



Lesson 9

Christian Stewardship

You've probably heard one of these comments before: "It's nobody's business what I give to the church." "The church is only concerned about my money." "The pastor talks about money too much" or "The pastor shouldn't talk about money from the pulpit." "The church doesn't spend its money wisely." Each is worthy of a response.

In this lesson, we will answer the following questions:

What does God have to say about me in relation to my possessions?

What are the biblical principles in Christian giving?

What does God want our motive to be in Christian giving?

We will also take a look at some biblical examples of generous giving.

Please read the following passages and then answer the corresponding questions.

II Corinthians 12:14 What I want is *not your possessions but you*.

II Corinthians 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

- 1) According to the italicized portion of these passages, what does Paul, and by extension God, want most?
- 2) According to the underlined portions of these passages, what did Jesus do?
- 3) According to the double-underlined portion of these passages, why did Jesus do this?

WHAT DOES GOD HAVE TO SAY ABOUT ME IN RELATION TO MY POSSESSIONS?

Please read the following passages and then answer the corresponding questions.

Psalm 24:1 The *earth* is the Lord's, and *everything* in it, the *world*, and *all who live in it*.

Matthew 25:14-19 Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them.¹⁵ To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey.¹⁶ The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more.¹⁷ So also, the one with the two talents gained two more.¹⁸ But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.¹⁹ "After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them.

- 4) According to the italicized portions of these passages, what does God own?
- 5) According to the underlined portions of these passages, what did the master do when he returned?
- 6) If we are not owners of our possessions in the most absolute sense, what does that mean we are?

Consider this thought from the Apostle Paul:

II Corinthians 8:7 But just as you excel in everything...see that you also *excel in this grace of giving*.

- 7) According to the italicized portion of this passage, what does God tell us to do?

On the basis of what we have looked at so far, how would you answer that question, WHAT DOES GOD HAVE TO SAY ABOUT ME IN RELATION TO MY POSSESSIONS?

WHAT ARE THE BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES IN CHRISTIAN GIVING?

Please read the following passages and then answer the corresponding questions.

I Corinthians 16:2 *On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.*

II Corinthians 8:12 For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have.

II Corinthians 9:7 Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a **cheerful giver**.

8) According to the italicized portion of these passages, what is one principle of Christian giving?

9) According to the underlined portions of these passages, what is another principle of Christian giving?



Tithe: 10% of a person's income, commanded by God for his Old Testament people but no longer a requirement for his people today. Now, it serves as a good starting point.

10) According to the double-underlined portions of these passages, what is another principle of Christian giving?

11) According to the bold portion of these passages, what is another principle of Christian giving?

12) According to the dotted-underlined portion of these passages, what is another principle of Christian giving?

Please read the following passages and then answer the corresponding questions.

Genesis 4:2b-5a Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. ³In the course of time *Cain brought* some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. ⁴But *Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock*. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, ⁵but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor.

Hebrews 11:4 By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.

13) According to the italicized portion of these passages, who gave God an offering?

14) According to the underlined portion of these passages, whose offering did God accept?

15) According to the double-underlined portion of these passages, why did God accept Abel's offering (note: these two answers are also principles in Christian giving)?



Firstfruits: The first/best of what God gives us.

On the basis of what we have looked at so far, how would you answer that question, **WHAT ARE THE BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES IN CHRISTIAN GIVING?**

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF GENEROUS GIVING

I Chronicles 22:14 I have taken great pains to provide for the temple of the Lord a *hundred thousand talents of gold*, a million talents of silver, quantities of bronze and iron too great to be weighed, and wood and stone. And you may add to them.

II Corinthians 8:1-4 And now, brothers, we want you to know about the *grace* that God has given the Macedonian churches. ²Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their *extreme poverty* welled up in rich generosity. ³For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and *even beyond their ability*. Entirely on their own, ⁴*they urgently pleaded* with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints.

Mark 12:41-44 Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. ⁴²But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. ⁴³Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. ⁴⁴They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on."