

## Lesson 4: The Heart of a Giver

### 1. Three reasons to study the disciple's use of money.

- a. **How we handle money affects our relationship with the Lord.** Read Luke 16:11. In this verse Jesus equates how we handle money with the quality of our spiritual life.
- b. **Our possessions compete with the Lord for lordship.** Read Matthew 6:24. You cannot serve the Lord and money at the same time.
- c. **Much of life revolves around our use of money.** Consider how much time you spend earning, spending, determining how to save or invest your money. Is there any doubt that money, and the lack of it, makes a significant impact on your actions and reactions?

### 2. God owns everything

Read the following verses and fill in the blanks.

- Psalm 50:10-12 \_\_\_\_\_ belongs to God
- 1 Samuel 2:7 “poverty and \_\_\_\_\_ depend on God
- 1 Corinthians 6:20 my \_\_\_\_\_ belongs to Him

### 3. God doesn't share ownership

- According to Deuteronomy 8:11-18, who gives you the ability to earn wealth?

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Since God gives even the ability to earn wealth, He remains in control of everything. He does not share His ownership just by allowing us to be responsible for part of His universe.

### 4. The disciple as a steward

Read Luke 19:11-19.

- a. **Each disciple has time, talents, and treasure.** These three components are given by God to every disciple to manage. Even though we differ as to the quantity and quality of each, we are still all given a portion of each. In Luke 19 Jesus tells a story of a king and his servants. He leaves each with one mina and tells them to invest it (or do business with it). He then returns to see how they have done with what was given them. Just as they were evaluated, so will you be evaluated for what you have done with you time, talents and treasure. **His question to you would be, “Is the Kingdom better off because of what you did with what I gave you?”**

Read: 1 Cor 3:11-15 and 1 Cor 5:10-11

- b. Each disciple will give an account.** You will stand before God and give an account. Your use of the possessions, and specifically, your money will be evaluated and you will be rewarded appropriately.

### From Luke 19

**1. For faithful service the disciple will** *(verse 17)*

- hear God say \_\_\_\_\_
- and receive a Kingdom inheritance (rule over \_\_\_\_\_ cities)

**2. For “half” faithful service the disciple will** *(verse 19)*

- receive a Kingdom inheritance (rule over \_\_\_\_\_ cities)

**3. The worthless servant**

The worthless servant played it safe. He hid his mina and had nothing to show. What was his punishment?

1. Jesus called him a *(verse 22)* \_\_\_\_\_
2. Jesus took *(verse 24)* \_\_\_\_\_

**5. God’s Part: ownership, control, and care**

**a. God owns everything.** We have already said this but it needs to be restated.

Listen to the Psalmist in Psalm 24:1,

*“The earth is the Lord’s, and all it contains.”*

**b. God has ultimate control of every event that occurs.**

1 Chronicles 29:11-12 states, *“Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor; for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all. Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all.*

According to these verses, who controls wealth, honor, strength, and power?

\_\_\_\_\_

Is your promotion in His hands? Even difficult circumstances have to flow through His hands before they come to you. While He is not the author of evil, He does allow certain freedoms that end in sinfulness. But Romans 8:28 says that all things work together for good to those called according to His purpose. Is there any doubt that God is still in control?

God sometimes acts to intervene in human events. We call that, *miracle*. But He does not always do as we wish. That is His sovereignty at work. Remember, it is His world—not ours!

According to 1 Corinthians 10:13, is there any event that comes to you in which you are left powerless to win a victory? \_\_\_\_\_

God is faithful. You can depend on Him, He is in complete control.

This ought to give you great peace. Better God to be in control than some inordinate, impersonal “fate” that does not know you or care about you! Better God to be sovereign, than you or me!!! He’s much better at it!

**c. God promises to provide for our needs.**

Read the following verse and rewrite it in your own words, personalizing it.

Matthew 6:33

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What did Abraham call God in Genesis 22:14? (*Jehovah-jireh*)

“The Lord will \_\_\_\_\_.”

Do you think He will also provide for you?

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What is the promise of Philippians 4:19?

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**6. Our Part: Faithfulness**

**a. Faithful with all our resources.** As stated earlier, you will be evaluated by the Lord for your faithfulness, not for the quantity of your abilities, talents, or wealth.

**b. Faithfulness in little things.** Read Luke 16:10. How would you know if a child will take care of his first car? You would observe how he cares for his bike! Faithfulness in little things brings the proper discipline in a person’s life that will make him faithful in the big things.

**7. Faithfulness in giving**

**a. Attitude in giving.**

Read 1 Corinthians 13:3. What should be our primary attitude in giving?

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If giving is merely to a church, ministry or to a needy person, it is only *charity*. But if it is to the Lord, it becomes an act of worship. That is why it must be done in love. We express our gratefulness, our love by giving our gifts to Him.

To give without love for God turns giving into a shameful, manipulative event. Some give to get!! What a travesty. When one gives out of a heart full of love for God, there is never anything expected in return—it is a gift! When we expect a return on our giving it is no longer a gift but an investment. It is gain we want, not love that we give.

**b. Advantages in giving.**

Acts 20:35 states, “*It is more blessed to give than to receive.*”

There are several benefits to giving.

**1. Giving develops our character.**

Read 1 Timothy 6:18-19. We are encouraged to be generous because it is the character of God to be so. Remember John 3:16, “... *God so loved...that He gave...*” George Mueller spent his entire life sharing generously to the needy and is remembered as a man whose prayers were answered and by whom orphans were fed.

**2. Giving increases intimacy with God.** Read Matthew 6:21.

Where is your heart? \_\_\_\_\_

It takes a great deal of money to live. If there is nothing left for giving you should consider changing your budget, or your lifestyle.

**3. Giving is an investment for eternity.** Compare Matthew 6:20 and Philippians 4:17. Consider where your giving account is being held.

**4. Giving increases our material blessings.**

According to Proverbs 11:24-25, what will the generous man be?

\_\_\_\_\_.

According to 2 Corinthians 9:6-8, what will you have in return for giving bountifully? \_\_\_\_\_.

What will you be able to do with this abundance?

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**c. Amount to give.**

**1. The Old Testament.** In the Old Testament the *tithe*, or tenth, was

required to be given by every Hebrew. Read Malachi 3:8-9.

How were they robbing God? \_\_\_\_\_

They were also required to give offerings above their tithe. This means that under the Law, without the benefit of the power of the Spirit, normal, everyday Hebrews gave over 10% of their income to God. Sometimes as much as 30%!! We are no longer under the Law but it is certainly a guide for us. Does it even sound right that those without the Spirit were required to give at least 10%, while those with the Spirit would, out of love, give less?

**2. The New Testament.** There is no specified amount in the New Testament. The tithe is not specifically rejected or recommended. From 2 Corinthians 8-9 we learn that our giving should be:

2 Cor 8:12-14     **Proportional** to our wealth (not all the same amount)

2 Cor 9:6         **Bountiful** (never stingy)

2 Cor 9:7         **Cheerful** (not out of duty, but joy-hilariously)

Each disciple should **begin** to work towards giving a tithe. The tithe is systematic and easy to compute. But the amount should never replace the leading of the Holy Spirit. The closer you are to the Lord the more you will give—it is His character to give. Besides, the more you give, the more He returns, and the more you will have to give, and want to give!

#### **d. To whom do we give?**

**1. The local Church, Christian Workers and Ministries.** Far too many Christian workers have been distracted from their ministry because Christians have not obeyed the Lord in giving.

*Read 1 Timothy 5:17. By double honor Paul means “pay”. In order to properly minister to the flock the Pastor must be paid an adequate salary. The local Church cannot continue to function, providing you with opportunities to grow, minister, worship and pray, and reach the lost unless you support it financially. While it does not seem very glorious to give for the light bill—how will you see to read the Word without the light?*

**2. Your Family.** Read 1 Timothy 5:8. It is your first responsibility to provide for your family. One note of caution: wants are not needs! Take care of your family, but do not indulge them at the expense of the Church or the truly needy.

**3. The Poor.** Jesus personally identifies with the poor. Read Matthew 25:34-45. Do you want to minister to Christ? Give to the poor!

#### **8. Begin giving today!**