

NORTHEAST HOUSTON COMMUNITY CHURCH
SERMON – Stewardship Pt 4
Why Should we give?
Scripture: Deut 14:22-23
02/26/2006

Quote: “Give to God what is right not what is left.”

Deut 14:22-23 "You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year. 23 And you shall eat before the LORD your God, in the place where He chooses to make His name abide, the tithe of your grain and your new wine and your oil, of the firstborn of your herds and your flocks, that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always. NKJV

Last week we looked at what bad can come from the love of money and what God’s purpose is for money. We know He has everything in the world but God has a purpose for money.

1. God uses money as medium of exchange that can be used as a channel of blessings from God. Money itself is not necessarily the blessing but can be a vehicle for a blessing.
2. God uses money to help us grow spiritually in Faith
3. He uses money to finance His earthly ministry through His people
4. He uses money to unite Christians that have a need with those that have a surplus.

We covered our responsibility for good stewardship concerning money. Today I want to talk about our expected giving of money to God.

This is what is called a topical sermon. In topical sermons there are many different scripture that are used to flesh out the message. I am going to use what is called the reporters model as an outline for this message. As an elementary student we were told to make a poster for the circus that was coming to town. I remember the teacher telling us that that the poster should give some specific information. It should answer the questions, **Who, What, When, Where, Why and How.**

WHO should give? The requirement to give was given by God to His people. Non-Israelites were not required to give to God, but His people were.

My wife and I recently celebrated our 31st wedding anniversary and Valentine’s Day. Our daughter Sarah gave us a gift out of love to help us celebrate. Now I don’t think she gave a financial gift to anyone else during the year who had a wedding anniversary. She is not their child.

We all have family and we often refer to our family as “my people.” They have a special place in our lives. We view them closer than our co-workers and acquaintances, but our children are closer.

God required His people, the children of Israel to give to Him. Is it not all the more appropriate for His **CHILDREN** to give to Him? We who have received Christ are CHILDREN of God.

WHAT are we to give?

It was a command and a law for them to give a tenth of all their increase, this was without exception. There were other times they were expected to give in addition to the tenth. And there was room for them to give just because they wanted too.

Deuteronomy 14:22 (NKJV) ²² “You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year.

In the New Testament the words tithe and tithing appear only eight times (*Matt 23:23; Luke 11:42; 18:12; Heb 7:5-6,8-9*). All of these passages refer to Old Testament usage and to current Jewish practice. Nowhere does the New Testament expressly command Christians to tithe nor does it say that all tithing has been discontinued. However, as believers we are to be generous in sharing our material possessions with the poor and for the support of Christian ministry.

Christ Himself is our model in giving. He gave His all. Giving is to be voluntary, willing, cheerfully, and given in the light of our accountability to God. Giving should be systematic and by no means limited to a tithe of our incomes. We do not have cattle and livestock to give so money becomes the common medium of exchange.

God accepts money.

Deut 14:24-25 24 "But if the journey is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry the tithe, or if the place where the LORD your God chooses to put His name is too far from you, when the LORD your God has blessed you, 25 "then you shall exchange it for money, take the money in your hand, and go to the place which the LORD your God chooses. (NKJ)

A tenth of our gross income (increase) is a good place to start. I know it takes some people longer to reach that point but I think that is first base in our giving.

No matter how much you give you can never beat God's giving no matter how hard you try.

Here are a few helpful hints on giving.

1. Remember you are giving to the Lord. Not to the pastor, or even the church.
2. Determine what you are going to give before you come to church. Even have the check made out or the money set aside.
3. Give it thanking God for it in the first place and that you have it to give.
4. Be glad about it.

When and HOW are we to give?

I believe that the NT teaches that we should give:

Systematically

1 Cor 16:2 2 On 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. (NKJ)

The bills of the ministry come due systematically every month. Most people have a systematic set of paydays. When we get our increase, we should give the first of our fruits to God. If we do not get into the habit of giving to God first it becomes tougher to give to Him later. Giving to Him first help you to solidify His position in your life.

Quote: "Give to God what is right not what is left."

Prearranged giving.

2 Cor 9:7 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. (NKJ)

When you come to worship your giving has already been determined. Ushers are not waiting on you and you do not have to rethink about how much you will give. If you have decided to give 10% of your gross than the decisions made and you can focus on enjoying the service.

When there is a need

Acts 4:34-35 34 Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, 35 and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need. NKJ)

On occasion an unexpected need arises around us. It could be a family in need, an unexpected repair or a special service or project. Giving is in order. Remember there are tithes and offerings. Giving systematically and prearranged is in line with tithing and extra giving is under offering.

WHERE are we to give? Where God chooses Deuteronomy 14: 23

God had an appointed place for His people to give. This can be confusing today because there are so many asking for your money. Many are truly worthy ministries but some are not.

I firmly believe that there are two criteria you should use in deciding where and to what ministry you should give. Your first obligation is to take care and give to your home church. Which of you would put bread on another's table and leave your table empty?

The second is where Gods word, ministries and work is being carried out to others, beginning locally first then into the world. Let's get specific. TV personalities and shows I do not recommend. Now I know I may be unfairly lumping some good ones in this batch but for the most part you do not know what is being done with your giving. That is not being a good steward.

These TV churches should be self-supporting. It should be a ministry of that church to go on television or radio. I do support those radio stations that offer free airtime to programmers and depend on local listener support. I am closer to how the funds are being used. I am not saying never give to another ministry if the Lord has prompted you to do so. But don't give to get a prayer cloth, a drop of mystery water, or even a promised blessing from the show.

Give your treasure where you can give your time and talent also.

1 WHY are we to give?

a. Because it belongs to God.

i. *Lev 27:30 30 'And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S. It is holy to the LORD. (NKJ)*

b. **To tithe**

c. In the Old Testament the purpose of the giving of a tenth was to meet the material need of the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless (the orphan), and the widow (*Deut 26:12-13*). The tithe was an expression of gratitude to God by His people. Basic to tithing was the acknowledgment of God's ownership of everything in the earth.

d. *Deuteronomy 26:12 (NKJV) ¹² "When you have finished laying aside all the tithe of your increase in the third year—the year of tithing—and have given it to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, so that they may eat within your gates and be filled,*

e. It is a debt we owe, but more of a debt of gratitude because God first gave it to us.

f. *1 Chr 29:14 14 ... For all things come from You, and of Your own we have given You. (NKJ)*

2 **GIVING IS A FORM OF WORSHIP.** It is not an admission fee, it is not a tip to God, it is one of our NT forms of sacrifice to God. When I internalized this my whole attitude about giving took on a different dimension, yours will too

3 It teaches us to fear (revere) the Lord God. When we revere God, we know we are to obey God and giving is a form of obedience and reverence. We pay our credit cards out of negative fear of what they will do if we don't. We give to God out of a spiritual reverential fear because He is worthy and deserves it.

Deuteronomy 14:23 (NKJV) ²³ And you shall eat before the LORD your God, in the place where He chooses to make His name abide, the tithe of your grain and your new wine and your oil, of the firstborn of your herds and your flocks, that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always.

4 When we give to God, we bless God.

Mal 3:10 10 Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, ... (NKJ)

When we supply God's house, then God's house (church) can help supply the houses of others that are in need.

5 When we give to God we will receive from God.

Look at the formula. We receive from God, we in turn give to God and in turn we receive from God. That is not a bad circle to be in.

OT Promise - Mal 3:10 Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, 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. (NKJ)

NT Promise - Luke 6:38 38 "Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you." (NKJ)

Let me caution you. Please do not give to God in order to get from God. Most likely you will be disappointed. You may give money to God and he in return may give you peace. That is not worship that is trying to make a deal with God.

6. To support those that labor in the ministry.

OT Precedence

*Num 18:21 21 "Behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tithes in Israel as an inheritance **in return for the work which they perform**, the work of the tabernacle of meeting. (NKJ)*

NT Precedence

*1 Cor 9:13-14 13 Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar? 14 Even so **the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.** (NKJ)*

There are other passages for this as well as the other sections of this message. This is not about my preaching for a raise for I have labored as Paul did.

1 Cor 9:15-16 15 But I have used none of these things, nor have I written these things that it should be done so to me; for it would be better for me to die than that anyone should make my boasting void. 16 For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! (NKJ)

God has called me to preach the Word and to be the best Pastor I can be regardless of the earthly pay. That is my responsibility laid upon me.

It is the responsibility of the church to provide for the pastor as it was for the people to provide for the Levites.

Any one of the reasons given should be enough reason for us to give. Giving is not a financial matter it is a heart matter. If your heart is not in it yet then your giving is truly in vain.

I am led to add something here. Giving is part of your Christian growth. I recognize that everyone is not at the same level spiritually in the matter of giving. I also know that there are times that you just may not have anything or very little to give. I don't try to understand why you give what and when you do. That is between you and God. You can tell me anything but God knows everything.

It is our stewardship that will allow us to give. Don't let Satan draw you further away from God because of money or the lack of it. If you cannot give to God the money you would like to as a form of worship, you surely can give Him your time in worship and your talent as a gift. For not doing any of the three, there is no excuse.

Stewardship is the key. If you are in debt, as many of us are, let us pray to God to show us a way out and to stay out of debt, then let us do it. It often requires a change in destructive habits but God is in the business of change.

Remember the definition of insanity? Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, but expecting a different result.

He is in the business of renewing. He is in the business of caring for His own. Let us work with Him and resist the devil. For anything that comes between God and us is of the devil.

Never forget that God is on your side.

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