

**Xenos Christian Fellowship
Christian Principles Unit #4**

Biblical Principles of Financial Giving

By [Gary DeLashmutt](#), [Jeff Gordon](#), and [Doug Patch](#)

Overview

- [Giving is Motivated by Grace](#)
 - [Christians Are Stewards](#)
 - [Giving is an Index of our Spiritual Vitality](#)
 - [Give according to what you have](#)
 - [The needs of others should have a moral bearing](#)
 - [God Abundantly Blesses the Gracious Giver](#)
 - [Responsibility to Support your Local Church](#)
-

Introduction

If we want to avoid enmeshment by materialism, we not only need to cultivate a lifestyle of spiritual growth and ministry; we also need to cultivate a godly manner of dealing with our money and material possessions. The Bible describes this as a habit of consistent, sacrificial financial giving to God's work.

HERBERT KANE: "The last part of the person to convert is the wallet." How true we've seen this to be! Therefore, we need to form deep biblical convictions about this area as soon as possible in our Christian lives.

The main text for tonight's study is 2 Corinthians 8 and 9. The historical setting had Paul taking up a collection for the Jerusalem church (1 Cor. 16:1-3). It was most likely for famine relief.

- 1 Cor 16:1-3 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. {2} On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come. {3} And when I arrive, whomever you may approve, I shall send them with letters to carry your gift to Jerusalem;
- The Corinthians had evidently pledged a certain amount to this (2 Cor 8:10). . .

(2 Cor 8:10) And I give my opinion in this matter, for this is to your advantage, who were the first to begin a year ago not only to do this, but also to desire to do it.

. . . but now they were not coming through on their commitment. This is one more symptom of the carnality that had plagued the Corinthian church.

Therefore, Paul writes this reminder which is designed to motivate them to give. This

passage contains many important principles of giving for the Christian.

Giving is motivated by grace (8:1-4,9; 9:15)

(2 Cor 8:1-4) Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, {2} that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality. {3} For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability they gave of their own accord, {4} begging us with much entreaty for the favor of participation in the support of the saints, {9} For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

(2 Cor 9:15) Thanks be to God for **His** [emphasis ours] indescribable gift!

Paul holds up the Macedonian Christians as an example. They viewed giving as a *privilege* which they begged to have even in the midst of great persecution and *poverty*--because their motivation was "the grace of God." **Why does grace motivate giving?**

They were so thankful for Christ's sacrifice for them (8:9), and so vitally aware of what they had received in Christ (forgiveness, eternal life, growth, new family, etc.) that they were motivated out of gratitude to give as much as they could (e.g. Scrooge - someone who eventually saw what he could be rescued from and responded with generosity; Lk. 7:47). This is the foundational motivation for *all* forms of Christian giving (e.g. O.T. Thank-Offering >> ROM. 12:1 >> Phil. 4:18). This is probably why Paul "bookends" this section with it (see 9:15).

- Rom 12:1 - I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.
- Phil 4:18 - But I have received everything in full, and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.

ATTITUDES TOWARD GIVING UNDER GRACE vs. UNDER LAW -

- Acceptance before God

UNDER LAW: "I give *in order to be* accepted by God." This motive is distinctive (?right word?) from other religions. They usually make giving one of the good works by which we earn God's acceptance (ISLAM: alms as one of 5 PILLARS; CATHOLIC INDULGENCES). In other words, we give in order to be accepted by God.

UNDER GRACE: In Christianity, we give *because* we have been accepted by God.

- Duty vs. Privilege

UNDER LAW: "My giving is a duty which I resent." This is the natural consequence of a works-righteousness mentality.

UNDER GRACE: "My giving is a privilege which I enjoy."

- Amount Given

UNDER LAW: "I give the least I can to keep God/others off my back." Stinginess always flows from law-living. Warning signs include hearing yourself ask AND focus on, "What's the right amount to give?" "I don't want to be irresponsible toward my obligations to the family!"

UNDER GRACE: "I give as much I can to express my gratitude to God for his love."

QUALIFICATION: Many Christians misinterpret or misapply 2 Cor. 9:7 (Let each one do just as he has

purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver.) Misinterpretations include the following ideas:

- It is wrong for us to call on or remind each other as Christians to make giving commitments.
Response: This isn't Paul's point--he called on them to give in 1Cor. 16 and he reminds them to give in this very passage!
- We should not give if we do not *feel* generous.
Response: My sin-nature does not naturally desire generosity toward the things of God. Paul's point is that *God wants us to give with the right attitude*. We should give voluntarily and cheerfully because we are the recipients of God's lavish grace. If I find that I am viewing giving as a distasteful duty which I do only grudgingly, **the answer isn't to stop giving**. It is to **change my perspective and attitude** by prayerfully reflecting on how much God has blessed me, and then to step out in faith (sometimes in spite of lingering negative feelings) and give in response.

Christians Are Stewards -->(8:5)

(2 Cor 8:5) and this, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God.

Paul emphasizes that the Macedonians "first . . . gave themselves to the Lord . . ." Blue defined stewardship as "the use of God-given resources for the accomplishment of God-given goals." (Ron Blue, *Master Your Money* (New York; Thomas Nelson), p. 23.)

Giving should be an expression of our identity *as God's stewards*. When the biblical affirmation of private property (Acts 5:4; 2 Thess. 3:12 both demonstrate recognition of private ownership in the NT) is not tempered by this truth, the result is autonomous materialism. There are several biblical implications of stewardship.

- Everything we have is God's and not ours.
 - Psa 24:1 - The earth is the LORD'S, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it.
 - 1 Cor 4:7 - For who regards you as superior? And what do you have that you did not receive? But if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?
- We are stewards of God's money; everything we have is to be held in trust to advance his kingdom. We should be ready to part with whatever is needed (Lk. 14:33), and we should find creative ways to serve God financially (Lk. 16:9).
 - Luke 14:33 - So therefore, no one of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.
 - Luke 16:9 - And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when it fails, they may receive you into the eternal dwellings.
- We will give an account to God for how we spent his money.
 - Mat 25:19 - Now after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them.
 - Rom 14:12 - So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God.

ATTITUDES TOWARD USE OF MONEY AS AN OWNER vs. AS A STEWARD: As stewards, God has all the rights; we have all the responsibilities. There are key distinctions to know and understand:

1. OWNERS ask "*How much of my money will I give to God?*"

STEWARDS ask "*How much of God's money will I keep for myself?*" It is appropriate for the steward to have enough to live on and provide for his family--but never to live luxuriously while the owner's affairs are neglected. Yet statistics reveal that as most Christians' income

goes up, their percentage of giving goes down.

2. OWNERS ask "*Will I enjoy this?*" and (sometimes) "*Can I afford it?*" -- when purchasing "things". This mentality often results in big debt with the availability of consumer credit. A substantial debt burden often limits a Christian's ability to give and/or minister more.

STEWARDS ask "*How will this purchase affect my ability to advance God's purposes?*" Certainly, being able to afford something is a necessary but not sufficient reason for buying something.

- There are the needs of other Christians to consider. (see 8:13-15)
- The needs of those who don't know Christ.
- The need for maturity of those we lead by our example. We may give up an affordable purchase so that we would not tempt others who don't have the financial means to live at the same level.

This is why stewards are committed to spending less than they make.

When we live with a grace-motivated attitude and a steward mentality, we are able to enjoy our giving and the possessions and pleasures God grants to us.

- 1 Chr 29:6-22 - Then the rulers of the fathers' households, and the princes of the tribes of Israel, and the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, with the overseers over the king's work, *offered willingly*; and for the service for the house of God they gave 5,000 talents and 10,000 darics of gold, and 10,000 talents of silver, and 18,000 talents of brass, and 100,000 talents of iron. And whoever possessed precious stones gave them to the treasury of the house of the LORD, in care of Jehiel the Gershonite. *Then the people rejoiced because they had offered so willingly, for they made their offering to the LORD with a whole heart*, and King David also rejoiced greatly. So David blessed the LORD in the sight of all the assembly; and David said, "Blessed art Thou, O LORD God of Israel our father, forever and ever . . . *Both riches and honor come from Thee*, and Thou dost rule over all, and in Thy hand is power and might; and it lies in Thy hand to make great, and to strengthen everyone . . . *For all things come from Thee*, and from Thy hand we have given Thee. For we are sojourners before Thee, and tenants, as all our fathers were; our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope. O LORD our God, all this abundance that we have provided to build Thee a house for Thy holy name, it is from Thy hand, and *all is Thine* . . . And all the assembly blessed the LORD, the God of their fathers, and bowed low and did homage to the LORD and to the king. And on the next day they made sacrifices to the LORD and offered burnt offerings to the LORD, 1,000 bulls, 1,000 rams and 1,000 lambs, with their libations and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel. *So they ate and drank that day before the LORD with great gladness* . . . cf. Ex. 25:2
1. OWNERS say "*My finances and giving are my private business.*" They tend to resent questions or challenges from others in this area as intrusive.

STEWARDS say "*I will seek wise counsel so I can be faithful with God's resources.*" Instead of viewing our finances and giving as our private business, we will begin (as with all important decisions) to see what God's Word says about it, and ask counsel from other more mature Christians (light from Word; unforeseen implications).

Each of us is ultimately responsible for the use of our finances. Therefore we should approach financial decisions with a spiritual perspective and with sobriety. If we find ourselves troubled in this area, we may need to ask ourselves if we have truly given ourselves fully to God as in Romans 12:1 and 2 Cor 8:5.

Our financial giving is an index of our spiritual vitality and maturity (8:7).

How would you respond to someone who insists they are spiritually mature because they tithe despite the fact that they don't know the Word, rarely pray, and aren't in fellowship? We recognize that the absence of any one of these robs us of spiritual vitality. We need to recognize also, that the absence of a sacrificial giving ministry robs us of spiritual vitality.

- Luke 12:34 - For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.
- XCF has had the opposite problem historically: For example one might say, "Since I know some scripture and I'm busy with God's work, I am spiritually mature even though I don't give sacrificially." Paul's point is that giving is just as much a part of the profile of spiritual maturity as the other things they boasted about.
- (Blue) "Your checkbook reveals all that you really believe about stewardship . . . A person who has been a Christian for even a short while can fake prayer, Bible study, evangelism, going to church, but he can't fake what his checkbook reveals. Maybe that is why so many of us are so secretive about our personal finances." (Ron Blue, *Master Your Money* (New York; Thomas Nelson), p. 20.)

APPLICATIONS:

- This is why we require Servant Team members to demonstrate a record of consistent and generous giving (1 Tim. 3:3b,8b >> elders' giving requirement; Fiscal Support Team requirement for being on the Servant Team)--just as we require a record of other qualifications (e.g., biblical knowledge, ministry, etc.).

1 Tim 3:3,8 - (Elders must be) . . . free from the love of money . . . Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not . . . fond of sordid gain . . .

- We should talk about this area with one another and in our discipleship work. It should not be "off limits" like it is in the world.

QUALIFICATION: When it comes to the point of practically helping someone with their budget, usually you should send people to the Personal Finance Ministry Team to help them get on a budget rather than do this yourself.

Give according to what you have (8:12).

(2 Cor 8:12) For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable according to what a man has, not according to what he does not have.

Because our financial situations vary widely according to many factors (earning power, family size, previous money management, etc.), it is *impossible* and *unscriptural* to set a monetary standard for what constitutes significant giving. God sets a different standard. 2 Cor. 8:12 says it is our *readiness* to give, not the amount we give, that God prizes. It is our *willingness to sacrifice* for him that pleases God more than the actual amount. This is what Ron Blue calls the "could give" level. This is why Paul holds up the Macedonians as models, just as Jesus holds up the widow in Mk. 12:41-44. *We may give significantly no matter how little we may have.*

- Mark 12:41-44 - And He sat down opposite the treasury, and began observing how the multitude were putting money into the treasury; and many rich people were putting in large sums. And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which amount to a cent. And calling His disciples to Him, He said to them, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury; for they all put in out of their surplus, but she, out of her poverty, put in all she owned, all she had to live on."
- (Oswald Sanders)"This is. . . the new mathematics, the arithmetic of heaven. God estimates our gifts not so much by their financial value, as by the sacrifice involved, the love that

accompanies it, and the amount that is left. The supreme value of the widow's gift lay in the fact that she `out of her poverty, put in all she owned, all she had to live on' - while the others gave `out of their surplus' (Mk. 12:44). Here is a searching test of our giving, but that incident should greatly encourage those who have only a little to give, but give it gladly." (Oswald Sanders, *Enjoying Intimacy With God* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 155.)

APPLICATIONS: What does this look like?

1. *Start giving now.* Many Christians do not give because they think what they can afford to give right now is so small it doesn't matter (students/smokers; adults digging out of debt: "I'll wait until I'm making more or get out of debt, then I'll start giving.").

However, unless we take specific measures, we will tend to spend our disposable income on ourselves, whatever it is. Those who do not start giving when they have little left never seem to have anything but little left!

Even if the amount can only be very small initially, establishing this *habit* will begin to bring you joy and motivate you to get in a position to be able to give more.

2. *Choose an amount which affects your lifestyle.* If you can't feel it, it isn't sacrificial--and this is a reflection of our view of God. This is why God rebuked Israel for offering only offering crippled animals (Mal. 1:6-14). They weren't really thanking God; they were going through a tokenistic religious show.

An excellent mind set to have is that you want to live NOW in such a way that if the Lord called you to full-time ministry, you could do it.

Mal 1:6-14 - "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. Then if I am a father, where is My honor? And if I am a master, where is My respect?" says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests who despise My name. But you say, 'How have we despised Thy name?' You are presenting defiled food upon My altar. But you say, 'How have we defiled Thee?' In that you say, 'The table of the LORD is to be despised.' But when you present the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? And when you present the lame and sick, is it not evil? Why not offer it to your governor? Would he be pleased with you? Or would he receive you kindly?" says the LORD of hosts. "But now will you not entreat God's favor, that He may be gracious to us? With such an offering on your part, will He receive any of you kindly?" says the LORD of hosts. "Oh that there were one among you who would shut the gates, that you might not uselessly kindle fire on My altar! I am not pleased with you," says the LORD of hosts, "nor will I accept an offering from you. For from the rising of the sun, even to its setting, My name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense is going to be offered to My name, and a grain offering that is pure; for My name will be great among the nations," says the LORD of hosts. "But you are profaning it, in that you say, 'The table of the Lord is defiled, and as for its fruit, its food is to be despised.' You also say, 'My, how tiresome it is!' And you disdainfully sniff at it," says the LORD of hosts, "and you bring what was taken by robbery, and what is lame or sick; so you bring the offering! Should I receive that from your hand?" says the LORD. "But cursed be the swindler who has a male in his flock, and vows it, but sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord, for I am a great King," says the LORD of hosts, "and My name is feared among the nations."

Although the tithe is no longer in force, 10% is a good rule of thumb feasible for many of us as a starting point. We can give that off the top, and then if we prosper more at the end of the month/year, we can give more. Certainly, since the tithe was given under the Law, grace should out-produce the Law in its giving!

Make this a matter of family discussion. Parents shouldn't automatically answer kids' financial requests with "We can't afford it." Rather, we should say, "We could do/buy that--but we have chosen not to so we can serve the Lord and others . . . or because we would have to work so much more that we couldn't spend enough time with you as a family."

3. *Incorporate your giving as a definite part of your budget.* Give "off the top" (like our bills) at the beginning of the month, pay-period, etc. (Prov. 3:9; 1 Cor. 16:2). Do not view your giving

commitment as disposable income, but rather like your rent/mortgage, food and utility bills, etc. "Wants" should always wait until this commitment has been honored.

Prov 3:9 - Honor the LORD from your wealth, and from the first of all your produce . . .

1 Cor 16:2 - On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come.

Giving sporadically according to dramatic needs only is inadequate, because ministry needs are very regular. Big needs require financial preparation. Church leaders need to plan financially, which requires regular income. Your giving will also be lower than if we commit ourselves to a regular amount. This is Paul's point in 9:5--good giving intentions are often sabotaged by covetousness.

The pledge program facilitates this: signed commitment, reminder, accountability. Qualification: It is not a blood-oath--we can revise it if we run into financial trouble.

Be faithful to this commitment even when unexpected needs arise (unless impossible). This gives God the opportunity to show you his faithfulness (PERSONAL EXAMPLES).

Some may object to a pledge with the statement, "*But it seems so impersonal.*" But the Bible insists that we can and should give regularly *and* with the right heart attitude, just like we should assemble with other Christians regularly *and* with the proper attitude (Heb. 10:24,25). If you give regularly but heartlessly, the solution is not to cease giving, but to get before God and change your heart! Those who wait until their heart attitude is right to start regular giving never seem to get there.

"What about windfalls (bonuses; gifts; inheritances)?" Unless we plan in advance how we will deal with unexpected income, your flesh just takes over and you'll tend to spend it selfishly. Shouldn't we expect to give more than 10% of this?

"What about faith giving?" Individuals are free to give even "beyond their ability" if they believe God wants them to and can trust him to meet their financial needs in extraordinary ways. The Macedonians did this (8:3), and Paul holds them up as an example much like Jesus did the widow. If you choose to do this, you should accept full responsibility for the outcome and look to the Lord for your help, not expecting other Christians to make up the short-fall.

The needs of others should have a moral bearing on our finances (8:13-15).

2 Cor 8:15 ...as it is written, "HE WHO gathered MUCH DID NOT HAVE TOO MUCH, AND HE WHO gathered LITTLE HAD NO LACK."

"Equality" here does not mean the same *per capita* income for everyone. Rather, it means that every Christian has sufficient resources. God gives me an excess of money (in part) so I can make up for the lack of another Christian (Eph. 4:28). The situation may well be reversed at another time. God has a special concern for the poor (Prov. 14:31).

- Eph 4:28 - Let him who steals steal no longer; but rather let him labor, performing with his own hands what is good, in order that he may have something to share with him who has need.
- Gal 6:10 - So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.
- Prov 14:31 - He who oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker, but he who is gracious to the needy honors Him.

This passage teaches that we have no right to hoard money or possessions for ourselves when we are aware of others in legitimate need. This is an implication and application of stewardship. This principle applies to the Body of Christ, since we are the family of God and brothers and sisters of each other--and also to the non-Christian poor.

- What would you think of a father who spent all his paycheck on golfing when his wife and children were going hungry and ill-clothed? His right to spend it on himself is limited by the needs of his family.
- Or, the Christian professional who questions how good of a witness they have when living a frugal lifestyle compared to their peers. Their secular peers look at them as if they are weird. Clearly, they should answer that they have better things to do with their money as they look across the highway and see the significant needs of others.
- QUALIFICATION: We should not let lazy Christians abuse this principle. Instead, we should confront them about their irresponsibility, call on them to pull their share of the load, and even excommunicate them if they persist.

2 Thess 3:10-12 For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone will not work, neither let him eat. For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies. Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to work in quiet fashion and eat their own bread.

1 Tim 5:8,16 - But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever . . . If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows, let her assist them, and let not the church be burdened, so that it may assist those who are widows indeed.

- Acts 4:32-35 teaches this on a *local* level. 2 Cor. 8:13-15 also applies it on an *extra-local* level. Passages like Gal. 6:10 remind us that we also should help *non-Christians* who are poor (although the Christian poor take priority).

APPLICATION:

1. Simple Lifestyle: Because of the obvious and ongoing need of other Christians locally and globally, this principle argues for a *simple lifestyle* so that as God prospers us in our earning power, we may give more and more (proportionately) to his purposes (WINTER'S "WARTIME LIFESTYLE").

Compare SIDER'S "GRADUATED TITHE" (from Ronald Sider's *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*) to BLUE, p. 141 and his advice to "get rich slowly." This contradicts Paul's warning in 1 Tim. 6:9.

If you allow your spending habits to increase proportionately to your income, then it will be very difficult for you to take advantage of ministry opportunities which require decreased income. But if you learn to live simply, you will be able to take advantage of these opportunities. There are many examples of people who have done this in the church.

This applies to DINKS as well. If you unnecessarily put yourself in a position that requires both incomes, even when beginning to have children, the integrity of your family and your walk with God may be compromised.

QUALIFICATION: Some people due to their job situations are unable to hold the family together financially without both spouses working. However, even they should not be able to review their expenses and see unnecessary expenditures. Again, Personal Finance Ministry helps people in this situation.

2. Xenos General Fund giving supports Urban Concern, missions and other ministries to the poor. You can also direct United Way funds to U.C. Your personal XCF missions giving gets at this to some degree. Other organizations like World Vision and Compassion International enable you to help support a child. Before you give to an organization, check it out for integrity, amount of overhead, etc.

God abundantly blesses the gracious giver (2 Cor. 9:6,8-14).

2 Cor. 9: 6ff Now this I say, he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully... {8} And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed; {9} as it is written, "HE SCATTERED ABROAD, HE GAVE TO THE POOR, HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS ABIDES FOREVER." {10} Now He 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; {11} you will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God. {12} For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God. {13} Because of the proof given by this ministry they will glorify God for your obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for the liberality of your contribution to them and to all, {14} while they also, by prayer on your behalf, yearn for you because of the surpassing grace of God in you.

This principle has been so abused by "Health and Wealth" preachers that many Christians have "thrown the baby out with the bath water." Religious hucksters misapply vs 6 as an incentive to give in order to get rich, thus violating 1 Tim. 6:5-10. But Paul undeniably teaches in this passage that godly financial giving *does* result in blessing to the giver, and the more bountifully we sow, the more bountifully we will reap. He clearly holds this out as an incentive to give.

What will we reap?

1. *We will reap increased financial resources to enable us to give more (vs 10a).* God will bless us financially as we give bountifully. Other New Testament passages teach this (Lk. 6:38; Mk. 10:28-30; Matt. 6:33; Phil. 4:18,19). Of course, this may not mean staggering wealth. Neither are we to hoard this, but rather continue to be a "conduit" to bless others. Vs 8 and 11a seem to broaden this promise out to include every kind of needed resource ("everything").
2. *We will reap increased effectiveness for God (vs 10b).* This phrase is difficult to interpret. It may mean we will reap the privilege of greater involvement and results in God's work. Faithfulness in money matters allows God to entrust us with greater ministry opportunities

Luke 16:9-11** - And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when it fails, they may receive you into the eternal dwellings. He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. If therefore you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous mammon, who will entrust the true riches to you?

Christ shows that we cannot "compensate" for poor giving by other forms of ministry. Rather, he clearly states that money is a "very little thing" in his view. If we don't handle it appropriately, what indication is there we'll be good stewards of "true riches" -- like unsaved people, that he would like to place in our lives?

If we want to have eternal impact on people's lives through evangelism and discipleship, first look to this area.

3. *We will reap the privilege of seeing others affected for Christ (vs 11b-13).* It is a wonderful thing to see that God has worked through you to bless other people (bringing friend to Christ; discipling those who are now solid workers for Christ; providing these classes; missions fruit; Urban Concern kids; XCF baptisms. Because of salaries & facilities, many of these ministries thrive and grow; XCF future growth because of increased new facilities [Cent. Tch; Campus Min; Youth Bldg).
4. *We will reap increased friends who love us and pray for us (vs 14).* Paul greatly valued this,

and we should, too.

5. *We will reap increased eternal reward (1 Tim. 6:19)*. God will point out the people reached (in part) through your giving to missions, etc.--and praise/reward you for it!

1 Tim 6:17-19** - Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.

NOTE: The Corinthians evidently responded to Paul's exhortation (see Rom. 15:26,27).

Our *first* responsibility is to support our local church.

Gal. 6:6; 1 Tim. 5:17,18 - There is a *moral obligation* to support those from whom you regularly benefit spiritually (*contra* GIVING BOYCOTT if one doesn't agree with a particular leadership decision).

Gal 6:6 - And let the one who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches.

1 Tim 5:17,18 - Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages."

PLEDGE PROGRAM & FISCAL SUPPORT TEAM: We would like to see all Christian Principle grads in this! Get in the habit now! Go through Pledge and FST rationale (tie together the principles above)

BUILDING PROGRAM: You have the opportunity to begin, extend &/or increase your pledge to this. The job is not done yet! Have a say in the future of this fellowships ministry.

MISSIONS: Part of your XCF pledge subsidizes XCF missions teams support. You can designate over and above that to them or to other missions.

Memory Verses

2 Cor. 8:7* - Consistent, sacrificial giving is a non-optional component of spiritual vitality and maturity. We cannot be true disciples of Christ without this.

2 Cor. 9:6-11** - God blesses bountiful financial giving in a variety of ways.

1 Cor. 16:2* - Our financial giving should be regular and consistent.

Assignment

Respond to questions on the challenge of wealth.

[Contact instructors with questions or comments](#)

[Return to top of this document](#)

[Return to Xenos Home Page](#)

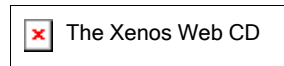
[Return to Crossroads Home Page](#)

[Return to Christian Principles Intro Page](#)

□

Please [contact our Webmaster](#) with comments or questions

For guidelines on using this material see our [Copyright notice](#).



[The Xenos Web CD is now Available!](#)