

CHRISTIAN MONEY \$ENSE

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What God Wants From Our Finances: Humility

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Have you ever tried to take a toy from a little child? One of the responses you may get is "Mine!" Although you bought the toy for the child, feed him regularly, take care of all his needs, and only want to put the toy away for a while, he will still give you the response, "Mine!" He doesn't realize that really, as the parent, it could be yours and should be yours, but you have graciously given it to him because you care for him and desire to see his needs met, including playtime fun.

Now with your finances, how do you react when God allows the circumstances of life to take some money from you? You may have had some unexpected expenses come up like new tires for your car or medical expenses for a sick child or increased insurance premiums. Just as the child sits there with his toy, you do not want to be bothered with giving something up that you weren't planning to relinquish. You were minding your own business, and all of a sudden, it is gone. If you can, you will try to cling to it with all your might, but it doesn't matter because a stronger power is involved.

Why does God allow these things? Does He delight in making us sad or frustrated? Does He realize that what He is doing has hurt me financially? These questions may come to mind when an unexpected situation occurs. I will assure you that He does not delight in bringing affliction into your life as it says in Lamentations 3:33: "For He does not afflict willingly or grieve the sons of men" (NASB). He does know that what has happened has made you a little lighter in the wallet; He is all knowing.

So why does God allow these things? I think, in part, they help us realize who we really are in our heart. "Every man's way is right in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the hearts" (Proverbs 21:2, NASB). "As in water face reflects face, so the heart of man reflects

man" (Proverbs 27:19, NASB). God can take these difficult financial situations and use them as a mirror to help us see who we really are. Through this we can see if we are like the child who is screaming, "Mine!" when the hand of circumstance takes the money out of our hand.

What do we need to realize in these times? To be who God wants us to be, we need to be humble, to realize that our possessions belong to God. God is not losing any money through this circumstance. We need to see that He is more concerned about the condition of our heart than the condition of our checkbook.

Humility is something that God wants from us in our finances. "And what does the Lord require of you... to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). He wants us to remember that everything is His, even our finances. "The land is mine" (Leviticus 25:23). "Every beast, the cattle on a thousand hills are God's." (Psalm 50:10) "The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine" (Ezekiel 18:4).

The next time an unexpected situation out of your control occurs that takes your money:

- 1) Realize that God has allowed this situation into your life
- 2) Remember that it is all God's money, and He will put it wherever He pleases
- 3) Humbly accept this situation, and praise Him for it.

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; e-mail: info@bbcfoundation.org