretionary/other 5% - 15%	
Eating out	
Books/magazines/music	
Fitness & sports	
Movies & events	
Vacation & trips	
Babysitting	
Other	
TOTAL DISCRETIONARY	

TOTAL INCOME	
LESS TOTAL EXPENSES	
INCOME OVER/UNDER EXPENSES	



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