

Money, Part III – Giving Back

Introduction:

Quick review

- God's part is ownership, control and provision
- Our part is stewardship-faithful stewardship
- Stewardship includes avoiding debt, spending wisely
- Now lets talk about another essential part of stewardship—giving

• Attitude of Giving

- Attitude is key—cannot stress enough the importance of giving with the proper attitude—we are just giving back a small amount of what God has so richly blessed us with
- When we give, it's the very attribute of God that is reflected in His most precious gift, one He did not count the cost of
- **John 3:16**—He gave His Son—our attitude in giving, is reflective of how we see His gift to us
- **I Cor 13:3**—out of a heart of love
- **I Cor 9:7**— Give cheerfully
- **Prov 3:9** -- Give to God first
- Cain and Able—not so much about blood sacrifice—Cain did not give of his best (Gen 4—after the course of time, not first fruits)

-- Our giving is a tangible confession of our faith

• Advantages of giving

- Increase in intimacy – **Matt 6:20-21**.
 - When you give your gift to Him, your heart will automatically be drawn to the Lord
 - Don't be critical, give as if your giving to Christ
- Investments for Eternity
 - Put treasures in heaven (**Matt 6:20**)
 - Prov 13:21 – “Evil pursues sinners, But to the righteous, good shall be repaid.”
- Develops Character
 - “Giving is not God's way of raising money; it is God's way of raising people into the likeness of His son”
 - **Phil 4:14-17**— nevertheless you have done well that you shared in my distress. Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. For even in Thessalonica you sent *aid* once and again for my necessities. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account.
 - kindness in giving, fruit that increases your giving, “but I seek the fruit of your giving

- **I Tim 6:18-19** -- *Let them* do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life
 - Increase in material blessings – possible but not guaranteed
 - Prov 11:24-25 -- There is *one* who scatters, yet increases more; and there is *one* who withholds more than is right, but it *leads* to poverty. The generous soul will be made rich, and he who waters will also be watered himself.
 - I Cor 9:6-8 -- But this *I say*: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. *So let* each one *give* as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may have an abundance for every good work.
 - These verses clearly teach that giving results in material increase, but notice the purpose – that you may have an abundance for every good work—it’s not just for you to fatten your bank account, have a bigger house, faster car, etc.
 - Can produce material increase to the giver—emphasize “**Can**” **not an if, then--** If He does, He does it because you are faithful steward and God knows if He gives you more, you will share more. May not happen.
 - Martin Luther—I’ve tried to hold on to things with my hands and lost them all, and the things I have given to God, I still possess.
- **Amount of giving** -- what amount should I give?
 - Tithe – God sets (10%) – Abraham to Melchizedek & Jacob gave tithe before the codification on the law
 - After Exodus – codified (**Deut 14:22** -- You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year. (Lev 27)
 - It is the Lord’s (Tithes are Gods, Offerings are what we give above tithe—(Num 18)
 - When the children of Israel failed to give the tithe, it was considered robbing God
 - Mal 3:8 -- Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘ In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, *Even* this whole nation
 - Mathew – tithe mint, cumin, but forget weightier matters—don’t be legalistic about it
 - Good thing about the tithe or any fixed percentage giving is that it is systematic and the amount of the gift is easy to compute
 - Danger is that it becomes just another bill to pay. By not giving out of a heart of love, we place ourselves where we cannot receive the blessings the Lord has designed for the giver.
 - Another danger is that once I have given my tithe, I have fulfilled my giving obligations to give
 - Tithe should be the beginning of giving for Christians, not the limit

- Scripture is unclear on the exact amount that we should give and that could be because it should be personal, private matter between the giver and God and one of prayerful consideration, which can make it an exciting adventure.
- Teach yourself to pray about your giving decisions and teach your children to pray for their wants as well as their needs and let God provide.
- Offerings
 - David fund raise for building and Solomon
 - In NT for struggling churches
 - Most vivid in scripture (Widow's mite)
 - Ananias and Saphirah – punished because they held back
 - More blessed to give than to receive
- **To whom should I give?**
 - The tithe is the means to run and operate the church (e.g. of tithe for the Levites)
 - **I Tim 5:17ff** “The laborer *is* worthy of his wages.”
 - **Gal 6:6-10** – “let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.”
 - **Num 18:21ff** – God gave the Levites the tithe for their service in the tabernacle
 - Give to your family (**I Tim 5:8**).
 - Give to the poor (Matt 25:34-45 --those that are truly His...unto the least of these)
- **How should I give?** – the pattern of giving (“Paul’s P’s” – I Cor 16:2)
 - It should be **Personal** -- It’s each Christian’s privilege and responsibility to give “*Let each one of you...*”
 - It should be **Periodic** – “on the first day of every week”—giving regularly helps draw us consistently to Christ
 - It should be of a **Private** deposit – “put aside and save” – use the envelope system if you have to or open a special checking account that you give from
 - It should be **Premeditated** – “collections be made when I come.”
 - Well thought and planned out, as well as prayed about.—not grudgingly or of necessity...
 - Heb 12:2—ultimate example is Christ.

Conclusion:

Remember that God will provide and when we give with the right attitude, He will give back in many different ways. When we give it away is when we really start enjoying it.