

2024

Stewardship
Devotional



CHRIST
CHURCH

DEAR CHRIST CHURCH,

When it comes to money, the Scriptures have a lot to say. As a church, we believe that managing finances, being generous, and stewardship are all matters of discipleship and the heart. That's why we have prepared five devotionals that will help us delve into the Scriptures regarding money. We want to spend time with Jesus as a community and allow Him to speak to our hearts on how we view money, stewardship, and generosity. Our goal is to be more intentional with how we handle our finances and allow the Holy Spirit to lead us.

May the Lord speak clearly to us and guide us as we seek to follow Him!

Blessings,

The Christ Church Leadership Team and Finance Team

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Contagious Generosity.

Think about what it is like to be a part of something bigger than yourself. If you were all in on that thing, what would you do to make it happen and move its mission forward? What would you give up? What would you sacrifice? This is the question before the people of Israel in this passage. David knows he will die soon and wants to set up his son, Solomon, and the nation of Israel to build the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem.

Read 1 Chronicles 29:1-20

Consider

1. What do you notice about how much the leaders of Israel gave towards the construction of the temple compared to King David (the wealthiest man in Israel)?

2. How do the people react to the generosity of David and their other leaders?

3. Re-read 1 Chronicles 29:10-20. What stands out to you about David's prayer?

4. How does David talk about partnership with God?

5. What is the result of all of this?

This must have been an amazing spectacle! The nation of Israel gathered and David pledged incredible resources for the temple. The leaders of Israel are then inspired to give generously themselves. The people are amazed at what is happening. This isn't how we usually experience generosity, is it?

David then breaks into prayer and praise that teaches the people about who God is, who they are, and how they are all partnered together in this amazing thing that is about to happen. Finally, the whole event turns into a time of worship and prayer!

Just like the people of Israel, we are invited to be a part of God's plan by building His Church. And like them, we have the opportunity to go all in, in partnership with God because, as David says, everything comes from God. And what should the results be? It leads us to worship when we can celebrate the generosity we get to witness and partake in.



Next Steps

1. What would it look like for you to be “all in” with building God’s church?

2. What inspires you to give generously?

3. How could your generosity inspire others?

A Transformed Life.

We often tend to have negative feelings when we think about money and the Bible. We may experience guilt over how we or our family handled money, or we may picture a preacher begging or shaming us into giving something. However, this is not the picture of money God presents us in the Scriptures. In this passage, Luke narrates how someone's handling of their money brought great joy and good news!

Read Luke 19:1-10

Consider

1. How did Jesus show generosity in this passage?

2. Tax collectors had the reputation of being selfish, greedy, and criminal. What do you think sparked the change in Zacchaeus's heart?

3. Why do you think Jesus said these words about Zacchaeus in verses 9 and 10? Who was he speaking to?

4. Is there connection between money, generosity and salvation in this passage?

This is a great little story, and Luke is a master storyteller. It starts with a sinful outcast (Zacchaeus) who is wealthy and curious about Jesus. He is willing to embarrass himself to see Jesus. Jesus then leads with generosity and stops what he is doing, not just to notice Zacchaeus, but to risk his own reputation to have dinner with him. During that dinner, the crowd starts to judge, but something has clearly happened within Zacchaeus because he stands up and announces that he is going to be incredibly generous. He is going to right any wrongs he committed financially. Jesus responds by giving Zacchaeus an identity as a son of Abraham.

The crowd labels Zacchaeus as a sinner, but he receives a new identity after a striking change in how he handles his money. It is clear from Scripture that giving money away does not save Zacchaeus; rather, his generosity is a sign of the transformation of his heart. Jesus, who sees the heart, calls this out. Zacchaeus underwent a transformation after spending time with Jesus, and this was evident in his dealings with money.



Next Steps

1. Do your financial practices point to a life transformed by Jesus?

2. What kind of generosity can you practice that brings the joy of salvation to your life?

Treasures In Heaven.

Money: a piece of green paper; a number on a computer screen; a little plastic card; a button on a cell phone. Wealth: the need for a modern education; the need for a happy retirement; the need for that big house; the need for the latest and greatest "stuff". But is that it? Is that what this life is all about? Let's see what Paul has to say to Timothy about it.

Read 1 Timothy 6:6-19

Consider

1. What does it mean to be content?

2. Is having money bad? Or is it our posture towards money?

3. What is the relationship between money and joy?

4. How does God expect us to live our life?

There is a lot to unpack in this text, but Paul clearly points out that money and wealth should not be the focus of a Christian's life. Instead, our lives should be centered around Jesus, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. God provides us with all that we need, leading us to find that our hearts can be content with simple things like the food and clothing we have.

Christians are differentiated by our pursuit of eternal treasures through fruits of the Holy Spirit rather than worldly riches. These fruits include righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness. A desire for more material possessions only leads to distractions from our true objective on earth. We should remember that it is only our soul that departs from this world, and it is the things that money cannot buy that bring us the greatest joy.

Having money and working hard to acquire wealth are not bad things. They create opportunities to be good stewards of His blessings - to be humble and generous and do good deeds, sharing with those around us. It is through this posture of our hearts that we fully understand the truth of life and the joy of God's grace and love.



A word cloud featuring the fruits of the Holy Spirit. The words are arranged in a grid-like fashion with varying fonts and sizes. The words include: gentleness, JOY, PATIENCE, KINDNESS, PEACE, SELF-CONTROL, LOVE, GOODNESS, and faithfulness. The word 'PEACE' is the largest and most prominent, written in a tall, narrow, serif font. 'JOY' is also large, in a bold, serif font. 'LOVE' is in a large, serif font. 'GOODNESS' is in a smaller, serif font. 'faithfulness' is in a cursive script. 'gentleness' is in a cursive script. 'PATIENCE' is in a serif font. 'KINDNESS' is in a serif font. 'SELF-CONTROL' is in a small, sans-serif font.

Next Steps

1. Where are we placing our hope today? Is it in acquiring wealth or is it in the God who provides everything we need?

2. As Christians living in a world consumed by the "love of money," are we differentiating ourselves? Are we honoring the Lord or the world?

3. How might you work to lay up treasures in heaven using your treasure on earth?

The Joy of Generosity.

God delights in a cheerful giver. When our hearts are filled with joy and gratitude, giving becomes a celebration of our faith in God and His provision. Giving cheerfully reflects the joy we have received from God. Our desire to share that joy with others is an expression of our love for Him.

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Consider

1. What does Paul say about the impact of generosity? How does God partner with us in our generosity and in its impact?

2. Is it possible to give cheerfully even in times of financial difficulty or scarcity? How can a joyful heart impact your giving despite constraints?

3. Have you ever given out of obligation or compulsion rather than from a joyful heart? How might understanding God's desire for cheerful giving change your perspective on generosity?

Imagine trying to “top” God. We’re talking about the omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent creator of the universe – do you think there’s something you can do better than Him? Impossible, right? Paul is basically challenging us to try to out-give God. We can’t do it - the more we give, the more He will give back to us! This passage assures believers that God is capable of blessing us abundantly in all aspects of our lives. He can provide us with an overflow of blessings so we can, in turn, continue to be generous in every way. Why should we be anything but cheerful when we give in His name?



Next Steps

1. Consider a time when your giving brought you joy. What made that experience fulfilling? How might you replicate that joy in future acts of generosity?

2. How do you typically decide on the amount or manner of your giving? Can you increase the role prayer and seeking God's guidance play in your decision-making process?

3. How can you make space to seek God's guidance?

Faithfulness With What We Have.

Our lives all have different twists and turns along the way. Each of us faces various trials and experiences different blessings. We have been entrusted with family and work responsibilities along with financial matters to manage as part of our daily lives. We try our best to handle these things and typically turn to God in prayer for guidance in dealing with issues involving our family, the workplace, our health, and our relationships. However, when it comes to finances, we tend to keep our struggles to ourselves and not share them with others or God, unless we're in a crisis and need urgent help - then we cry out to God. Why is that, and does it sound familiar to you?

Read Matthew 25:14 – 30

Consider

1. What does this passage reveal to you about your stewardship?

2. Do we guard what we have so closely that we forget that everything we have comes from God?

3. What is the reward given to those who stewarded their resources well?

4. What does Jesus want us to see as good stewardship?

God has given us everything we have, which isn't for our own pleasure. It is to grow his Kingdom. It's not enough to just bury what we have and return it the same to Jesus. God wants us to leverage what He has given us to multiply it in the Kingdom of God. It is also clear here that if we are faithful with what the Lord has given us, He will entrust us with more to invest in His Kingdom work. May we learn how to put His resources to work faithfully!



Next Steps

1. Do we put more effort into planning our vacations and how we will spend our money on ourselves than we do on being intentional when it comes to stewardship?

2. How can we consider God and His Kingdom work first when we budget our family finances?

Dear Lord Jesus,
Help me to trust you first in every aspect of my life: with my family, my career, my relationships, and my finances. Help me come before you in prayer, fully trusting that you will walk beside me in all I do, and continue to provide for my family and me. Everything I have is all from you, Lord! Help me to trust fully!



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