

The Fundamentals

Lesson 6 – Giving To The Lord

2 Corinthians 9:7

It's especially important that we begin this lesson in prayer asking the Holy Spirit to open our eyes to show us what he would have to say to us specifically in this lesson. The topic is one that can make us Christians run for the hills. Ask the Holy Spirit to guard your thoughts against the flesh and how you might typically react to today's lesson and to transform your thinking towards God's thinking in this area. Pray that you wouldn't be afraid to hear from God and his word on what it has to say about the critical importance of your money and giving.

Now, open your Bible.

Teachings from pastors regarding the topic of giving and money aren't exactly the most popular messages to give. Often times a Christian will tune out what the pastor is sharing out of God's word when it relates to giving and money. Martin Luther, the great reformer, said this: *"Every Christian must undergo three conversions. The conversion of the mind, the conversion of the heart and the conversion of the pocketbook."*

As Christians mature and begin to serve the Lord, so often the last thing we really see transformed in a Christian's life is how they deal with their money. It's a well known fact. Maybe that is why the New Testament talks more about money than heaven and hell combined! Jesus taught a lot of parables; one-half of them involve our money. Fifty percent of his parables were on the topic of our money. Five times more in the New Testament money is talked about than prayer. Five times more in the New Testament is our money referred to than prayer. Five times more than faith is money mentioned. There is a lot in the Bible about our money. A lot. The Bible contains 2,500 direct references to our money and how to handle it. What that means to us is that **our money is absolutely central to our spiritual lives**. However, the truth of the matter is that we want to divorce our money from our spiritual lives because we know our spiritual lives involve surrender so we'd much rather keep our money out of that conversation.

R.A. Torey says this in his book "How to Work for Christ": *"Many young Christians make little headway in the Christian life because they are not plainly instructed on the necessity of regular, systematic and generous giving to the Lord."*

How many times do you sit down in a new believer's Bible study and have someone say, "You really need to understand the regular, systematic, generous giving to the Lord"? We pull that out of our new believer's study because, as a new believer, we're receiving from the Lord. We're receiving salvation and grace and mercy and inheritance that are undefiled and do not fade away. We receive and we receive and we receive. Then our life

and our culture just cause us to keep receiving. “I was born to receive, baby, and God fits right in my plan and I just receive and receive and receive from him.”

But Torrey says, and the Bible agrees, that if we don’t learn the critical importance of our money and how we handle our money in relationship to the spiritual side of our lives, then we will make little headway. We will be missing out on a tremendous portion of what God has for us.

So if we have either failed to learn or if we have refused to hear – and when we talk about hearing in the Bible, we don’t talk about an auditory response; we talk about receiving. If we’ve either failed to learn or refused to hear, then we’re missing out on a huge part of our life with God – a massive part. How we handle our money is inextricably connected to our life with Jesus Christ and the two cannot be divorced – not Biblically.

Are you ready to dive into the Word of God to see what our Abba, Father, Papa, Daddy has to say about the money he has given us? He is wise, loving and the best Dad to learn from. Read Luke 3:1-14.

In Luke 3, we see the first recorded sermon of John the Baptist. Isaiah prophesied about John the Baptist. Read verse 4. What did Isaiah say John’s purpose was?

John came to prepare the way for the Lord. His purpose was to speak of and glorify Jesus, not to exalt self or speak his own words. This is clear from what John teaches in his very first recorded sermon. He picks a subject that is very unpopular to man: giving and money. Not exactly the topic to win over the masses! John has been going from place to place preaching repentance and forgiveness. People are drawn to his message and want to receive the truth so they ask John what they must do. They specifically want to know what fruit they need to produce in their lives in order to show repentance and in order to make way for the Lord in their heart. John gives them three acts (fruits) of repentance that would indicate that they are ready to receive the Lord. What are the three acts (fruits) of repentance found in Luke 3?

Verse 11 (in response to the crowds’ question):

Verse 13 (in response to the corrupt tax collectors’ question):

Verse 14 (in response to the soldiers' question):

All three points John makes in his very first sermon about how we can know that we are ready to receive the Lord have to do with money and giving. He tells the crowds to give to the poor (in this case one of two shirts they possess - give what you have) and to share food with those who are hungry. To the money-hungry, greedy tax collectors he tells them not to take from the people more tax money than the government required (don't take extra money and keep it for yourself – that's called stealing). And to the soldiers he instructs them not to use their strength and authority as a soldier to forcibly take money or to lie about it and to be content with what they are being paid.

Are you shocked that this very first sermon has to do with money and giving? All three points John the Baptist makes in Luke 3 are to prove genuine repentance and to show a heart is truly ready for the coming of Lord are related to our money and giving. That's a big deal. Our money and our giving are absolutely central to our spiritual condition. We have a desire to be spiritually healthy and mature but in the flesh we don't like to hear that our money is such a big part of that health and maturity.

The Bible has a lot to say about our heart as it relates to our money. Let's look at one of many scriptures that reveal how our spiritual health and maturity relates to our heart and money. Read Matthew 19:16-24.

What is the rich man's original question in verse 16?

What answer does Jesus give the rich man at the end of verse 17?

The rich man has a desire for eternal life. He recognizes Jesus as the one who has the answer. However, when the rich man gets the answer (keep the commandments), we begin to see a glimpse of the man's true condition of his heart. In verse 18, the rich man wants more clarification. What does he ask Jesus?

Jesus told him to keep ALL the commandments. But the rich man seems to want to only partially obey when he says "which ones?" Jesus already gave him the complete answer and that was to obey ALL of the commandments. We all know that none of us can keep all of the commandments (law) and that is why Jesus had to come to fulfill the law. So when the man tells Jesus in verse 21 that he **has** "obeyed all of these commandments" he

must not really believe that is true because he asks Jesus another question at the end of verse 20: “What else must I do?”

Wanting to reveal the man’s heart, Jesus instructs the rich man to do something radical. What does Jesus tell him to do in verse 21?

How does the rich man respond in verse 22 when he has been told by Jesus to sell everything he owns and give the money to the poor?

Why do you think the rich man was sad and walked away from Jesus?

The rich man’s heart was not 100% surrendered to the Lord. He only wanted to partially follow the Lord. He thought his “works” were sufficient to get him into eternity. But Jesus knew his true heart and that this rich man loved his money and his possessions more than he desired eternal life. Jesus told his disciples in Matthew 19:23 that it is very hard for a rich person to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven and easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. Why do you think that is true?

Maybe it’s not money that you are holding onto so tightly that is keeping you from following Jesus 100%. There are many things that we refuse to “sell” (surrender). Our TV watching, our addiction to our smart phones, Facebook, the internet, a little pet sin, etc., these things can keep us distracted and away from Jesus which result in spending less time with him. What area of your life do you continue to hold onto that you are unwilling to give up to following to Jesus 100%?

We know that a person receives salvation and eternal life by confessing their sins and asking the Lord Jesus into their life. Salvation does not come by works we do or by our giving of our money or our life consuming habits. However, God doesn't just want a part of our heart. He wants all of us, including our heart with respect to our money. If we're clinging to our money and are not giving, we probably aren't following the Lord completely the way Jesus asks us to, with a 100% surrendered heart. As a result, if we are ever pushed to choose money or Jesus, chances are we might end up picking foolishly.

Unfortunately, in this lesson, like all the other lessons in the fundamentals, we cannot begin to hardly even scratch the surface of what the Bible teaches on money. A full 15% of what Jesus said had to do with our money. One-half of his parables relate to money. There are 2,500 references in the Old Testament and the New Testament relating to money. There is so much in the Bible about our money that there is absolutely no way we can cover it all in this lesson. So all we can do in this single lesson is hit some basic foundational truths.

1 basic principle regarding giving to the Lord: God is the owner of everything.

The word of God shows us this truth. Read Psalm 24:1, Psalm 50:10, and Haggai 2:8. There is a repeated theme in these scriptures. Who owns everything? _____

God is already the owner of everything. We don't own anything. If you're fortunate enough to have a dollar in your hand, God has given you that dollar and he owned it before he gave it to you. We need to get out of this mind-set that everything we own came from us and that we have to decide how much we have to **tip** God in order to get him to do good service for us. We need to be very careful how we view what we have. It didn't start with us. It started with God and it came from God. When we give back to God, in essence we are acknowledging that it's all his and we are merely giving back to him what he's given to us.

Not only does he own it all but he provides all that we have. James 1:17 says "Every good and perfect gift is from above coming down from the Father of Lights." God gives us everything we need. We're not just talking about the material things. God also gives us spiritual things. Ephesians 1:3 says "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places." All we have comes from God. Everything!

But the sad reality is that most Christians don't subscribe to the point of view that God is the owner of everything and everything came from him. The best illustration we can use to illustrate how most Christians in the church treat God with respect to their money would be to say that we treat God like he is our waitress. We will slip the waitress an extra buck or two this time so when we return to her table on another day, she will remember us and how well we tipped her. We expect the same waitress to be there again and expect her to take care of us because of that extra buck we slipped her the last time.

However, if the waitress isn't doing what she's supposed to do, we will withhold our tip (or reduce it drastically) to make sure she understands she's not making us happy. Sadly, that's how the vast majority of the Christian church handles their giving to God – we “tip” him in the same manner we would a waitress.

Let's contrast ourselves and our mind-set about giving and who owns everything to King David's mind-set found in 1 Chronicles. He is given the blessing of giving the all time offering, the highest all time offering, the offering to end all offerings.

In 1 Chronicles 17, King David, settled comfy and cozy in his palace, ponders the ark of the covenant of the Lord (which is being housed “under a tent). King David tells the prophet Nathan that he (King David) should build a “house” for the Lord to dwell in. But, through the prophet Nathan, God said “No, David, you can't. You are a man of war; you have blood on your hands. You can't build my temple; however, your son Solomon will be the one who builds my temple.” (However, God basically tells David that he would get credit because of his desire to build the temple.) So, instead of throwing a fit and walking away and not doing a thing because he didn't get his way, King David asks God if he can at least prepare the way for his son to build the temple. In essence, King David asks if he can prepare the offering for the temple. God says yes. So in 1 Chronicles 28 and 29, we read of King David holding the greatest all time offering. He sets the example by giving his own money and materials and then he inspires his leaders to give. The single offering received that day would be equal in today's dollars to \$10 BILLION.

After this enormous offering is gathered, what does King David say in 1 Chronicles 29:13?

Isn't that remarkable? First King David thanks God and praises his name. Then he acknowledges that he and the people were not the ones who were responsible for the \$10 billion offering that was generously given because EVERYTHING COMES FROM GOD and everything that was given that day came from God in the first place.

That is the secret to understanding the first basic principal of giving. Our mind-set should be: “Who am I to even think I could give something to God? Everything I have has come from God and I give it back only as an acknowledgment. All I have is from God and I give back to him what is already his.” If we will embrace the principle that God already owns everything we have, that he's provided it for our use, then we would understand the second basic principle of giving much easier.

2 basic principle for giving to the Lord: We are stewards of all that God has given us.

We are called to be God’s stewards of all that he has given us. It is clear throughout the entire Bible that God sees us as his managers. As his stewards. Like an employee. God has given us and entrusted us with time, talents, and treasures. He asks us to care well for them.

There are many examples in the Bible relating to how we are called to be God’s stewards. The most famous example is found in a parable Jesus taught in Matthew 25:14-30. The New King James refers to this passage as the “Parable of the Talents.” (The term talent here does not refer to your God given abilities to sing, dance, etc. But rather, a talent is a measurement of weight of money.) The New Living Translation refers to this passage as the “Parable of The Three Servants.” The bottom line is that this parable is about our money.

Read Matthew 25:14-30.

This parable is about Jesus, the Father, giving us money and asking us to use it wisely on his behalf and how one day he’s going to come back and ask us how we did with the money he gave us. Jesus drives home the point in Matthew 25:29. Summarize what Jesus is saying verse 29:

The point the Bible is making here is that God is watching. He is El Roi (God Who Sees). God has given us something and he is watching to see how we handle it. The truth of the matter is that how we handle what God has given us determines how God responds to us in this area of our life.

So many times a Christian will say “I can’t afford to give to God right now. But I will as soon as I win the lottery or when I have some extra money.” We try to justify our not giving by saying we don’t have enough right now. We lie to ourselves by saying “When my bills are paid, when I have enough food in the pantry, after I’ve taken that vacation ... when I have extra money, then I’ll give to God.” Truth of the matter is that rarely happens.

Jesus gives another illustration of us being stewards with whatever it is that God has given us. Read Luke 16:1-14 (the Parable of the Shrewd Manager).

What does Jesus say to us in verse 10?

Jesus says whoever is faithful in very little is also faithful in much. If we aren't faithful to give when we have very little, more than likely we won't be faithful to give when we have that extra buck or two. But Jesus also tells us in Luke 16 that one who is dishonest in very little is also dishonest with much and that those who have not been faithful with the unrighteous wealth (worldly wealth such as money and material possessions) won't be entrusted with TRUE riches (things of the highest value: salvation, wisdom, etc.). Sadly, we humans think worldly wealth such as lots of money, fancy cars, diamond rings, Coach purses, etc., are true riches. What a foolish lot we are to think such things. (Read Ephesians 1:3 to gain some knowledge of true riches.)

Luke 16 tells us that how we handle that unrighteous wealth will determine how much of the true riches God will give us. Basically the parable of the shrewd manager means that God is watching us. He's watching what we do with our money and he will respond to what we are doing with the talents he has given us. This is a critical reality. It's almost scary.

Remember at the beginning of this lesson we learned that when John the Baptist first came on the scene preaching, he preached on repentance in order to prepare the way for the Lord to come into a heart and that John's first message was all about money and giving. Interestingly, the last thing Jesus did publically in Jerusalem before retreating to prepare for the crucifixion was something similar.

Read Luke 21:1-4. What's taking place in these few verses?

The last public thing Jesus did in the temple as a free man was watch people give money. The word "watched" (NLT) in verse 1 means "behold." It means he gazed intently at each person as they put money into the temple treasury.

There is a story told of one pastor who followed the offering bag up and down the church row one day and gazed intently as each person put money in the bag. It made everyone really uncomfortable, including the pastor. After doing that he went up to the pulpit and taught a message on Luke 21:1-4. The pastor told his congregation, "Listen, you were uncomfortable because I am watching, but One far greater than me is watching every time you give."

In Luke 21, Jesus isn't discriminating. He watches both the wealthy and the poor put their money in the temple treasury. Back then the temple treasuries were tall boxes and they had on them a big brass horn (picture an old RCA phonograph with the big horn). The

wealthy would take big handfuls of money and throw it against this horn so that it would make a lot of noise so that everyone in the temple could hear and tell how much money they were giving. Jesus watched a few of those wealthy guys come and in essence brag and toot their own horn about how much money they had just given. Then he watched a widow come up to the treasury box and put two mites in the brass horn. (A mite is .128 of a day's wage. It's similar to a penny or a nickel to us.) With the widow's giving, there was no loud and long rattling of many coins going down the horn and into the treasury box. Just the clink, clink of two small coins.

After witnessing this widow's offering, what does Jesus say (Luke 21:3-4)?

Jesus tells all those who have just witnessed the wealthy and poor give that the wealthy have given a tiny part of their surplus but the widow, as poor as she is, has given everything she has. What's the point? Jesus cares about HOW we give and not how much we give. He didn't really need those two nickels. He wanted that widow's heart and he got it. And he made an example of her sacrificial giving for all time.

If we think about it, so much of what our life comes down to is our money. Think about how many hours we spend earning our money and how much effort we put into earning our money. Maybe we've gone to school; maybe we've gotten a degree; maybe we've climbed the corporate ladder; or maybe we've learned a trade or we've invested in a business or we've done something big to get the money we have. Needless to say, a lot of effort and time has been put into earning our cold hard cash so we cling to it and attach so much value to it. And, the sad truth of the matter is that in our society so much of whom we are as people comes down to money.

Here's what Pastor David Jeremiah says, "When we come to bring him what we have earned, we are literally taking our lives and compressing them into the coinage of our day saying 'Here is my life, God. Here are my hours and energy melted down into coin and I give it to you.'"

That's a powerful and slaps you in the face statement.

We are constantly talking about giving our lives to the Lord, surrendering our lives to the Lord, but so much of our life comes down to our money. So often when we're faced with giving or surrendering our money to the Lord, we halt and say "Um, I didn't mean that. I meant the other stuff that is intangible, the stuff that doesn't really affect me, yeah; I want to give all of that to the Lord. That money I worked hard for, that represents a major part of my life and I'm not giving it to the Lord." If that's been your mentality, pray that the Lord will change your heart.

3 basic principle for giving to the Lord: Our money determines where our heart will be.

Our money and the way we handle it actually sets the direction of our heart. You might think the phrase in the #3 basic principle should read “where our heart **is**”, while that is true, it’s not the truest sense. Do you know that your heart is where your money is? Of course we do. All we have to do is just look in our checkbook and we’ll see where our heart is. But what’s more important to be discussed is that our money will determine where our heart is going to be. The Bible says if we invest our time and our talent and our treasures in this world that our heart will be forever tied to this world. However, if we invest our time, talent and treasures in heaven, our heart will be forever tied to heaven. (Matthew 6:19-21)

Turn over to Matthew 6; it’s an often quoted chapter. Its power packed. So much is in there. But there is a section of this chapter that Christians lean on so much that it is critical for us to take the time here to see the context.

In verses 19-21, under the expanding truth of where we put our money is where our heart will be, Jesus says, ***“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourself treasures in heaven where neither moths or rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*** The Message translation reads verse 21 like this: ***“It’s obvious, isn’t it? The place where your treasure is, is the place you will most want to be, and you will end up being there.”***

Where we choose to put our treasure is where our heart will want to be and for certain we’ll find a way to get there. Take a minute and ask the Holy Spirit to give you the guts to be honest to write down areas where your treasures are and where you often find your heart.

God doesn’t want our treasures. He’s given them to us in the first place. He already owns them and he can take them back at any given second. He wants our heart. It’s a no brainer making the determination of whether your heart is truly bent towards the Lord and if your treasure is in heaven. How can you tell if your heart is bent towards the Lord and your treasure is truly in heaven?

God knows that our money determines the spiritual condition of our heart. Our money is connected to our heart. God wants our heart and that is why there is so much in the Bible

about our money – because they are connected. That’s why God calls us to give back to him what he’s given to us – in order to get our heart.

Glance at Matthew 6 and look at the summary headings that come before each section. A few verses down from verse 19 starts the famous “Do Not Worry” section (verse 25). These are the verses that Christians love. We love hearing “God is going to give me everything I need.” It’s critical that we understand the context in which Jesus shares with us this watershed truth.

Let’s take a look at Matthew 6 starting at the beginning. The first four verses are about giving. Jesus starts this “cling to” section of the Bible about not worrying by telling us how to **give**. Then in verse 5 he tells us how to pray. Then in verse 16 he teaches us how to fast. Then in verse 19 he talks about laying up our treasures in heaven. Jesus teaches us how to give, how to pray, how to fast; he warns us about not laying our treasures upon earth but to lay them up in heaven. Then before he leads us into this great section that we cling to with everything we’ve got, there is one verse we have to read. Verse 24. Write out Matthew 6:24.

We don’t want to read that verse. We want to go right to “God will give me everything” verses. But the verse right before those verses says no one can serve two masters for he will either hate one and love the other or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. We cannot serve both God and money. If you are looking at an old version it uses the word “mammon” (which means everything involved in wealth). We can’t serve both. Jesus says choose and choose wisely. He’s telling us in verses 1 through 24 to choose wisely. Then he goes into the don’t worry section.

But what do we do? We say “I don’t need the rest of that stuff. I need verse 25 and on. I need the (God is going to give me everything I need) verses.” Jesus disagrees and shows us in verses 1-24 what we need to learn first. We need to learn how to give. We need to learn how to pray. We need to learn that we will be forgiven as we forgive. We need to learn how to fast. We need to learn how not to lay up treasures on earth but in heaven. We need to learn that we can’t serve two masters because we’ll hate one and love the other. We cannot serve God and money. Once we learn all these things, our hearts WILL be truly bent towards God and we’ll discover that we can trust his promises that he will take care of us!

Do you see Matthew 6 building up to this phenomenal watershed truth that how we give and how we pray and how we fast and where we lay up our treasures and whether God or money is our master determines whether we can have the no worry life? Jesus

summarizes the whole thing in Matthew 6:33. Read that verse. What is Jesus instructing us to do?

That verse contains a conditional promise. We have a part in living in this life where we don't have to worry about God providing. He wants us to seek him first and to live righteously! However, if we are living for the world and living for our money; if we're serving money and we're laying up treasures on this earth, we have absolutely no right to ask God to give us everything we need. That's not part of the promise.

Here is a summary of the three basic principles we discussed in this lesson: God owns everything. God provides everything. We are God's stewards (managers). Where we put our money is where our heart is going to go.

Now we need to learn the HOW. How am I to give to God? What is the process of giving to God? Giving in the Old Testament was "simple" in that the teaching was they were to give a tithe. Tithe means a tenth (10%). Malachi 3:10 is probably the most well known Old Testament scripture about the tithe. Summarize that verse.

God is actually telling the people to test him as it relates to their money. He tells them to bring their money into the storehouse to see how he'll respond to their giving. If you haven't tested God in this way, do it. He gives you the green light. Bring your tithe to his storehouse and see how he will respond to your faithful and obedient giving. You'll be blown away.

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament contain mounds of instructions about giving to the Lord. Some Christians say the tithe is not commanded in the New Testament. Most of the time that person is looking to justify that they give \$5 a week. However, every command of the Old Testament that Jesus re-addresses in the New Testament, he raises the bar on. Here are some examples:

The law says do not commit adultery, Jesus raises the bar and says don't commit adultery in your heart. He's not doing away with thou shalt not commit adultery; he's saying I'm raising it to be a matter of your heart. The Old Testament says do not commit murder. Jesus says do not murder in your heart - don't hold hatred for your brother in your heart. Jesus doesn't do away with thou shalt not murder, he raises the bar. The Old Testament says give 10%, Jesus says give generously. The New Testament says give generously, cheerfully from your heart.

There is one place where Jesus does mention the tithe in the New Testament (Matthew 23 and parallel Luke 11). Scholars are divided on this but 3/4 lean towards the overall truth that the tithe, though not specifically required in the New Testament, is like a bare minimum. Most scholars believe the tithe (10%) is a good start for giving. Let's use the tithe for a barometer for the heart condition of the church in America as it relates to our giving. The average church goer in America gives 2.5% of their income to God. That's about \$20 a week.

Throughout the New Testament that percentage thing is still in place it's just not so clearly defined what the percentage should be. But God does still hold that percentage and he definitely didn't reduce it. The general principles of giving haven't changed. What's changed is Jesus says the way you now give reflects your true spiritual condition. We don't like to hear this. But the way we give reflects our true spiritual condition. The Bible is clear on that.

Let's shift to how God responds to our giving with a cheerful and generous heart; when the condition of spiritual heart towards God is healthy. Honestly, this is the stuff that most pastors use when they teach on giving. But before we proceed, it has to be made very clear that we don't give to force God's hand to give back to us. The Bible is full of promises to those who give with the right spiritual heart. So don't take these promises and use them for the wrong motive. We give because God owns everything, because we're his stewards and we've been instructed to be a generous, cheerful giver based on who God is and what he's done for us. However, there are promises in the Bible that make it perfectly clear that God will respond to how we give.

Luke 6:38

... give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.

This isn't just about money, it's also about forgiveness, grace and mercy.

2 Corinthians 9:6-8

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. 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. And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.

It's a promise but it's a conditional promise. As we learn to give, God trusts us with his resources so he gives us more so we can give more. We become a conduit and God is filling in the top so you can pour it out the bottom.

2 Corinthians 9:9-10

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

He will provide and increase our resources so that a great harvest of generosity is produced in us. If God is giving to us (and he is), it's not for us personally. He'll bless us but the greatest blessing is to be a part of what he is doing. If we will learn to give this way, he'll pour it in so we'll give it out.

2 Corinthians 9:11

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.

When we give it brings glory to God because the people who receive it will thank God. That is the testimony of every single person who gives freely to the Lord. These types of givers have an air about them, a peace, they are loving life. They've learned the secret of giving with the right heart.

Finally, write out Proverbs 11:24.

Don't take these promise scriptures and cultivate a false motive for giving. Don't give because you think you're going to get from the Lord or because you think you can force him to give you. Also remember, God not only wants us to give our money but our **time**, our **resources**, our **abilities**, our **talents**, our **wisdom and knowledge**. Don't be a grumpy stingy giver. Be a cheerful and generous giver. The Lord has given you **everything** you have. Test him in your giving and let him show you what he wants to do in your life through a spiritual heart that is healthy!

Let's pray.

God, we know every good and perfect gift comes for you. We thank you for giving us everything we have. Lord, help us to be good stewards of the things you have given us. Forgive us when we refuse to give back to you and we are stingy with our money and time and everything else. Help us to trust you with our finances and to allow you to work mightily in our lives as we surrender our money to you. Amen