

Generosity - Resources

Sixteen of the thirty-eight parables of Jesus deal with money. One out of ten verses in the New Testament deals with that subject. Scripture offers about five hundred verses on prayer, fewer than five hundred on faith, and over two thousand on money. The believer's attitude toward money and possessions is determinative.

John MacArthur

Matthew 25:14-30 (NLT) “Again, the Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. He called together his servants and entrusted his money to them while he was gone. ¹⁵ He gave five bags of silver to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last—dividing it in proportion to their abilities. He then left on his trip. ¹⁶ “The servant who received the five bags of silver began to invest the money and earned five more. ¹⁷ The servant with two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more. ¹⁸ But the servant who received the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and hid the master's money. ¹⁹ “After a long time their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they had used his money. ²⁰ The servant to whom he had entrusted the five bags of silver came forward with five more and said, ‘Master, you gave me five bags of silver to invest, and I have earned five more.’ ²¹ “The master was full of praise. ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!’ ²² “The servant who had received the two bags of silver came forward and said, ‘Master, you gave me two bags of silver to invest, and I have earned two more.’ ²³ “The master said, ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!’ ²⁴ “Then the servant with the one bag of silver came and said, ‘Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn't plant and gathering crops you didn't cultivate. ²⁵ I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.’ ²⁶ “But the master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy servant! If you knew I harvested crops I didn't plant and gathered crops I didn't cultivate, ²⁷ why didn't you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.’ ²⁸ “Then he ordered, ‘Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver. ²⁹ To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away. ³⁰ Now throw this useless servant into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

When it comes to money do we work for money or does money work for us?

God's expectation – Invest

He gave five bags of silver to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last—dividing it in proportion to their abilities. (v 15)

- The servant who received the five bags of silver began to invest the money and earned five more. (v 16)
- The servant with two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more. (v 17)
- The servant who received the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and hid the master's money. (v 18)

Observation #1 God required them to be stewards with all he had given them

Observation #2 Not Multiplying what we have is totally unacceptable

What if God was talking about money here and it was actually His plan for us that we would be a instrument of multiplication

Not how are we going to spend it but how are we going to invest it?

- The servant to whom he had entrusted the five bags of silver came forward with five more and said, 'Master, you gave me five bags of silver to invest, and I have earned five more.' (v 20)
- "The master was full of praise. 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!' (v 21)
- "The servant who had received the two bags of silver came forward and said, 'Master, you gave me two bags of silver to invest, and I have earned two more.' (v 22)
- "The master said, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!' (v 23)
- "Then the servant with the one bag of silver came and said, 'Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn't plant and gathering crops you didn't cultivate. ²⁵ I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.' (v 24-25)
- "But the master replied, 'You wicked and lazy servant! If you knew I harvested crops I didn't plant and gathered crops I didn't cultivate, ²⁷ why didn't you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten

some interest on it.' (v 26-27)

- "Then he ordered, 'Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver. (v 28)
- To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away. (v 29)
- Now throw this useless servant into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' (v 30)

The problem is that so many are living in scarcity

Many people today are living with a scarcity mindset, Jesus lived with an abundant mindset. A scarcity mind set sets us up to be selfish and think it is all about us. An abundant mindset seeks to give. We see value is spending ourselves for others. Investing our lives allowing them to have a multiplying effect verses simply realizing personal increase that will die with us.

Most of the time when the subject of financial resources and stewardship is discussed the topic of tithing comes up. A tithe is typically considered to be 10% of our gross income.

We believe tithing is a recognition that everything we have comes from God. The practice of tithing checks our greed, promotes personal discipline and thrift, testifies to our faith, promotes God's work in the world, and helps to alleviate human need.

We do not believe tithing to be a condition for salvation, however it is a great biblical model, one which should set the minimal standard for Christian giving for people in all income ranges. It certainly creates the environment of togetherness and shared responsibility.

It is true there is no direct commandment in the New Testament saying, "You must tithe to God one-tenth of your income"; but there is also no statement declaring the Old Testament plan as no longer valid. Some feel tithing is an Old Testament law and has been superceded in the New Testament. Personally I do not hold that view, I do however believe God's desire is for our giving to be a cheerful and grateful love response to Him.

God owns it all and (you) are stewards of His resources...Because you are stewards of the resources God has entrusted to you, every financial decision you make is actually a spiritual decision. For many, that's a revolutionary concept. How you manage your finances is a pretty good

barometer for the condition of your spiritual life.

Dennis Rainey

2 Corinthians 9:6-15 (NLT)

⁶ Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. ⁷ You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully."

⁸ And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. ⁹ As the Scriptures say,

"They share freely and give generously to the poor.
Their good deeds will be remembered forever."

God comes right out and tells us why He gives us more money than we need. It's not so we can find more ways to spend it. It's not so we can indulge ourselves and spoil our children. It's not so we can insulate ourselves from needing God's provision. It's so we can give – generously. When God provides more money, we often think, This is a blessing. Well, yes, but it would be just as scriptural to think, This is a test.

Randy Alcorn

¹⁰ For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you.

¹¹ Yes, you will be enriched in every way so that you can always be generous. And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God. ¹² So two good things will result from this ministry of giving—the needs of the believers in Jerusalem will be met, and they will joyfully express their thanks to God.

¹³ As a result of your ministry, they will give glory to God. For your generosity to them and to all believers will prove that you are obedient to the Good News of Christ. ¹⁴ And they will pray for you with deep affection because of the overflowing grace God has given to you. ¹⁵ Thank God for this gift too wonderful for words!

Matthew 6:19-21 (NLT) "Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.

Proverbs 3:9 (NLT) Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the best part of everything you produce.