**Week 2:**

***Avoid the Use of Debt***

*Key phrase*: To avoid the use of debt we must learn (1) not to be impulsive, (2) to be patient, and (3) to protect our savings.

*Scripture*: Luke 12:13-21

*VIDEO link*: https://12stone.com/watch/master-your-money/avoid-the-use-of-debt/

1. Introduction
   1. Recap of the 5 steps on our financial journey
      1. May be wondering how to move from one step to the next – no matter where you are
   2. Lead into VIDEO 6 where Ron recaps the 5 biblical principles
      1. Spend less than you earn
      2. Avoid the use of debt
      3. Build margin (save)
      4. Set long term goals
      5. Give generously
2. Avoid the Use of Debt
   1. We are all creatures of our culture – culture becomes normal for us – only as we look back do we often realize our decisions are dumb
      1. Example: Fashion from the 60s or 70s or 80s
         1. It feels normal, but looking back it feels dumb
      2. Debt without discussion is something we will look back on and realize it was stupid
      3. Introduce VIDEO 7 where Ron addresses the pressure in our culture to use debt to fund our lifestyles
         1. We all need encouragement to live differently than the rest of society with respect of debt
         2. Culture has redefined what it means to be able to afford something
   2. The problem with **Greed** is that it masks as **Need**
      1. Once we say we need it, it is easier to justify
      2. Francis of Assisi – “Man has confessed every sin to me except for greed”
      3. Greed is hard to identify because what others have that we don’t have is always in our face: social media, online shopping, commercials, etc.
         1. ILLUSTRATION – there is a story that was circulated recently about a 17-year-old Chinese teenager who sold his kidney on the black market and used the money to buy an iPad and an iPhone. When his mom came home and found him in very bad shape, he simply explained that he sold his kidney because he “needed” the iPad and iPhone.
   3. The Bible talks more about money than faith and prayer combined – this isn’t because God cares about money that much, but it is because we do
      1. The way you feel about money is a direct expression of your faith
      2. Luke 12:13-15
         1. Context: chapter 12 Jesus is talking to thousands of people and He is teaching them to be on guard and telling them to live for larger things than material wealth. In the midst of this sermon, a guy interrupts Him thinking “my brother needs to hear this sermon about materialism.”
            1. It is so much easier to see greed in others than in ourselves
         2. v. 15 – life does not consist in the abundance of your possessions
            1. Jesus did not answer the man’s question, He says your life does not consist of greed
   4. Master Your Money chapter 5 – “The Dangers of Debt”
      1. Debt has the reverse impact than we intended – listen to Ron explain how debt has the long-term effect of lowering our standard of living: VIDEO 8
      2. You cannot borrow your way to the next step of the financial journey
         1. If you do that, instead of going forward, you go backward
            1. If you don’t conquer lies, they will conquer you
   5. Three things we need to protect:
      1. Protect From Impulse
         1. Listen to Ron explain how to protect ourselves from impulse: VIDEO 9
         2. Get control by setting a budget – a budget is a set of pre-made decisions
            1. This is just like dieting and exercise – have to pre-decide what you are going to eat and so you can’t go to a buffet

VIDEO from Jerry Seinfeld regarding a buffet and how it breaks down our judgment: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=984VkHzXl8w> [starting at 3:55 through 4:52]

* + - * 1. A buffet breaks down our mind, reason, and judgment

When we have no limits and treat life like a spending buffet, we will bulge until we bankrupt

Proverbs 22:7

* + - * 1. What spending impulses are conquering you?
        2. What is taking you into debt that can be avoided?
      1. Example: 10/10/80 budget (first 10 to God, second 10 to save, third for lifestyle)
         1. Then you live inside of your 80 (or less) – otherwise your 80 will try to consume your 10/10 and will consume all that is there
    1. Protect From Impatience
       1. Let’s listen to Ron as he helps us learn to protect from impatience: VIDEO 10
       2. Delayed gratification is the way to protect against impatience
          1. It is the process of not spending now, so you can have some later
       3. Where are you pretending you can get ahead without practicing delayed gratification?
       4. Where do you need to wait?
          1. Wait while you work your way there
    2. Protect Your Savings
       1. In VIDEO 11 Ron describes how and why we need to protect our long-term savings
       2. A little bit over a long period of time and you will be just fine
          1. This is really contrary in a culture that tells us we should get it now
       3. You must draw lines and be vigilant
          1. If you don’t draw the line, it will be drawn for you – draw the line so you can be successful
       4. PERSONAL ILLUSTRATION: [provide a story where you or someone else went to extravagant lengths to protect a child or someone who was vulnerable]
          1. If you don’t protect it, everything in this world will drive you to spend it all and you will end up without any savings
          2. This isn’t easy, but it isn’t impossible

You must start getting rid of your consumer and credit card debt and then you will be able to move into saving

* 1. The bottom line with saving and avoiding debt: Get rich slow
     1. Master Your Money page 59 – debt – getting in to debt takes no effort, but getting out is hard because it takes time

1. Conclusion
   1. Being wealthy or being poor are neither a sign of being holy or right with God
   2. PERSONAL ILLUSTRATION: share your own story of struggle and success with money and how you have been able to practice these principles or have struggled in applying them
      1. These principles need to be embraced and practiced
   3. We are more than conquerors – you either conquer the things of the world or they will conquer you