

Making Bank: No man can serve two masters

MPS: Christians live to glorify God and serve King Jesus with all of life's treasure.

OBJ: Every person can understand how to glorify God with all of life's treasure by three relationships.

Song "Money" by Pink Floyd

- Money, get away. Get a good job with good pay and you're okay. Money, it's a gas. Grab that cash with both hands and make a stash. New car, caviar, four star daydream, think I'll buy me a football team.
- Money, get back. I'm all right, Jack, keeps your hands off of my stack. Money, it's a hit. Don't give me that do goody good *stuff*. I'm in the hi-fidelity first class traveling set. And I think I need a Lear jet.
- Money, it's a crime. Share it fairly but don't take a slice of my pie. Money, so they say, is the root of all evil today. But if you ask for a rise it's no surprise that they're giving none away.

TRANS We're looking at money in the Bible. We've looked at three relationship to money, identity, giving, and today, mission; moving beyond maintenance to mission. We want to see how **Christians live to glorify God and serve King Jesus with all of life's treasure through these three relationships.**

TRANS Pink Floyd offers ALL the things one can do with money, representing the promise it provides for us. The real problem, and truth-telling of these lyrics, is that none are lasting. **How do Christians steward our money so that its impact outlasts our time on earth and prepares our hearts now for Heaven and eternity with Jesus?**

Making Bank: Money and Mission

2 Corinthians 9:12-15

MPS: Christians glorify God and honor King Jesus when we understand that our obedient and generous giving invests in the forward-move of God's eternal Kingdom in the world.

OBJ: Every C-fs should practice obedient and generous giving because it resources missional living in three ways.

Christians glorify God and honor King Jesus when we understand that our obedient and generous giving invests in the forward-move of God's eternal Kingdom in the world.

ILLUS Christian Financial Motivations, by Barna Group¹

In an report titled "The Generation Gap", Barna compared giving patterns and motivations of generations among Christians. They compared the motivations of two main categories, Givers and Keepers. Givers' ultimate financial goal is focused on God or other people. Keepers ultimate financial goal is centered on themselves. What may surprise you most is that of the four generations, elders, Boomers, Gen-Xers and Millennials, Millennials ranked with Elder generation in being motivated to give to provide for their family. And, unless you think the "Giver" group were simply people with more money, Givers are not giving more because they make more. In fact, Keepers tend to be somewhat more financially comfortable.

Christians with giving goals give a lot, and Christians with keeping goals give less or not at all.

Q? Why do you give your money? Do you give out of Fear of what God might or might not do? Do you give out of Shame of being less of a person if you do not give? Do you give out of obligation, whether to God or in expectation from God? Do you give out of Obedience? Christians give for the glory of God. There is no higher goal. But today I want to challenge you to consider "WHY" it is good to give faithfully and generously to the Lord.

¹ <https://www.barna.com/research/christians-financial-motivations-matter/>

READ 2 Cor 9.6-15

⁶The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. ⁹As it is written,

"He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever."

¹⁰He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. ¹²For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God. ¹³By their approval of this service, they will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others, ¹⁴while they long for you and pray for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. ¹⁵Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!

When Paul begins this final section on instructions for giving, he reminds us that what we get is directly related to what we give. *The more we believe God's promise of grace to motivate our giving, the more joy and abounding grace will overflow in all areas of our life.*

OBJ: When a Christ-follower practices giving, it cultivates missional living in three ways.

#1: Giving equips a Christ-follower to live missionally by cultivating a Gospel-centered ethos.

Paul states in **2 Cor 9.12**, *"This service that you perform..."* Paul refers to giving as a service. Giving is one way that every Christ-follower serves the Lord. The growth a Christ-follower gets from giving is great as well. Spiritual growth will never occur without giving because not giving or wrong giving is sin. *Giving grows and matures the identity and ethos of the whole Christ-follower.*

Consider five areas in which the discipline of giving acts as a service of divine ministry, both for the recipient and for the giver. **Giving is worship.** The Christ-follower as Worshipper gives, first and foremost, as an act of worship. Our foundation and consummating motivation for giving is in response to God's glory and grace in our life through Jesus Christ. There is no greater reason for giving it all away than Jesus. Paul states, *"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ..."* (2 Cor 8.9) *When our giving of all we are able and beyond, in response to God's love in Jesus Christ, we are desire to give more because we know his grace and the fullness of joy overflowing.*

Giving is ministry for the Christ-follower as Servant. This may be the simplest and easiest way to see giving. Paul states that we give for equality in provision. (2 Cor 8.13-15) When you give, you meet needs in the lives of others. We can see this one. It has an almost immediate return. The strongest of motivations for giving through the church is that she might be built up, each and every person. Some are given an exceeding measure of grace to give to meet the needs of others. Romans 12.8 teaches of the spiritual gift of giving. *All are called to serve through the discipline of giving.*

Giving is connecting for the Christ-follower as Disciple. We build community through giving so that we and others can grow and mature. When we give, we connect our heart to those who benefit from our giving. We build community and give people a place to connect in growing proportion that is beyond ourselves; adults, students, children, babies, etc. *When one Christ-follower gives, it encourages the giving of others by demonstrating the value of the church in community.*

Giving is mission for the Christ-follower as Missioner, who gives so the gospel can go forth to the ends of the earth. Mission is moved forward when people give their money. We invest in God's Kingdom work so others can hear the gospel, believe in Jesus and live with Him eternally.

Giving is investing as a faithful steward. When we give our money, our heart follows. Jesus says, *"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."* (Matt 6:24) *Faithfully giving to God's Kingdom work tethers our heart to Jesus for all of life.*

APPL Christ-follower: a life of faithful stewardship is essential to grow your ethos of W-S-D-M.

If you only think God wants your money, that's a sure sign that you are consumed with money and it is god to you. God wants far more than your money: He wants you! As a Christ-follower, you are a steward of God. It's not about how much we give to God, but how manage all we have. It's about how much we choose to keep because it's all His. How we steward our money is not just what we do, it's who we are. Knowing Christ means every area of our life serves Him because our very lives are His! [We serve King Jesus and others when we give faithfully and sacrificially to His Kingdom work.](#)

The glory God gets from a giving Christ-follower is great!

#2: Giving equips a Christ-follower to live missionally by investing in a Gospel-centered community.

Consider how faithful stewardship builds and strengthens the church's community. Paul continues, *"This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God."* (2 Cor 9.12)

Community is essential to the Gospel because when the Gospel is received by a people they begin to form a redeemed community. As the life of a Christ-follower is to be good soil for the seed of the gospel to take root and grow, so a Gospel-centered community is to be good soil for the Christ-follower to plant their life and grow. It is the will of God for every rescued, regenerated, redeemed, reconciled Christ-follower to identify their lives with a local body of believers to live life "together" and work in the same manner to send the gospel to the ends of the earth. Another way to say it would be that a Christian is to place their life in the care of a God-ordained, Jesus-consumed, Gospel-centered, elder-led, Bible preaching local church. [Growing community is a living witness of the power of the Gospel among a group of people to a larger number of people.](#)

When you give to God, your first, finest and foremost portion should be given through the local church. Then, you should give generously to other God-honoring causes as the Lord leads. I want to emphasize what I am saying, but I so not want you to hear me saying anything negative about specific causes, or other Christians organizations. I say this for a number of reasons.

First, the local church is God's body in the world, the immediate and physical representation of all that will be eternally. God has chosen the church to reveal his wisdom, a reference to the whole of his will and mission, in the world.² In all that the Christ-follower does, we should seek to edify the church and glorify God through her.

Second, the local church is the modern day "storehouse."³ I understand that the local church does not operate identically to the Temple in the Old Testament. However, that does not mean there is no transferable application for us. When tithes and offerings are given to God, they are given to his men who lead his church to invest in his work for his glory. Adrian Rogers says, "God's money should be given to God's house so God's work can be done in God's way." [The priority of every Christian's giving should be invested in the local church because she IS the center of all God's mission in the world.](#)

Third, the New Testament teaches and models that the giving of a Christ-follower should be through the local church.⁴ This pattern is clearly demonstrated in the New Testament.

Fourth, giving to the local church that you are involved in keeps you accountable in giving to a larger community of God's people. Giving should never be a public marquee for Christians to advertise their righteousness, but neither should it only be always private and unknown. Otherwise, how can we spur one another on to excel in giving, a clear principle and practice in the New Testament. Giving holds great potential to wrongly honor people, which reveals that our hearts are more full of money. But when we take an incorrect piety to never speak of it, we commit an equally offensive and damaging sin in the church. [Fellow Christians should be encouraged and challenged by one another's giving, to encourage us to excel in our own giving.](#)

² Eph 3.10; Matt 16.17-19

³ Mal 3.10

⁴ Acts 4.32f

Some people give regularly through the church as long as the church does what they want them to do, what is beneficial for them or what they think the church ought to be doing. When these things stop, they stop their giving. Nothing could be more dis-ingenuous and destructive for a community or a Christ-follower. This shows two things, their motivation for giving in the first place was wrong and their offerings were an abomination to God because of this. Fickle and manipulative support like this definitely hurts the church, but it also destroys the Christ-follower. Instead of understanding their life as a steward, people use money as a leverage tool.

I have learned in 27 years of ministry that those who give most generously to the church are those that give most generously beyond the church. It's not an "either/or" scenario. And, you cannot put your finger on them. What you should look for is the giddy ones, who are the happiest, most consistently, joyful people. [Generosity is generosity and God gives those who are generous a greater supply so they can continue to grow their generosity.](#)

APPL LifePoint: create a culture of stewardship to build our ethos as real C-fs.

The vision for LifePoint is that every person would live as a faithful steward unto God. Financial peace is a great stepping stone to begin this path, but it is only a beginning. The driving vision of LP should be to send forth the testimony of "I am here to share the Gospel because God sent me here. This church is here because God moved through LPC to plant churches." The Lord has sent us to the ends of the earth with the good news of eternal life in Jesus Christ. LP, as faithful stewards, we eagerly participate to share the grace of God in Christ Jesus. [A culture of stewardship builds a healthy competition that urges and an environment that cultivates us to excel in every area of life, including giving.](#)

The glory God gets from a giving community of Christ-followers is greater still!

#3: [Giving equips a Christ-follower to live missionally by investing in God's Kingdom work.](#)

And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you.

Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift! 2 Cor 9.14-15

ILLUS Derek Carr became the highest paid player in the NFL this week when he signed a 5 year, \$125 million dollar contract. When the reporter asked, "what's the first thing you will do with all the money?", Carr replied, "I'm going to tithe. Just like I did on my \$700 college scholarship check. There will be many people who are helped by this money, both here and around the world."

The Church is the body of God's kingdom mission in the world. Eph 3.10 says "*through the Church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known*". It's not enough to keep the lights or the temperature agreeable. The church must move forward, on mission, to penetrate darkness in the world with the light of God's truth. It's not enough for us to meet budget. We must **excel** beyond to create and develop new points of missional impact. It's NOT enough to wait for the lost sinner to come to us. We must show up in their world to introduce them to our Savior. Our mission is not to get people in, but to get them connected to Jesus to send them back out through the church, you included. [When you give, you participate in growing God's kingdom and multiplying his glory.](#)

Why did Paul say, *in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you?* (.14) When we give from the treasure of our lives so others can hear we open our hearts and lives up to them. God's grace comes full circle from Him, through his children to others who receive him, back to the Church and ending unto Him alone! [This missional ethos of grace is God's great, greater and greatest glory!](#)

Stewardship is God's strategy to resource the operation of his mission through His people in the world. This is true both for every individual Christ-follower as well as for the local church. The witness of today's church has weakened in the world because stewardship has stagnated in the church. May this never be true of LifePoint, NEVER! When people ask me about LifePoint's generosity, I tell them it is because our people love to give. And, your track record proves this for every one of our 13 years. We've never met budget at LifePoint, but always exceeded it. And I am confident this year will be no different.

The glory God gets from his Kingdom being expanded through Christ-followers is greatest!

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. No One can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

Matt 6.21, 24

LifePoint, let's guarantee our heart to always be with Jesus by investing our treasure with Him in His Kingdom.