

Prologue

Let me introduce you to four people who will help us understand the principles we are going to discuss in **The Truth About Money: How To Find Joy And Peace**, as well as the next two books of **The Truth Trilogy**. Please say hello to Liam, Noah, Emma and Olivia.

These four have been friends since elementary school and then went on to the same high school. They have had some wonderful times together as they grew, matured and prepared for adulthood; an event they greatly anticipate with equal measures of excitement, anticipation and apprehension.

By the time they walked across the stage to get their high school diplomas Liam and Emma were inseparable. Noah and Olivia had dated throughout high school and while they had different attitudes and dreams, it seemed they were made for each other. All four wanted to go to college to better prepare themselves for the future, but choose different educational paths: Liam and Emma wanted to go to school together and both strongly desired to pay for college as they went. They made the decision to attend the local community college for the first two years, allowing them to live at home, ease into college life and, most importantly, minimize their expenses. After graduating in two years, they both enrolled in the State University to complete their education.

Noah and Olivia both desired to fully experience the college life - they did not want to miss a thing. They wanted to go out-of-state to college, but could not agree on a school, so they enrolled in different universities; although they were close enough to maintain their developing relationship. They choose to use any available scholarships, grants and student loans to finance their education.

At State U., Liam and Emma both agreed they wanted to graduate from college in two years with zero student loan debt. By taking advantage of available scholarships, grants, Liam's participation in the University's ROTC Program, and with part-time jobs, they were able to accomplish both these goals. Liam earned a degree in Engineering and Emma graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing. The first thing they did upon graduation was to get married, in their home town, to the delight of family and friends. Liam accepted a commission in the United States Navy and they were off to their first duty station at Norfolk Naval Station in Virginia. Emma immediately started preparing for her State Boards and licensure as a Registered Nurse. They were working hard, meeting life head-on and having the time of their lives.

Meanwhile, Noah and Olivia graduated from their respective universities; Noah with a Bachelor's Degree in Marketing and Olivia with a degree in Education. They had had enough separation, so they too decided to get married shortly after graduation. This allowed them to confine their job searches to large metropolitan areas that both were interested in and would allow plenty of career opportunities for each of them. Noah landed a sales position with a national pharmaceutical company in Chicago and Olivia experienced little difficulty in getting a teaching position in the suburbs. They too were working hard and both were excitedly looking forward to the opportunities and adventures that lay ahead.

Both of our couples, Liam & Emma and Noah & Olivia are off and running in their new homes and careers; with one big difference: Liam and Emma have no student loan debt while Noah and Olivia are starting with a handicap of \$74,344 in student loans (as of this writing in May 2019, the average student loan debt for 2016 (the latest data available) is \$37,172). The terms of Noah and Olivia's student loans are 6.8% interest rate for twenty years which means a combined monthly payment of \$567.50.

*We will pay particular attention to how this student loan debt or lack thereof, effects each of our newly married couples as we progress through **The Truth About Money: How To Find Joy And Peace!** I hope you find our journey interesting.*

Quotation:

“Any government, like any family, can for a year spend a little more than it earns. But you and I know that a continuance of that habit means the poorhouse.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States (1933-1945).