



Know the state of your
flocks, and put your
heart into caring for
your herds, for riches
don't last forever,
and the crown
might not be
passed to the
next generation.

Proverbs 27:23-24

Pay Attention

Be Transformed - Romans 12:2

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Dominion Financial Management, Inc.
For Dominion belongs to The Lord (Psalm 22:28)

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Pay Attention...

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Introduction

Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds; for riches do not endure forever, and a crown is not secure for all generations. Proverbs 27:23-24

In biblical times, shepherds were responsible for caring for the sheep. After all, sheep were equated with wealth. A flock of sheep provided food, clothing, milk, coats and leather that could be used to provide shelter. Imagine being dependent on the sheep for so much, and knowing so little about them. Not knowing how many of them you have, not realizing that they are sick, or that they have been stolen, or killed by wild animals, or that they have just wandered off on their own. What if you only had female sheep? How would you have provision for tomorrow?

The simple commands to know the condition of your flock, and pay attention to your herds make good advice for the shepherd. But what about for us?

We have many sources of income and wealth. We may be employed, make investments, manage a household, draw disability or social security or perhaps we own a business. Regardless of the amount, imagine being dependent on that income for so much, while knowing so little about our finances?

Answer Three Questions

As we enter 2016, many of us decide that we are going to do better. Whether we diet, exercise, or get on a budget, we have all experienced an enthusiastic start that is a distant memory only a few short months later. Why?

For me, I try to take on too many things at the same time. Instead, can I impact my finances by making a *few small* changes? I can start by answering **three questions**. You can too!

Let's begin by knowing the condition of our flock. The first question is, "**How do I spend money?**" Make certain that you can answer this question. If you already know, great! If not, take a close look at your spending. You can use a pencil and paper, keep receipts, create an Excel spreadsheet or download free apps that track spending. No matter the tool, get started and commit to doing it for at least thirty days.

How do I spend money?

Do I **like** how I spend money?

What changes am **I** willing to make?

It will be the least fun, but most helpful thing you can do for your finances. I promise.

So now that I know how I spend money, the second question is "**Do I like how I spend money?**" Am I accomplishing all that I need or want by spending this way? If not, question three quickly follows. "**What changes am I willing to make?**" If you are at all like me, change just for the sake of change will not last. But change that helps accomplish my goals – that, I can do.

Make it Personal, Make it Specific

A simple example is making a temporary (or permanent if needed) change to accomplish a goal that is not already included in my spending plan. If I see that I have spent too much on entertainment, I may decide to reduce the amount and place the extra money in my savings account. I must be intentional by setting a specific goal.

Instead of, “I am going to eat out less to save money,” say, “I spent \$100.00 on eating out last month. I am going to spend \$50 this month. I will deposit the \$50.00 in my savings account at the beginning of the month. I will save for six months and will have \$300 toward my goal.

Set your goal, make it specific and most importantly write it down! It sounds like a lot. But remember: Know the condition of your flock, pay attention! The promise for the shepherd is that the flock will provide food, clothing and milk for the shepherd, the shepherd’s family and servants.

I pray as you make these changes that the same blessings will be yours.

Regina

Author



Regina Harvey is the Executive Director of Dominion Financial Management, Inc. a Christian non-profit in Smyrna, TN whose mission is to coach, teach and counsel from a Biblical viewpoint, so that families will know the right path to take, manage their finances well and experience financial freedom. Mrs. Harvey has developed financial capability and homebuyer education materials used throughout Middle Tennessee and is a certified homebuyer educator and financial coach. She provides RealHelp[™] Sessions where families identify financial goals and develop plans to accomplish them. She has been married to Ron for 32 years and they have three children, Ross (28), Ryan (21) and Reid (20).