

## GIVING

### A. Love of Money

- a) You can have money in the bank, yet still be poor. Money will NOT make you happy. This is the poverty of the Godless rich. Riches cannot satisfy your deepest longings. You become spiritually poor when you seek satisfaction in riches.
  - i) Pv 11:28
    - (1) Whoever trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will thrive like a green leaf.
  - ii) Pv 13:7
    - (1) One man pretends to be rich, yet has nothing; another pretends to be poor, yet has great wealth.
  - iii) Pv 15:6 When your possessions increase your trouble, you are NOT wealthy
    - (1) The house of the righteous contains great treasure, but the income of the wicked brings them trouble.
  - iv) Pv 28:20
    - (1) A faithful man will be richly blessed, but one eager to get rich will not go unpunished.
  - v) In Luke 12:15, Jesus says:
    - (1) a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.
- b) Joseph, Job, Daniel, David, Solomon, Barnabus, Nicodemus, Mary/Martha/Lazarus, Zacchaeus were all wealthy people, so it is not wealth that is wrong, it is the love of wealth and lack of contentment that hurts us spiritually.
  - i) Ecc 5:10
    - (a) Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless.
  - ii) 1 Tim 6:9-11
    - (1) 9People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. 10For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. 11But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.
  - iii) Heb 13:5
    - (1) Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

### B. True Riches. There are two kinds of riches (worldly & spiritual)

- a) Luke 16:11. Jesus draws a distinction between them.
  - i) So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?
- b) Mt 6:19-24
  - i) 19"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
- c) Luke 12:33-34
  - i) 33Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. 34For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
- d) Col 2:2-4
  - i) 2My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, 3in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. 4I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments.

### C. Generosity

- a) Pv 11:24-25
  - i) 24 One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. 25 A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.
- b) Pv 15:16-17 Think about it. Takers eat better, Givers sleep better.
  - i) 16 Better a little with the fear of the LORD than great wealth with turmoil. 17 Better a meal of vegetables where there is love than a fattened calf with hatred.
- c) 1 Cor 16:1-2 When there was a famine, the Christians saved their money in order to be able to give.
  - i) 1Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. 2On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

d) 1 Tim 6:17-19 We are commanded to put our hope in God and to be generous.

i) 17Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

e) Acts 20:33-35

i) 33I have not coveted anyone's silver or gold or clothing. 34You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. 35In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

D. Generosity does not always lead to riches like they tell you on TV. So much for the health & wealth gospel.

a) Job 21 Job was a generous man, yet God did not spare him from pain & poverty (albeit temporary)

i) 23 One man dies in full vigor, completely secure and at ease, 24 his body well nourished, his bones rich with marrow. 25 Another man dies in bitterness of soul, never having enjoyed anything good. 26 Side by side they lie in the dust, and worms cover them both.

b) Mt 8:19-20 Following Jesus does not bring wealth with it.

i) 19Then a teacher of the law came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." 20Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

c) Heb 10:32-34

i) 32Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering. 33Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. 34You sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions.

E. New Testament Standard for Giving

a) Lk 6:30-35

i) 30Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. 31Do to others as you would have them do to you. 32"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' love those who love them. 33And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' do that. 34And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' lend to 'sinners,' expecting to be repaid in full. 35But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.

b) 2 Cor 9:6-7

i) 6Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 7Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 9As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." 10Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. 11You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. 12This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. 13Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. 14And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. 15Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

c) 2 Cor 8:1-15

i) 1And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. 2Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. 3For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, 4they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. 5And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will. 6So we urged Titus, since he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. 7But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving. 8I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. 9For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. 10And here is my advice about what is best for you in this matter: Last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so. 11Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means. 12For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have. 13Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. 14At the present time your plenty will supply what

they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. Then there will be equality, 15as it is written: "He who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little did not have too little."

d) Mt 6:1-4

- i) 1 "Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. 2" So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

e) Mk 12:41-44 (see also Luke 21:1-4)

- i) 41 Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. 42 But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. 43 Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. 44 They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on."

F. We need to give to God

a) Ps 50:7-15 – God does not need anything from us, we need to give to Him

- i) 7 "Hear, O my people, and I will speak, O Israel, and I will testify against you: I am God, your God. 8 I do not rebuke you for your sacrifices or your burnt offerings, which are ever before me. 9 I have no need of a bull from your stall or of goats from your pens, 10 for every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. 11 I know every bird in the mountains, and the creatures of the field are mine. 12 If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is mine, and all that is in it. 13 Do I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats? 14 Sacrifice thank offerings to God, fulfill your vows to the Most High, 15 and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me."

ii) If God does not need anything from us, then why should people give to Him?

- (1) God will deliver us in our day of trouble. That is a good thing.
- (2) How does giving benefit us?
  - (a) What does giving do for our heart?
  - (b) What does focusing on and meeting the needs of others change in us?

G. Jesus says give to everyone who asks you, but ...

a) 2 Th 3:10-15 Can't just mooch off of others and borrow all the time, you must work (if you are physically able).

- i) 10 For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." 11 We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. 12 Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat. 13 And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right. 14 If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed. 15 Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

ii) You need a job. Any job. This is how you earn your keep according to the Lord.

H. Tithing [some opinions, not all agree]

a) From GotQuestions.org (see <http://www.gotquestions.org/tithing-debt.html> citing the book "Giving and Tithing" by Larry Burkett):

- i) It is permissible to stop tithing while paying off debt. Paying debts is a duty; tithing is "optional." Please do not misunderstand—giving to the Lord's work is very important. Sacrificial financial giving is part of God's calling for every Christian. If it is truly impossible to pay off the debt and continue tithing at the same time, it would not be wrong to decrease giving, or stop giving entirely, temporarily, in order to pay off the debts that are owed.
- ii) Our one unalterable duty toward other people is that we love them, dealing with them as we want them to deal with us (Matthew 7:12). All of us want people to pay the debts they owe us. Therefore, as Christians, we should "Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law" (Romans 13:8-10).
- iii) Christians shouldn't hoard but give as much as God directs. It is God's money. His rewards outweigh the cost. "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work" (2 Corinthians 9:6-8).

b) From Doug Jacoby's website (see [http://www.douglasjacoby.com/view\\_article.php?ID=1483](http://www.douglasjacoby.com/view_article.php?ID=1483)):

- i) [In] Luke 21:1-4 [Widow,] Sacrifice is relative, and Jesus commends someone who clearly gave well over 10%. I have no problem with 10% as a suggested minimum. But to say it's the command of God, or to be hardline about it, gives me problems. At any rate, there's no suggestion in this passage that the givers were tithing.

- ii) Should we keep giving sacrificially? Absolutely yes! Are we commanded to support our leaders? Yes! Gal 6.6, Matt 10.10 and other verses make that clear. But is there a fixed amount God wills we should give? The burden of proof is on those who would extend the Old Testament's agricultural tithe to total income today. When we do that, it seems to me we're "going beyond what is written" (1 Cor 4.6).
  - iii) My study of the New Testament leads me to the following conclusions:
    - (1) There is no maximum level at which we ought to be giving our contributions. On the other hand, there is no minimum level at which we ought to be giving, either.
    - (2) Legalism is a temptation where it pertains to contributions.
    - (3) Giving is to be liberal, ungrudging, and sacrificial. In my opinion, most of our first world members -- above all in the United States -- can afford to and ought to give over the 10% level.
    - (4) In all things, we are to honor God with our wealth (Proverbs 3:9). That is the heart of the matter.
  - c) From *The Evolving Tithe* by Mark Shaw (see <http://www.douglasjacoby.com/attachments/Tithe.pdf>):
    - i) A sweeping overview of the NT reveals a startling omission regarding a system of giving. In fact, it appears that there was no attempt to crystallize such a monetary system. More so, we find some congregations refusing to pay for a fulltime staff (Corinth), yet still encouraged (1Corinthians 1:4) for their participation in God's grace. Some congregations (Philippi) gave to support their father in the faith, Paul, on other mission fields (e.g. Corinth). Most congregations gave to support a specific need among impoverished brethren in lands so far away they would never see them! Yet no system, no yearly calculated system. No growth charts, no spread sheets. Yet the gospel was spread to the borders of their known world. Maybe their ad hoc concept wasn't so bad after all.
    - ii) On the flip side, we also see that, despite not being held accountable on their contribution, the Philippian church gave sacrificially again and again. May this example be an upward call to us all!
  - d) From GotQuestions.org (see <http://www.gotquestions.org/tithe-gross-net.html> citing the book "Giving and Tithing" by Larry Burkett):
    - i) Believers in Christ are not commanded to give 10% of their income. Each and every Christian should diligently pray and seek God's wisdom as to how much he or she should give (James 1:5). Many people believe that the Old Testament tithe is a good principle for believers to follow. Giving 10% of your income back to God demonstrates your thankfulness to Him for what He has provided and helps you to remember to rely on God instead of on riches.
    - ii) The Bible does not specifically say whether we should give 10% off our gross or net income. The Old Testament teaches the principle of firstfruits (Exodus 23:16; 34:22; Leviticus 2:12-14; 2 Chronicles 31:5). Old Testament believers gave from the best of their crops, not the leftovers. The same principle should apply to our giving today. Again, a believer should give what he believes God would have him give. It all goes back to the attitude of the heart. Are we giving out of reverence for God or out of selfishness for our own wealth? "Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7).
  - e) From GotQuestions.org (see <http://www.gotquestions.org/firstfruits-offering.html> citing the book "Giving and Tithing" by Larry Burkett):
    - i) The firstfruits offering is never directly applied to Christian giving in the New Testament. However, Paul taught the Corinthian believers to set aside a collection "on the first day of the week" (1 Corinthians 16:2). And, just as the offering of firstfruits was an occasion of thanksgiving, so the Christian is to give with gladness.
    - ii) In summary, firstfruits symbolizes God's harvest of souls, it illustrates giving to God from a grateful heart, and it sets a pattern of giving back to Him the first (and the best) of what He has given us. Not being under the Old Testament Law, the Christian is under no further obligation than to give cheerfully and liberally (2 Corinthians 9:6-7).
- I. Nonaccumulation. For a completely different point of view on wealth accumulation that teaches that Christians should not save, see *Through the Eye of a Needle: the Doctrine of Nonaccumulation* by Roger Hertzler (at <http://www.elcristianismoprimitivo.com/througheyeofneedle.pdf>). Some highlights:
- a) A teacher at a Bible school for young people stands up and announces, "In our class on Christian Stewardship today we are going to look specifically at the subject of financial management and some Biblical principles about how we are to handle money." He then goes on to teach about long-range planning, especially emphasizing the benefits of disciplining ourselves to put at least a small amount of money each month into savings. ... The students, noticeably impressed, take part in the ensuing class discussion about how a person can, by a little hard work and consistent self-discipline, build up for himself a nice nest egg for the future. This money then will be available to care for his personal needs, to give to his church, or to pass on to his children.
  - b) Another teacher at a different Bible school makes this statement: "When Jesus gave the command 'Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth', He literally meant that as His followers, we are not to accumulate unused wealth on this earth." This teacher then goes on to bring other Scriptures into the discussion, including the reasons Christ has forbidden us to accumulate wealth and the consequences we'll face if we do it anyway.
  - c) So what is the doctrine of nonaccumulation? Quite simply, it is the doctrine stating that Jesus forbids His people to accumulate wealth on this earth [Mt 6:19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth"], but rather commands them to distribute those possessions they do not currently need for the needs of others and for spreading the gospel [Lk 12:33 "Sell your possessions and give to the poor"]. Or to condense it into a few words, this doctrine says that Jesus commands us to distribute rather than accumulate earthly wealth.