

# CHRISTIAN MONEY \$ENSE

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## What God Wants From Our Finances: Selflessness

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Several years ago, there was a little boy who had a party for his fifth birthday. Many of his friends came to the party with gifts, which piled higher and higher as the guests arrived. Besides having friends over and getting gifts, there was plenty of birthday cake and candy. As most children do, this boy loved candy. Because he had a very health conscious mother, the candy supply was usually lean while the vegetable supply was abundant, so anything that would bring candy was considered good. Friends, gifts, and candy - what more could this boy ask for!

As the party began, the boy's mother opened a carton of Whopper's candy, which the boy did not want to share with anyone else. As children can be at times, this boy was being selfish, and the mother rightly told him this. The boy agreed to share and share he did, but only half. When I mean half, I mean half of the actual Whopper's; The boy pulled out each piece of candy, bit it in half, and then gave the uneaten half to one of the guests. How generous!? How juvenile. The mother corrected this dilemma quickly. That day the boy learned about the true meaning of giving - being selfless.

Now I will confess that the boy was me. I was selfish with the candy because I felt like I was never going to get enough of it if I did not hoard it. I had neglected the fact that all my friends had brought presents for me to have; I was looking only at my needs as I held back on half of the Whoppers. A candy tax, you may call it.

I can do the same thing as an adult, but now it regards money. There are times when I hold back giving to the Lord or to other believers that are hurting because I am looking at my own situation too much. My troubles and worries about my finances seem to mount so high that I forget that others may need help more than me. And then I wonder why no one notices when I am struggling: Everyone else is looking at his or her own needs first.

God's Word tells us, "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interest of others" (Philippians 2:3-4, NASB). We need to be looking out for the needs of others, and we need to take action on it if we desire to be blessed by God. "Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully" (2 Corinthians 9:6, NASB).

This can be a real challenge for most people because of the weak economy or poor financial conditions. To those who are doing well financially, keep your ears open to others in your church body. Many people are hurting from the loss of a job, the inability to find a new job, and the pressure of providing for their families. I challenge you to find a person or two like this and give an anonymous financial gift. God could use that in their lives and the lives of their families to bless them and give them some encouragement.

To those who do not have much, listen also to the needs of others. You may realize that you do not have it so bad, or it may help to know that others are going through the same difficult circumstances. Be willing to be open about your struggles because there are many hurting people that need the encouragement. "Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2, NASB).

Let us be watching for the Lord's goodness, waiting for his provision, and willing to give as a blessing to others.

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BBC Foundation has been ministering to churches and individuals regarding biblical stewardship since 1992. Send your questions on finances and stewardship to: BBC Foundation, 538 Venard Rd., Clarks Summit, PA 18411. Phone: (800) 451-8668, website: [bbcfoundation.org](http://bbcfoundation.org); e-mail: [info@bbcfoundation.org](mailto:info@bbcfoundation.org)