

THURSDAY — A Christ-filled attitude toward giving

Big Point: Give joyfully and without over zealous attention to yourself as God loves a cheerful and self-less giver.

On page 11, see the Response Questions for Giving in order to complete the Commitment portion of the Missional Membership Process.

Followers of Christ realize that God is the owner and giver of all things and that we are God's managers of all that He has entrusted to us.

In light of this, they desire to be responsible caretakers of the material resources that God has entrusted to them. They recognize the tithe (10% of one's earnings) as the historic standard of giving in Scripture. But moreover, in response to Christ's abundant giving, they increasingly submit to His Lordship and display a spirit of generosity and cheerfulness in supporting the work of the church.

READ and THINK...Find Answers in the Bible

Savings and Debt

1. In this age of easy credit and consumer debt, what does the timeless wisdom of God have to say concerning how we as Christ-followers handle our desires and indebtedness?

Proverbs 22:7 and 26-27 (New Living Translation)

⁷Just as the rich rule the poor, so the borrower is servant to the lender ... ²⁶Do not co-sign another person's note or put up a guarantee for someone else's loan. ²⁷If you can't pay it, even your bed will be snatched from under you.

Answer:

2. Why do you think the Scriptures elevate practices such as saving and avoiding debt to a spiritual level rather than just a simple monetary one?

Answer:

Attitudes toward Money and Giving

1. What additional lessons about giving can be gleaned from the following passages? (See also Proverbs 23:4-5)

Matthew 6:3-4 (New Living Translation)

But when you give to someone, don't tell your left hand what your right hand is doing. ⁴Give your gifts in secret, and your Father, who knows all secrets, will reward you.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2 (New Living Translation)

Now about the money being collected for the Christians in Jerusalem: You should follow the same procedures I gave to the churches in Galatia. ²On every Lord's Day, each of you should put aside some amount of money in relation to what you have earned and save it for this offering. Don't wait until I get there and then try to collect it all at once.

2 Corinthians 8:8 (New Living Translation)

I am not commanding you to do this. But I am testing how genuine your love is by comparing it with the eagerness of the other churches.

1 Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19 (New Living Translation)

Yet true religion with contentment is great wealth. ⁷After all, we didn't bring anything with us when we came into the world, and we certainly cannot carry anything with us when we die. ⁸So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content. ⁹But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰For the love of money is at the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows ... ¹⁷Tell those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which will soon be gone. But their trust should be in the living God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. ¹⁸Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and should give generously to those in need, always being ready to share with others whatever God has given them. ¹⁹By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may take hold of real life.

Answer:

2. What attitudes should characterize giving according to 2 Corinthians 9:6-7?

2 Corinthians 9:6-7 (New Living Translation)

Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But one who plants generously will get a generous crop. ⁷You must each make up your own mind as to how much you should give. Don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. For God loves the person who gives cheerfully.

Answer:

PRAY...God, What do you want me to know & do?

Ask God to help you apply the above scripture by learning how to save and reduce debt and have the correct attitude towards giving.

Mature Christians Give:

Locally...*Knowing that they claim this church as their spiritual home, they support the ministries from which they derive benefit.*

Liberally...*As they are able, they go beyond giving to their own church and contribute to the cause of Christ globally.*

Cheerfully...*Knowing that God sees the heart, they don't just give begrudgingly to an organization—they give their offering as unto God Himself; they do so willingly, and not under compulsion, but with joyful worship as their resources flow out to serve others.*

Anonymously...*They don't call attention to themselves when they give or expect their offering to produce an advantage in the church.*