

Money Managers Pt. 4, Principles of Giving, 10/1/17

Recap:

Started this series with the big picture-

Week 1: God owns everything, we manage it, we are responsible.

Week 2- Where our treasure is, that's where our heart will be also. God wants us to be generous in our giving not because he wants our money but because he wants our hearts.

Week 3: Last week, Pastor Matthew talked about God's heart for the "least of these." That we have been blessed so that we would be a blessing to others in need.

This week we want to transition to the "How-To."

Week 4: How do we develop a plan for managing our money in a way best aligns with what the Bible teaches? We all need a plan don't we? You might be here today and you wouldn't label yourself a Christian, checking out religion, you might be an atheist but we believe that what the Bible teaches on about finances is great advice for everyone. Going to try to make this really simple because I recognize that many of us here would be the first to confess that we are not very good with handling money, maybe good at spending it but our eyes glaze over when we pull out spreadsheets, pie charts, etc.

You can basically do 5 things with your money.

1. Spend (me)
2. Repay debt (me)
3. Pay taxes (America)
4. Save (me)
5. Give (God/Others)

For most Americans, this is our order. Here's the problem with this- God inevitably gets our leftovers in this system. And then many of us ask him for his blessing, his help...God is gracious and so sometimes he bails us out in spite of this, but we are putting up road blocks for God to act powerfully in our lives when he is last. What we are going to see from God's Word is this- When we prioritize our money God's way it is an invitation for Him to move powerfully in our lives. I want to show you this theme through three sections of Scripture, Old Testament, Words of Jesus and Apostle Paul to the Church.

Malachi 3:7-10

Return to me, and I will return to you," says the Lord Almighty. "But you ask, 'How are we to return?'⁸ "Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How are we robbing you?'

"In tithes and offerings.⁹ You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me.¹⁰ Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house.

Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it."

-They were bringing leftovers... taking care of themselves first and then getting to God.

-You want me to return to you, open my hand to you? Tithes and Offerings- 10% of all sources of income- Temple tax, once a year 10% for a massive love feast, giving to the poor- 23.3% of annual income.

-God is saying- I dare you to make me first and watch what I do. This isn't about getting your money, this is about getting your heart. Your heart follows your money!

This was a promise to Israel under the Old Covenant.

Jesus in Matthew 6:31-33

³¹ So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

-Put me at the top of the list and then I will provide for the rest of it.

2 Corinthians 8:5

They gave themselves first to the Lord.

Macedonians example, Paul tells the church in Corinth to follow their example in giving. Giving themselves first to the Lord.

2 Corinthians 9:8-11

⁸ And God is able to bless you abundantly...

-Is this a promise that God will make you rich? Some prosperity Gospel preachers preach this...meanwhile, often there congregations are made up of many who are economically poor while they drive around in Bentleys and have 10,000 sq. ft. homes.. Tragic on so many levels. Motivating people to give in order to become rich does not lead to godliness. It leads to idolatry. Because it makes Christ a means to an end. To another god, a false god..the god of wealth...so destructive.

So how does God bless us abundantly when we put him first with our money?

...so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. ⁹ As it is written: "They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever."

¹⁰ Now 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. ¹¹ You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

God is able to supply us with everything we need, so that we can give more...not to increase your standard of living, but to increase your standard of giving.

Over and over again we see this principle- If you prioritize giving to God first- we are inviting God to open his hand toward us.

What about the tithe? How much should I give?

Different opinions on this..that's ok. This is my understanding.

NT never commands Christians to tithe... Jesus talked about it, but he also talked about sacrificing animals and we don't do that... this is under old covenant. However, I do believe the tithe (10%) is a good starting point.

Randy Alcorn- Tithing is like the training wheels of giving.

Under the new covenant, the better covenant surely our giving doesn't lessen, standards, if anything it raises the standard! Our new testament standard according to Paul in 2 Cor. 8 is giving like Jesus gave to us. Response to the immeasurable grace we have received in Jesus. The question is tell me how much I HAVE to give, it's how much to I get to give! How can I use my resources to show that Christ is my treasure?

A Better Plan

1. Give
2. Save
3. Pay Taxes
4. Repay Debt
5. Spend

Money example

Conventional wisdom- Me first, God says you 5th! As long as you continue to put yourself first you will never feel like you have enough. You put God first and we open up his hand toward you. Do you believe that's true? This is a faith proposition. Read the letter...

Can you imagine what would happen if we did this?

Median Income, 10% 2.8 mill.

Credit card debt- average 1600...\$640,000 per year

Pay off our debt. Deal with poverty, addictions...

Buy Epiphany a building

When giving is #1- God does something personally...he also does something corporately. What if BVBC led the way?

Communion- **Communion Reveals Jesus' Priority, US!**

Jesus didn't tithe 10% of his body and blood... he gave 100% of it.