
God's Laws of Giving and Roadblocks to Giving

When you work so that you can have money to give, God takes care of you. It's a mindset and a heart condition, not a get rich scheme.

God's kind of prosperity comes when you shift your focus from getting and maintaining stuff, to living to give.

You are not supposed to live in poverty, it's just that your first priority should be helping other people, rather than trying to grab everything you can for yourself.

Would you like to be in such a good financial position that you will never need help from anyone? Would you like to be able to give abundantly to every good work you would like to contribute to? Our Father promises to supply these blessings in abundance to His children who sow abundantly by giving generously. (2 Corinthians 9:6-7)

Giving is a powerful part of tapping into God's prosperity. Several different things help determine the harvest you get from your giving – like the attitude you give with, where you give, and trusting God as your source – so there isn't a formula. But you can't really prosper in God's economy until you start sowing into his kingdom.

When we plant our financial seeds, it is very important for us to prayerfully ask where we should plant them. We should always seek the Lord's will before we give. Here are a few principles that the Lord has given to us in His Word concerning our giving.

Giving To the Poor

Jesus explicitly said that God will grant us rewards for giving generously to the poor:

Go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven (Matthew 19:21)

Jesus said, "Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Luke 12:33 – 34).

Similarly, Mark quotes Jesus as saying, "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasures in heaven" (Mark 10:21).

There is no ambiguity here. Taking money and possessions we could have stored up for ourselves on earth and instead giving them to the poor is how we store up treasures in Heaven. Jesus' message is convicting and clear – it's all about giving and rewards for giving. When poor people cross our path, we shouldn't turn away from them. If we give to them, we will be blessed and we will never lack.

He that gives to the poor shall not lack, but he that hides his eyes shall have many a curse (Proverbs 28:27)

He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord, and He will pay back what he has given (Proverbs 19:17)

He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor (Proverbs 22:9)

Blessed is he who considers the poor; The Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive, And he will be blessed on the earth (Psalm 41:1)

If we really comprehend these principles, we will give freely to help the poor of the world. As the Lord continues to give back to us, we'll continue to give more and more freely. This won't cost us one cent. The Lord wants to use our faith as a channel through which He can and will pour large amounts of money to fulfill His great commission throughout the world.

The Highest Form of Giving

The highest form of giving is to help share the gospel. When you start helping the good news to be shared, demonstrating the love of God in word and deed, there is a divine flow that takes place. God starts supernaturally supplying your needs. This is why Scripture tells us to give God the first fruits, not the left-over fruit. The first thing you should do when you get money is give back to God. When you do that, God takes better care of you accidentally than you ever have done through striving and grasping at your resources.

Do Not Store Up Treasures on Earth

Jesus says, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth." Why? Because earthly treasures are bad? No. Because they won't last.

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:19)

When Jesus warns us against greed and to not store up treasures on Earth, it's not because wealth might be lost, it's because wealth will always be lost. Either it leaves us while we live, or we leave it when we die. No exceptions.

Be on your guard against all kinds of greed, a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions (Luke 12:15)

Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle (Proverbs 23:5)

Next time you buy a prized possession, imagine it sprouting wings and flying off. Sooner or later, it will disappear.

Invest In What Has Lasting Value

Jesus doesn't just tell us where not to put our treasures. He also gives the best investment advice you'll ever hear: "Store up for yourselves treasure in heaven" (Matthew 6:20).

God's riches are infinite. When you serve Him and others, you store up treasures in Heaven. This doesn't reduce the treasures available to others. Everyone gains, no one loses.

"Store up for yourselves treasure in heaven." Why? Because it's right? Not only that, but because it's smart. Jesus makes not an emotional appeal, but a logical one: invest in what has lasting value.

Giving Based Upon Love

God's Word teaches that all giving should be based upon love. Some people learn part of God's laws of prosperity and give in a calculating manner, anticipating something in return. This won't work! Giving without love is "of no value whatever." Love is the key to giving and only love opens the channels for our loving Father to give back to us.

If I gave everything I have to poor people, and if I were burned alive for preaching the Gospel but didn't love others, it would be of no value whatever (1 Corinthians 13:3)

The Joy of Giving

When you speak to givers about their experience and rewards as a faithful giver, the words fun, joy, exciting, and wonderful will typically surface. Smiles, laughter and tears of joy will often accompany their stories. The more we give, the more we delight in our giving. It pleases us. But more important, it pleases God.

God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7)

However, the cheerfulness often comes during and after the act of obedience, not before it. So don't wait until you feel like giving! Just give and watch the joy follow.

Giving brings us far more than it takes. It infuses our lives with gladness and gratitude. It interjects an eternal dimension into the most ordinary day. That's one reason you could never pay givers enough to convince them not to give.

My Heart Follows My Money

By telling us "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also," Jesus is saying, "Show me your bank records and your Visa statement, and I will show you where your heart is." What we do with "our" money doesn't simply indicate where our hearts are. According to Jesus, it determines where our hearts go.

As surely as the compass needle follows north, your heart will follow your treasure. This is a remarkable truth. If I want my heart somewhere, all I need to do is put my money there.

God wants your heart. He isn't looking for dispassionate "philanthropists" for His kingdom. He's looking for disciples so filled with a vision for eternity that they wouldn't dream of not investing their money, time, and prayers where they will matter most.

Giving is the Only Antidote to Materialism.

The act of giving is a vivid reminder that it's all about God, not about us. It's saying I'm not the point, He is the point. He does not exist for me. I exist for Him. God's money has a higher purpose than my affluence. Giving is a joyful surrender to God and a greater agenda. Giving dethrones me and exalts Christ. It breaks the chains of the Money-God that would enslave me.

As long as I still have something, I'm tempted to believe I own it. But when I give it away, I relinquish control. At the moment of release, the spell is broken. My mind clears. I recognize God as owner, myself as servant, and others as intended beneficiaries of what God has entrusted to me.

I am free, and with freedom comes happiness. Galatians 5:1 says, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery."

Giving doesn't strip us of vested interests, rather, it shifts our vested interests from Earth to Heaven – from self to God.

Giving in any form frees us from the gravitational hold of money and possessions. It shifts us to a new center of gravity: Heaven.

Men Shall Give Unto You

Our Father has created a spiritual principle that is set into motion whenever we give freely and abundantly. Our Father is very generous. He has made provision to guarantee that all of His children who are generous will be blessed abundantly. When we give according to God's laws, our gift will come back to us overflowing and running over.

Give, and it will be given to you, a good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over shall men give unto your bosom. For with the

same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you (Luke 6:38)

God isn't going to rain down money from Heaven to meet our needs! The money will come from people on this earth. Notice Jesus said, "...shall men give into your bosom...." Of course, God is always the One who opens doors, stirs hearts and orchestrates circumstances, as well as motivates people to give to us as we believe and obey the instructions in His Word.

God won't let you outgive Him. He will always bless you back when you show faith in Him by giving of your substance. You will never be more faithful to God than He is to you.

Cheerful Giving

The times when we give should be the greatest times of our lives. As always, this is completely opposite to the world's way. Most people think that the times that they "get" are the happiest times of their lives. Too many Christians look upon their giving as an obligation that they owe instead of as a seed that they sow.

God prospers me not to raise my standard of living but to raise my standard of giving.

Why shouldn't we give cheerfully if we know that our money is going to be put to good use and, in addition if we know that God is going to see to it that every bit of our gift is given back to us plus more? Who wouldn't be cheerful if they fully comprehended that, in addition to blessing others and doing God's work, they would receive a bountiful harvest from the seeds they had sown?

Give It Now or Give It Later?

People ask, "Should I give now, or should I hang onto it, hoping my investments will do well and I'll have more to give in a year?" Two questions in response, "How soon do you want to experience God's blessing?" And "do you want to be sure the money goes to God's kingdom, or are you willing to risk that it won't?"

I don't believe it's ever wrong to give now instead of later. God can produce far greater returns on money invested in heaven today than the world system ever can.

**When we stand before God, I don't believe He'll say,
"You blew it when you gave Me all that money before the stock market peaked."**

Giving When in Debt

Many people give faithfully for a while and then when financial problems come up, they cut down on their giving. If we fall into this trap, we fail a financial test that God has allowed to come into our lives. When financial problems come, if we make any change in our giving, it should be to increase our giving, not to decrease it. In times of difficulty, it's more important than ever to put God first and to keep Him first.

Am I saying that, if someone is really "down and out," that he should start giving freely to God? This is exactly what I'm saying.

It's not easy to give when our debts are large, yet this is exactly what we must do. We can give and meditate our way out of debt.

People who are in debt can meditate their way out of debt (Psalm 1:1-3 & Joshua 1:8) and give their way out of debt. (Luke 6:38, 2 Corinthians 9:6-8, Malachi 3:8-11) **God places tremendous emphasis on continual giving and**

constant time in the Word ahead of everything else. This is what God's Word teaches and we should make a decision to follow His instructions.

Heaven's Economy

When we put our money in the bank of heaven, we put our money in a bank that is greater than any bank that this world has ever known - a bank that has a better guarantee than any bank in this world. Our "savings account" in the Bank of Heaven is backed by the Word of God. Can we believe Him?

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal (Matthew 6:19-20)

Jesus spoke a lot about motives. It's wrong to build up savings out of fear, or so that you can sit back and say to yourself, "eat, drink, and be merry, for I have goods laid up for many days ahead." (Luke 12:19)

That's the wrong attitude. But it's good to build up savings so that you always have resources to "abound to every good work" (2 Corinthians 9:8) and to leave an inheritance to your grandchildren. (Proverbs 13:22) That's using money as God intended.

God's Kingdom Is Set Up On Percentages

You don't have to literally give huge amounts of money. God looks at your giving in proportion to how much you have.

Giving liberally isn't about the cash value of your gift. You can be so wealthy that 10% of your income won't even put a dent in your spending. In that case, tithing might not be enough to build trust in God as your source. If you have come to a level of prosperity where giving 10% is no skin off your back, then you should increase your giving to where you still need to trust God to multiply your finances. Give an amount so that you are relying on God to come through for you financially. It's all about trust.

Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much. Then one poor widow came and threw in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents. So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood." (Mark 12:41-44)

More Blessed to Give Than to Receive

There's only one statement of Jesus recorded in Acts that doesn't appear in the Gospels. Jesus did that so it would stand out: "The Lord Jesus himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'" (Acts 20:35)

Let's not be so absorbed with "getting what's ours" that we miss what brings real happiness, giving God what's His. Giving is doing what we were made for, loving God and our neighbors. Giving boldly and joyfully affirms Christ's Lordship.

"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 22:36-40)

Why is it more blessed to give than to receive? Here are four reasons:

- 1) We put God first ahead of our own selfish interests.
- 2) It proves our trust in God and freedom from fear.
- 3) Giving protects us from the pitfalls of greed and covetousness.
- 4) The more we give to God, the more this opens the channel for Him to see that we receive abundantly in return.

Blessed To Be A Blessing

God gives you money to survive and pay your bills, but He also provides a return on our giving so that you can be a blessing.

Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need (Ephesians 4:28)

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work (2 Corinthians 9:8)

Excel in giving

Paul said, "See that you also excel in this grace of giving" (2 Corinthians 8:7). Like piano playing, giving is a skill. With practice, we get better at it. We can learn to give more, give more often, and give more strategically by making giving something we study, discuss, and sharpen.

The Macedonian believers gave "as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability" (2 Corinthians 8:3). What does it mean to give beyond your ability? It means pushing our giving past the point where the figures add up. Sometimes giving will seem like it doesn't make sense, but when we do it, God provides.

You've heard of prayer warriors. What about **giving warriors**? God has entrusted us with so much. Perhaps He is raising up a great army of givers and calling us to enlist!

God's Money Manager

If God is the owner, then I am the manager. We need to adopt a steward's mentality toward the assets He has entrusted – not given – to us.

A steward manages assets for the owner's benefit. He carries no sense of entitlement to the assets he manages. It's his job to find out what the Owner wants done with his assets, then to carry out his will.

We need to realize God's ownership. Once we understand that we are giving away God's money to do God's work, we will discover a peace and joy we never had back when we thought it was our money!

The Law of Quiet Giving

We should never give so that other people will know what we have given.

Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise, you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret;

and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly. Mathew 6:1-4

ROADBLOCKS TO GIVING

We know that Christ commands us to give. And we know He offers us great rewards for giving. Maybe we even believe that giving brings happiness. So why do we find it so difficult to give at times?

There are many roadblocks to giving: unbelief, insecurity, pride, fear, idolatry, desire for control. The raging current of our culture – and often our churches – makes it hard to swim upstream. It's considered "normal" to keep far more than we give.

If you aren't giving to God, then you either don't know His promises to give back to you, or you don't really believe those promises are true.

A Purse With Holes

Many people suppose they can't afford to give precisely because they're not giving, and therefore not experiencing God's blessing. When God's people failed to give as He called them to, He said, "You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it" (Haggai 1:6). God didn't allow their money to go far because they were stingy and disobedient.

You looked for much, but indeed it came to little; and when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why?" says the Lord of hosts. "Because of My house that is in ruins, while every one of you runs to his own house" (Haggai 1:9)

A Battle With Our Natural (unrenewed) Mind

A lot of people are struggling financially, and their natural minds don't see how they can spare any of their income toward giving. The mind sees that there isn't enough and common sense will reason that we need to keep everything, but the Word of God says honor the Lord with the first fruits of your substance and our bank accounts will burst forth with finances.

There is one who scatters yet increases more; and there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty (Proverbs 11:24)

To the natural mind, that doesn't make any sense. How can scattering lead to prosperity, and withholding lead to poverty? Yet that is how God's economy works. You can't understand it with your natural mind.

The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. (1 Corinthians 2:14)

Most people are short-term thinkers. They don't see the wisdom in giving because the natural mind can't understand the things of the spirit.

Fear Releases Poverty

If you aren't honoring the Lord with your first fruits, the bottom line is that you don't trust God. Fear that God won't come through for you is what is keeping you from giving, and that fear is actually releasing lack into your life. If that's the case, then all you have to do is start taking steps of faith by giving. Honoring the Lord with your first fruits will release the power and anointing of God in your life, and you will begin to prosper. It's simple.

God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7)

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;
In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths (Proverbs 3:5-6)
Don't take this the wrong way, but if you aren't a giver, then you aren't trusting God.
Giving is a step of faith that turns your focus to God and moves you into position to receive from Him.

God Rewards Acts of Faith Done While We're Still Living

When the Lord returns, what will happen to all the money sitting in bank accounts, retirement programs, estates, and foundations? It will burn like wood, hay, and straw. (1 Corinthians 3:12–13). Money that could have been used to feed the hungry and fulfill the Great Commission will go up in smoke. (This will be discussed more in the “Treasures That Await Us In Heaven” section.)

A lot of Christians say, “my trust is in the Lord,” but you can tell where their heart really is by looking at how they give. Are they faithful givers, or do they have other priorities with their finances?

Where We Think Our Home Is

One of the greatest deterrents to giving is this: the illusion that the present earth is our home. Where we choose to store our treasures depends largely on where we think our home is. The Bible says:

Our citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20)
We are pilgrims, strangers, aliens on earth (Hebrews 11:13)
We are ambassadors representing our true country (2 Corinthians 5:20)
We are citizens of a better country – a heavenly one (Hebrews 11:16)

GO TO THE “EARTHLY HOTEL ROOM ANALOGY” ON PAGE 2 IN THE “LIFE LESSONS - FINANCES” SECTION

Final Thoughts on God's Laws of Giving

If you have money, then you can give. It doesn't matter how much you have. Trust what God's Word says and begin to give from your first fruits. Don't hold back for fear that you won't have enough. God will provide. He wants to bless you financially, but you have to plant seed. You need to take a step of faith. So start giving, and watch for God's supernatural flow to increase your finances and cause you to prosper in every area of your life.

In God's economy, you move closer toward your goals by giving than you do by clinging to everything you have.

The more you give, the more comes back to you, because God is the greatest giver in the universe, and He won't let you outgive Him. Go ahead and try. See what happens.

Whatever is given to Christ is immediately touched with immortality.