

# CHRISTIAN MONEY \$ENSE

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## God Made Us to Give

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Do you feel like what you do with your possessions is nobody's business but your own? For the most part, this is true. However, we must remember that our wealth is only a tool that God uses to transform us from being self-focused to God focused. The hymn "Count Your Blessings" was taken from Psalm 40 and reminds us that the reward Christ has promised is waiting for us in heaven. Investing in Great Commission causes in this life prepares us for our role in eternity.<sup>1</sup> Will accumulating and holding wealth on this earth improve your status in heaven? Not according to Scripture. However, the distribution of your earthly wealth to advance God's kingdom will.<sup>2</sup> That's a promise that shouldn't be missed. It is also the test that God uses to help us understand what we have placed first in our lives.<sup>3</sup> In fact, how we spend our money is an exact reflection of our heart condition.<sup>4</sup> It is through cheerful and disciplined giving that God transforms our character, lives, and relationship with Him.

In the parable of the talents, two servants invested their money according to their master's wishes. They knew their role and his desire for the wealth that he had entrusted to them. The third servant acted with fear of loss instead of hope of gain and placed his interests before his master's. The consequence for the servant was that the master took away the wealth he had entrusted to him. Not only that, we are told that he was cast out of the house and experienced the loss of his role as a trusted servant. Caution: This is not about losing your salvation. Instead, this parable conveys the truth that our rewards in heaven are contingent on our faithfulness and are not the same from person to person.<sup>5</sup> Those who are faithful stewards according to their ability receive abundant rewards and honor. Those who are not faithful with the wealth that God has entrusted to them on earth will experience a loss of rewards and honor in heaven.

How can we be faithful stewards amidst all of the pleas from needy organizations? The answer can be simplified if we break it down into bite sized pieces:

- Decide who is Lord of your life.
- Help your family commit to being faithful stewards in giving to Great Commission causes. Be an example.
- Give to God first and adjust your budget from there. You choose the amount. Start anywhere, even if it is only 1% of your income.
- Adjust your giving for inflation and work at increasing it each year.
- Develop a budget that you can live with.
- Personally participate in the Great Commission activities you support. This is part of the blessing, and God will use the experience to keep you committed.

No faithful steward chooses what is important to his master or overrides his master's expressed interests. God desires that all should be saved<sup>6</sup> and has entrusted us with wealth so that we use a portion of it to advance His kingdom. Will you have an abundance of rewards in heaven or will you live with disappointment in the rewards that you do not receive? To whom much is given, much is expected.<sup>7</sup> Your sacrificial giving to advance God's kingdom can be a great source of joy. Seize the opportunity and build a life of intimacy with God. Please let us know if we can help you with biblically based counsel on budgeting or finances.

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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)

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 16:10-12; Luke 19:17,19,26.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 19:27-30; Luke 14:12-14; 1 Peter 4:10; 2 John 8.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Corinthians 8:8-12.

<sup>4</sup> Matthew 6:21.

<sup>5</sup> Matthew 25:14-30; 1 Corinthians 3:12-15; Luke 19:17,19,26.

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<sup>6</sup> 2 Peter 3:9.

<sup>7</sup> Luke 12:48.