

WHEN IS ENOUGH, ENOUGH?

Six Biblical Core Values for Faithful Financial Living

by Shane Stanford (adapted)

What beliefs and principles form who we are? How do our core values define our important boundaries and goals of our lives? And, how are our core values shaping our hearts into vessels for God's good news?

We live in a world of “discontented accumulation” – no matter how much we acquire, it never feeds the real hunger of our lives. Shane Stanford, director of *Stewardship and Discipling Ministries* for the Mississippi United Methodist Foundation in Jackson, Mississippi suggests that the cause of our discontent is more spiritual than financial. Stanford believes that our dissatisfaction comes not from our lack of material wealth, but rather from our inability to connect with God in every facet of our lives, including how we handle our financial resources. And, he acknowledges that we can't fix how and where we choose to spend our money unless we first fix what drives our priorities in this world.

Stanford rightly points out that our priorities must begin with God, not the inflated and misguided values of our world which seems to be bent on gorging itself on one fleeting and unfulfilling delicacy after another. In fact, our spiritual energy comes from living lives devoted to

discovering a deeper understanding of who we are and the Creator to whom we belong, not from fleeting material wealth and the accumulation of material goods.

In teaching about material wealth, Jesus taught that our resources give us opportunities to live faithfully before God and one another. Said another way, money, for Jesus, was just another tool for doing great good in the world!

Having core values provides us with a constant point of reference we can use to measure our successes and our failures. Stanford offers six core values he believes can help to guide, shape, and correct the fundamental paths of our lives and help us to develop our stewardship potential.

On Sunday, October 2nd, 9th, 16th and 30th and November 20th and 27th Sunday insert will include one of Stanford's six core values, a passage from scripture and some thought provoking statements and questions for our prayerful consideration. On each of those Sundays, you are invited to join in conversation immediately following our 9:30 am service in the Oakerhater parlor.

Our hope is that in intentionally setting aside some time to prayerfully consider these six core values we will discover the true price of faith, grow in wisdom and share with one another the blessings, struggles, and joys of living as faithful stewards.