

"Resources and Kingdom Rewards" [Pt. 1]

1 Timothy 6:17-19

What is a biblical worldview regarding resources? Join us as we look to answer the FAQs you have about your time talents and treasure and God's kingdom.

Discussion Qs

1. Why do you think so very few Christians actually tithe?
2. How do Christians (and non-Christians) in our culture tend to trust money rather than God?
3. How can a person's calendar and bank register reflect what they really love?
4. Reflection: What changes will you make to align your beliefs and behavior?

Pastor Bruce Zachary

Mobil Campus

Intro. Only 5% of (Evangelical) Christians actually tithe [ie. give 1/10th of income to advance God's kingdom] [Barna,Pew]? Average charitable contributions among Christians is 2% (same as non-b). **Why do you think so very few Christians actually tithe?** Some view their contributions of time, talents, and treasure to the work of the kingdom as a *God tax*. So they look for loopholes, argue whether gross or net & generally look to avoid or reduce contributing. **Jesus compares giving with investing, not with taxes.** Investment thinking causes you to use your creativity to increase contributions. Tax-based thinking causes you to seek to reduce the amount

Subject: Resources and kingdom rewards

Object: Use resources to please the King + earn rewards

A. A biblical worldview towards resources

1. Trust God not money [17] Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy:

a. Command: Jesus' instructions and resources are commandments requiring obedience not investment advice. You are stewards of His resources.

b. Who are the rich? In God's view & relative to the world's population are you rich?

i. 85% of the world lives on less than \$5,000 a year in 2012

c. Don't be haughty: The more wealth you have, the more likely you are to be proud, and fail to see your need for God [or reality of your spiritual condition (Matt.19:23-26)]

d. Trust the true + living God who gives us richly all things to enjoy: Mt. 6:25-34

i. God is faithful & blesses us with His resources, but money is not reliable [Heb.11:6]

2. Use money for good [18] Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share:

a. Use money to do good works to advance God's kingdom

i. be generous + willing to share resources

i. God's people are to use their time, talent, and treasure to advance the kingdom

ii. The need for volunteers + finances to advance the kingdom + local church

iii. Nexus sends \$125,000.00+ annually to support global missions + church planting,

3. Use earthly resources to influence eternity [19] storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

Matt. 6:19-21 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

a. Resources provide leverage to advance the kingdom + influence eternity for yourself and others

B. FAQs [Seven (7) of the most frequently asked questions]

1. If I'm saved what does it matter what I do with resources?

a. Belief determines destination (heaven or hell) but behavior determines compensation (rewards).

- i. Our works are not the basis of salvation but are evidence that we are saved.
- ii. Real eternal rewards for commitment [Cf. Pt. 1+ 2 "Reality" + "Reasons" for rewards]
- iii. a person's calendar and bank register reflect what they really love

2. What are proper motives for giving time talents + treasure to kingdom work?

a. Love + Honor God [Matt. 6:19-34] Cannot serve two masters (God and money)

b. Reflect God's gift to us [Ac. 20:35, Jn.3:16] More blessed to give than to receive. Salvation is a gift of God by grace through faith [Eph. 2:8-9]. God gave his only Son [His best] [Jn. 3:16]

c. Earn eternal rewards [Matt. 6:20, 19:21]

3. What is stewardship? Stewardship recognizes that all resources belong to God and are placed in trust with a believer for proper personal support and then advancement of God's kingdom

a. Good financial management requires controlling costs of living so that more funds are available for kingdom giving

i. Learn to develop habits of stewardship that honor God

Prov. 3:9 Honor the Lord with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of all your increase

i. Firstfruits: God is to receive the first + best [* joke re circle

4. What are the purposes of the tithe [giving]?

a. Provide for God's house, priests [ministers], God's kingdom, & benevolence [Lev. 27:30, Num. 18, Dt. 14:24-29]

i. The Old Testament tithes actually equates to 23.5% of income

ii. Offerings were voluntary and were in addition to the tithe

5. How should Christians give?

a. Regularly and proportionately [1Cor. 16:1-2] Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: **2On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.**

b. Cheerfully and generously [2Cor. 9:6-7] But this *I say*: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. **7So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.**

c. Jesus affirms the tithe [Matt. 23:23]

i. Cf. NT standard is always higher than OT [**Matt. 5:21-22, 27-28, 43-44**]

d. What about taxes? Don't they support charity?

Cf. Jews subject to Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Greek, + Roman taxes. Render to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's [**Matt. 22:21**]

6. How are the funds used at our church?

a. **The model** is: allocate 50% for payroll (personnel + benefits), 25% for facilities, 25% for operations. Of the 25% for operations, 10% of the total should be going out for missions, outreach, and benevolence.

Nexus: 48% payroll, 25% facilities (Mobil Ave. Campus Mortgage paid off at end of 2020), 27% operations. Over 14% of the total goes to missions, outreach, benevolence and church planting. Our bankers praise our stewardship of resources!

7. What if I don't currently have enough to tithe?

a. Learn to budget and allocate to reflect kingdom values

i. Start giving a percentage and make progress towards 10% (and more if possible)

ii. Spending reflects priorities – what changes can be made in your lifestyle to honor God?

iii. People who earn \$50k believe they need \$75k to be satisfied & those who earn \$75k think they need \$100k, & those who make \$100k feel they need \$150, etc

iv. Millennials (born 1980s to early 2000s) tend to give less as a % of income to charity than other generations. This must change among Christians to support kingdom work

Conclusion: Why do you think so very few Christians actually tithe? Perhaps lack of understanding of God's Word about resources and rewards. Perhaps perceived scarcity of "our resources" vs. sufficiency of God's resources. But it is likely that like the Rich Young Ruler (Mt. 19,) who we considered at the start of this series, we actually love our money more than we should ... and more than God. But we do not have to leave sorrowful like he did. Today we can decide to **use resources to please the King + earn rewards**

Pastor Justin Bell Lewis Campus

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- Maybe God isn't giving you more time, talent, treasure because He knows you will just use it on yourself.
- iv. Millennials (born 1980s to early 2000s) tend to give less as a % of income to charity than other generations. This must change among Christians to support kingdom work
- **“Bring all the tithes into the store house, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this, Says the LORD of hosts, 'If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it.'” - Malachi 3:10**
- Tithing and Santo Domingo

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