

OUTLINE – BIBLICAL STEWARDSHIP FOR TODAY

- 1) Overview – Biblical Stewardship
- 2) Money – Making Money is Easy, Keeping it is the Hard Part
- 3) Debt – The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly
- 4) Tithing – The New Testament Way
- 5) Benevolence Giving – Do's and Don'ts
- 6) God's Wisdom on Money
- 7) God's Economy
- 8) Prosperity Preaching – Pros & Cons
- 9) **Attitude is the Key for God to Bless**
- 10) Biblical Investing vs Gambling
- 11) Retirement and Taxes

INTRODUCTION / GOALS / OBJECTIVES

- We know the do's and don't's to meet God's will – BUT what about our disposition, our mental state, IOW, our ATTITUDE?
- What if we do what is right, but we don't feel like doing it?
 - ♦ E.g., We are encouraged to be "cheerful givers" but it is mentally hard to release much-needed income and be happy or cheerful about it; So, is it better to be cheerful about keeping hard-earned money, or upset about giving hard-earned money away to a church?
- God does not punish NT saints for not giving, but there are consequences for not giving. **What are they?**
 - ♦ God cannot bless the way He wants to bless
 - ♦ We do ourselves more harm than good by not giving
- Giving to God is not bribing God for blessings; rather, proper giving (Proportionately, Consistently, Willfully, Cheerfully, Sacrificially, Generously) puts us where we need to be w/ God.

Attitude is the Key

- Proper giving is a window into the soul, able to lead to salvation (Ps 50:23; Acts 10), but not an indicator of salvation
- And – we are commanded to give so that we can receive (Lk 6:38) and to give more (2 Cor 9:11)
- You don't get closer to God by making a commitment to Tithe or to give proportionately.
 - ♦ A commitment to Tithe/Give is an indication that one HAS gotten closer to God (Ps 50:23; Acts 10)
- God uses a reward-based approach to motivate NT giving (...and very few Christians take full advantage of this)
 - ♦ Give & it will be given.....Lk 6:38
 - ♦ Enriched by God to be more generous.....2 Cor 9:8-11
 - ♦ Rich get richer, poor get poorer..... Mat 25:14-30; Lk 19:15-26
- NT giving/receiving approach must be biblically balanced – there is a good probability for many, but no guarantee for all to be blessed with earthly or material blessings. However, all faithful givers will be blessed eternally (Mt 19:21; Lk 12:33)



Consider a Church Expansion Program

- Are we guaranteed blessings in this life if we give to it?..... No
- Will we be eternally rewarded for tithing or faithfully giving?Yes
- What if we misread God's hand on this venture?
 - ...Then sell the real estate and go in another direction after assessing any lessons learned.
- What do we get for our time, treasure, and tears spent on this?
 - ♦ A larger community reached for Christ
 - ♦ Personal and church spiritual growth
 - ♦ Unimaginable rewards in glory (even after we are long gone, we stand to continually reap rewards from our earthly endeavors – Phil 4:15-17)
- Stewardship is a matter of trust over someone else's resources
- God calls us to be His faithful stewards - knowing what to do, how to do it, where to do it, and when to do it – with His guidance
- Our money competes for God's lordship, so God constantly challenges us on this issue
- Money is the only area that God asks to be tested in (Mal 3:10)
- We can fake commitment until it's time to make a deposit

TOUGH QUESTIONS

- 1) If God doesn't need us or our money, why should we give?
 - a) Giving is for our benefit, and we get to see God at work
- 2) What's the purpose of Tithes & Offerings?

Answer: To make us more reliant on HimDeut 14:23
- 3) Does our giving impact someone's eternal destiny **Yes & No**
 - a) **Yes:** God uses our gifts to bring His elect to Him – and this is credited to our account (Phil 4:15-17). If we do not give, God credits someone else's account.
 - b) **No:** If we do not give, we give an account through loss of blessings/rewards ("...his blood will I require at the watchman's hand" – Ezek 18:20; 33:1-7) but we do not cause someone to go to Hell (for no one has an excuse).....Rom 1:20
- 4) Does God require us to live sacrificially?..... **Yes**
 - a) Our reasonable/logical service is to present our bodies as a living sacrifice.....Rom 12:1
 - b) God is well pleased with sacrificial giving (time, effort & resources)Heb 13:6
- 5) If the readiness/willingness is there – the amount or percentage% doesn't matter. Is this true?Only if you want to reap little!
- 6) Thoughtfully think through your giving habits
 - a) How much should I give?
 - b) How often?
 - c) Too whom?
 - d) What do I need to sacrifice? (possessions, time, effort)

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS / BENEFITS

Give God the Responsibility over your Finances

- God will still bless our good behavior in spite of our attitude, but we can only enjoy God's blessings if we have a good/positive demeanor and not one that is selfish – what's-in-it-for-me
- What good is it to obey God's directives if the wicked get richer and Christians are always behind the power curve? (Psalm 73:12)
 - ♦ **Answer:** God takes responsibility for our outcomes. We do not have to worry! (Psalm 73:23-28)
- Therefore - If we do what we know to do from Scripture, and we are hit with financial or any other types of misfortunes, God assumes responsibility. → CHRISTIAN ADVANTAGE ←

NEXT WEEK: Biblical Investing vs Gambling – What's the Diff?

