

How Will Your Children Handle Wealth?

Here are five thought-provoking questions to help you lead your children in our material world:

1. Will your children have a biblical perspective of wealth?

The more we can see life from God's point of view, the freer we will be and the more we will experience the richness that God has promised. Jesus said, "I have come that they might have life, and have it abundantly!" (John 10:10)

Those who have lots of money, but who do not see life from God's point of view, lack true wealth, true richness. How many people have you heard of who have much money, but are enslaved by all the shackles of unbelief such as strife, envy, addiction, and excess.

Wealth begins first by tapping into the goldmine of God's wonderful love and peace, which Christ made available to us through faith!

Tier1 Tipping Point™ – What can you do to help your child appreciate that the Bible can help them interpret their lives and make the best responses to life challenges? (We often go no further than code moralism, stressing the "shouldn'ts" and miss the life-giving wisdom which Proverbs provides, as one excellent starting point.)

2. Will your children have a high view of relationships?

Possessing a relationship with the true God, by faith, is true wealth.

Building and nurturing relationships with others, drawing from the wellspring of life in Christ which we have, makes us rich toward others. Pity the person who has a fortune in the bank, but has sold out family and friends to get or keep it.

Passionate followers of Jesus strive to operate at the highest tier of relational integrity and covenanting. Covenanting has to do with making and keeping promises – the foundation of a healthy marketplace and community.

Tier1 Tipping Point™ – How can you reinforce the idea of promise-making and promise-keeping with your children? Don't forget to include 'what to do' when they fail to keep a promise – how to ask forgiveness and make things right.

3. Will your children develop a strong sense of calling?

Building on our relational centre in Christ, and through our family circle and out into the world, the next level is to discern our destiny. Destiny has to do with those great purposes for which God, our Maker, uniquely created us, after which He threw away the mould! Imagine we are all Designer babies when we were brought into the world! God gave each of us an eternal spirit that lives forever and a unique combination of DNA, heritage, culture and circumstances that have shaped our potential in so many ways!

Your talents, skills, gifts and abilities for service to others are a real wealth. It takes wisdom to know what your best spheres of influence include and exclude!

Many businesspeople have lost their shirts by going into spheres beyond their range of ability. In 2 Corinthians 10:13, Paul said that "we will not boast beyond our measure, but within the measure of the sphere which God apportioned to us" Paul, the tentmaker-apostle, refused to go outside his appointed sphere.

One Canadian company, Fisher Gauge Ltd. of Peterborough, Ontario, was founded after the Second World War. Two brothers, starting in a home garage, designed a zinc molding process and made hand mixers. Ches Fisher, one of the brothers, said, "We made 50,000 of them and lost money on every one of them." Through trial and error they perfected their processes and products. Bill was the designer, Ches the business manager.

Decades later their company would become world class, winning many patents and providing technologies that contributed to Rolls Royce jet engine production and many other technically sophisticated production processes. With over three hundred staff in several plants and offices and agents worldwide, they emerged as a kingdom company.

At one point, they also had 150 missionaries on their 'giving' payroll providing partial support. This was just one of many ways in which they *gave back* from what God had entrusted to them.

Tier1 Tipping Point™ – Childhood is about discovery. What is one area of strength you can encourage in your child, to take as far as they can go? Maybe it's hockey. They may play in a Tier7 league and only make it to Tier 5. "Next!"

4. **Will your children take responsibility for the things they own?**

Owning private property is one of the main ways in which God teaches us responsibility.

It starts with how a child takes care of their own bike and possessions, or the family pet. But then it expands into ownership of a home.

The anti-dote to a culture of entitlement, is private ownership of property, intellectual capital, and anything that builds responsibility and duty into our growing children.

Eugene Peterson, in *Like Dew Your Youth*, describes the passage of children into adulthood in our western culture, being shaped by the 16-year-old getting a driver's license, and eventually that young adult getting a car.

Tier1 Tipping Point™ – Is there one key possession your child has with which you can reinforce the idea of responsibility, be it a pet or a new bicycle. Help define three or four things that benchmark being a good steward of that. Then, provide regular check-ins to celebrate, fine tune or correct behaviour. Help them know how pleased God is about this responsibility being done well. Reinforce 'the vertical' relationship with God through the common 'simple' things of life.

5. **Will your children be content with their material status?**

Although we live in material world, we are to come at it as spiritual beings. *Madonna* had it all wrong when she sang, "we live in a material world and I am a material girl."

The Scriptures tells us that "Godliness with contentment is great gain!" The secret of the Apostle Paul's joy was that he learned to be content in times of plenty and in times of lack. Why? Because our life is defined by more than just the material base we operate from.

One key is to learn to share with others in our times of abundance and even in our times of lack.

Tier1 Tipping Point™ – What is one way you can reinforce contentment on a date with a child? For example, could you take toys no longer being used to a drop off centre? Could you volunteer for an hour at the local food bank? Or, could you reach out to one family in need and share in an act of service to them.