

June 4, 2022

Financial Reserves

The first thing people think and talk about in regards to preparedness is food storage. Then they worry about water storage. For many people it ends there. However, for years prophets have talked as much about wise financial reserves. In fact, the Church council for the world is to store water, food, and financial reserves. So what are we supposed to do to prepare financially? Here are the three most basic things.

1. Get out and stay out of debt!
2. Pay a full tithing consistently.
3. Have money on hand

Stay Out of Debt

It is so tempting to buy things that we want or think we need and put them on credit or payments. Spending more money than you really have is an easy habit to start and it is difficult to stop. Many people are in bondage to debt. At that point, it takes only one crisis such as illness, injury, job loss, major repairs, or unexpected problems to change your whole way of life.

One of my children received excellent advice from a wise person. He said, “Keep your options open.” If you do not owe money you have many more options than if you are trying to keep ahead of debt. Over and over we have been told to live within our income. That advice is even better if we can not only live within our income, but also be creating some savings.

One of the wisest people I have known financially found his business not doing well and his finances in trouble. As he prayed about how to handle his situation he worked hard on how to solve the problems. He felt inspired to pay his tithing, his taxes, and live on half of what was left. At that point in his life that wasn't much. He said it took real effort on his family's part. With the other half he paid the debts off. When they were all paid he put the money into savings and then into wise investments. When I knew him he was quite wealthy. He worked to run his business the same way. He was willing to live very frugally in order to have money later on when his family needed it most.

The Church (our stake) offers a self-reliance course on family finance. If you could use a little bit of help in this area I recommend committing the time it takes each week for the length of the course to learn to better manage your finances, and then use the principles you learn. However, you can make it a priority to stay out of debt right now.

Pay a Full Tithing Consistently

While some people have learned to make tithing a priority, others have not. If you are one of those still learning, I will say that when you are truly committed to keeping this commandment it becomes easy, and there are always blessings. I don't think they always show up as unexpected cash as the stories you hear people tell. However, I know there are still blessings you may not even recognize such as appliances that keep running. As we are reading the Old Testament I noticed that while the children of Israel were in the wilderness the Lord caused their clothes to not wear out. That is actually a miracle we don't hear about much.

Paying tithing is not only a temporal law, but it is a law that will strengthen us spiritually and help us to put things in proper perspective and put the Lord first. One religion professor was speaking at a symposium about the book of Revelation and the last days. He said that as people became “drunken” with the importance of having money and the things it can buy they will lose their ability to think rationally. Is tithing one way to keep us

sober and grounded in a day when much of the world is losing their ability to think rationally? This is something to consider. If that is the case, tithing is vital to our survival.

Have Money on Hand

We are not given specific direction as to how to have money in reserve or on hand. How you choose to do this is something you may want to seek personal revelation on. However, here are some things to consider.

- In the past it has been recommended that you work towards having enough money in reserve to keep your family running for a year even if you had no money coming in.
- In studying, I have found that experts recommend having cash to live on for at least 3 months. Whatever you have is better than not having anything.
- In difficult times supplies may be more important than actual cash or even precious metals.
- Skills that you can offer to serve and help others can add to the success of a group working together to thrive in difficult times.

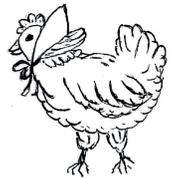
Here is the key question: If you found yourself in a situation where you could not receive any money from the government, the Church, or family, and you lost your means of support, what would you wish you had to make it so that you could be self-reliant. That answer is what you need to address now.

The Principle of the Piggy Bank

Currently most people know what a piggy bank is, but few people have ever really used one and built up a savings of such a kind. During the Great Depression many families had a tin or jar that served the same use. It was a place to keep precious cash for a time when it was especially needed. That money did not get spent for small wants like penny candy or lace and fancy socks. Families economized any way they could to avoid spending that money until it was really needed for something special or vital.

Children's early "piggy banks" usually didn't have a hole in the bottom or a big deposit slot. There wasn't a good way to get your money out except by breaking the ceramic or china pig. That meant you had to really stop and consider what was worth "breaking the bank," because you might not get another one. How different that time was than today when we just zip, tap, or plug in a card to pay for everything we want, often without really even adding it up to see how much we have and how much is being spent. Stop and consider how your life would be different if all you had to spend was what you kept in the piggy bank or "kitty." How would you live differently.

Notes from Red Hen



Dear Aunt Bitty,

The chickens that live safely in the big coop are fed and have their eggs collected daily. They cluck and pick at each other when they get bored. If one gets sick they all get sick. That is about all there is to their life. I guess that has its advantages, but I love the life we have in our small coop with the freedom to make our own choices and manage our own lives.

As chickens that are free to choose, we live a "storybook life" much different than most chickens. That takes work and effort. However, I think it is worth it and I want to always live like we do. Are there any things you have learned that helped you always be self-reliant so that you can maintain your lifestyle and not be totally under the control of the farmer?

Love, Red