

plugged in – finances

Don't forget the exercise of writing down our short-term debt.

Two weeks ago we started a series called plugged in and I told the story of my career in computers.

But by far, the most common problem that we saw over and over was the problem of the PC or monitor not being plugged in.

The thing about not being plugged in was that no matter how many buttons you pushed, no matter how many keystrokes you tried, no matter what you did to the system, it wasn't going anywhere.

It didn't matter how well you were trained or educated, how much experience you had, or how many experts you threw at the problem.

You could replace the power supply with the best and most state-of-the-art technology, but unless it was plugged in, it was a nice door stop.

Take a look at this lamp. Without it being plugged in, it's nothing more than decoration for the room.

In the same way, if you and I are not plugged in to the source of power for our Christian walk, we become little more than décor for the church.

And it doesn't matter what we try to tweek or fix in our lives. We can try to make more money, get married to a different spouse, change careers, change schools, change churches, change clothes and hairstyles, if we're not plugged into the power source, we will not function in our God-ordained purpose or potential, just as this lamp is not fulfilling its purpose.

So what is this power source?

***2 Timothy 1:7

For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.

***That word for power in the original Greek language is the word dunamis. (miraculous) power, might, strength, marvelous works

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Not only did He put the “can do” in there, but He also put the “get to” in there, as well.

***John 1:12

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,

The KJV says that he gave us power to become the sons of God.

***The word is *eksousía* and it means power, authority, weight, especially: moral authority, influence,

And we have access to this power and authority not because we deserve it, but because God in His mercy and grace has decided to adopt us into His family and we no longer relate to Him as orphans begging for His mercy, but we are now sons and daughters of the most high King.

***Romans 8:15

For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"

This is probably one of most important concepts for you as a believer to understand. Because it's in this understanding that we are able to truly plug into the *dunamis* or power of God for our lives, and it is only then we are able to exercise the *eksousia*, or authority of God over our circumstances.

Many of us have been trying exercise the authority of God in situations in our lives with no or limited *dunamis*, or no power.

This comes from a lack of understanding of our new relationship to God as His adopted children.

***Media lower slider 15 to dim the lamp.

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And when this happens it affects every area of our life and we're going to talk about some of these areas.

As we walk through this series together called "Plugged In" we'll examine what it means to be plugged in to God in 4 separate areas of our lives. Our faith, our family, our finances, and our fitness.

One of those areas we talked about last week was our family, and we'll look at what a family looks like both when they're not plugged in and when they're plugged in.

***Luke 10:27

"He answered, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind. And you must love your neighbor as yourself."

***John 13:34, 35

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

The concepts found in these 2 verses are the basis for all family relationships in God's kingdom.

***I want you to notice that nowhere in these verses or anywhere else in the Bible does the word ME come up.

***All throughout the New Testament this concept is formed over and over again. I must crucify or put to death self.

You want to see an example of a family that is not plugged in to God? It will be the family that is constantly focused on self.

In this family the needs of the individual are the driving force behind all decisions, activities, discussions, etc.

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This family is wrought with strife, selfishness, argumentativeness, selective obedience, and disunity of every kind.

Husbands and wives no longer choose out of respect and love for one another, they consider how it will affect ME first, then make decisions.

Children no longer obey their parents out of Godly love for them, but instead first consider ME before choosing to obey or not.

Now in contrast, the family that is plugged in to God has a different approach and the bible has a lot to say about how we are to relate to one another.

We looked at 5 key verses that had to do with how we are to relate to one another in the context of the family. If you missed last week I encourage you to get online and listen to those messages.

So today we move to the 3rd place that we are to be plugged in and that is our finances.

What does it mean to be plugged in with the area of our finances?

Well, just like in our faith and family, it requires an understanding of biblical principles before we can access the dunamis and exercise eksusia over our financial circumstances.

***Psalm 24:1

The earth is the LORD'S, and all it contains,
The world, and those who dwell in it.

***Principle #1, upon which all the teaching on money is based, is that everything already belongs to God.

From the story of Abraham to the story of Job to the story of the richest man that ever lived Solomon, this principle is found throughout scripture.

Until you understand and live with the truth of this principle, none of the rest of what I say today will make much sense.

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Because God owns everything, the possessions we have are temporarily entrusted to us to take care of.

***Principle #2 is God is our source.

***Philippians 4:19

And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Your boss is not your source, your customers are not your source, and the economy is not your source. God is!

***Principle #3, Live with margin.

When there is no margin there is no peace. It is true with time and it is true with money.

It is estimated that one of the leading causes of stress related illness is hurry.

If you are always running late, you're always in a hurry, your body is under constant stress. In this same study, it was estimated that the average person spends 6 months of 24 hour days in a state of hurry.

What is lacking in these people's life? Margin. Leaving yourself enough time for things to happen.

Well in the same way, lack of financial margin removes peace from anyone's life. Just ask anyone that lives on 100% of their income that has experienced an unplanned car repair, A/C repair, or any number of financially hurtful.

No margin, no peace. Establishing your life style well below your income level and keeping it there brings financial peace.

***Principle #4, Manage what you have been given well.

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Proverbs 24:3,4

By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established;
And by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches.

You cannot grow spiritually without planning to do so, and you cannot grow financially without a plan.

A family budget is essential. Plan it and stick to it. Let the budget make all the financial decisions for you.

This will prevent you from going into debt.

Let's take a look at the exercise we did earlier this morning. The number that represents the total debt for the people in this room today is.

This number represents the reason most of you in here cannot do financially what you so want to do. And most of this debt represents things that we either no longer own or have long since forgotten about.

One of the things we are going to do as a church is get this number down substantially over the next year. This is a barrier to ministry and to us fulfilling our destiny.

Have any of you noticed that I haven't talked much about giving your money?

It's primarily because most church teaching on finances that I've heard start with what I should be giving, and ignoring my responsibility as a steward of God's riches.

Which has lead to people living on 100% of their income and trying to give over and above that to manipulate God into giving them more.

How many of you want to be a cheerful giver.

You cannot be a cheerful giver until you become an effective manager of what you've been given.

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Principle #5 Giving will break the cycle.

Luke 12:34

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Jesus knew the power that possessions and money can have on an individual and the way around that hold that possessions can have on someone is by giving.

Priority, percentage giving is the way to break power that money has over us.

Proverbs 3:9, 10

Honor the LORD from your wealth and from the first of all your produce;
So your barns will be filled with plenty and your vats will overflow with new wine.

As a guide, my desire for you is that you look towards establishing the 10/10/80 rule on your finances.

Give 10% first, Save 10% second, live off of the rest.

If everyone in this church operated their finances according to this principle and stayed out of debt, every missions trip would be financed, every building project would be funded and every salary would be paid to see the kingdom of God advanced in this city, this nation and this world.

***Being plugged in financially means plugging in to the power source of God's truth behind our money.

Principle #1

Everything belongs to God.

Principle #2

God is our source.

Principle #3

Live with margin.

Principle #4

Manage what you have been given well.

Sometimes we need fresh eyes to help ... Robert Irvine and restaurant impossible

Principle #5

Giving will break the cycle.