

February 11th, 2018

# SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

## Service & Giving

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[ TITLE SLIDE: ]

- Spiritual disciplines of the Christian life

- Prayer & Fasting / Simplicity / Silence & Solitude

- TODAY... Giving your Time, your Service, and **YES, your Money**



## GIVING & SERVICE

When Christians think about GIVING - We think.... Stewardship

#1 Sometimes we use word Stewardship as an excuse to be stingy

Instead, think.... **GENEROSITY**

#2 Stewardship can imply you're Managing a LIMITED RESOURCE

One thing that we know from the Bible is that **God is a God of ABUNDANCE**

- Story of boy gave all his food (Generosity)

then they had twelve baskets full left over

- Bible's full of passages "**God blesses those who give**"

- **There is abundance in GENEROSITY**



[ Matthew 6.19-21 NLT ]

*"Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. 21 Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.*

- Our hearts will be where our Treasure is... **where our GIVING goes**

Country in South America going through an Inflation and Currency crisis...  
 ....trying to convert their Currency into US dollars

**So How do we turn the currency of this earth into the currency of heaven?**

- Famous saying:

*"You cannot take it with you, but you can send it on ahead"*

- Being GENEROUS with our money.....

*"We're converting the money of this world into a **Eternal Currency**"*



[ Luke 12.16b-21 NLT ]

...*"A rich man had a fertile farm that produced fine crops. 17 He said to himself, 'What should I do? I don't have room for all my crops.'* 18 *Then he said, 'I know! I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I'll have room enough to store all my wheat and other goods. 19 And I'll sit back and say to myself, 'My friend, you have enough stored away for years to come. Now take it easy! Eat, drink, and be merry!'"*

20 *"But God said to him, 'You fool! You will die this very night. Then who will get everything you worked for?' (Rich man had no idea when he would die... neither do you)*

21 *"Yes, a person is a fool to store up earthly wealth **but not have a rich relationship with God.**"*

- World's philosophy is *"Take care of Number One!"*....

But Jesus does NOT endorse that philosophy

- Rich man's *"bigger barn"* should have been **"Mouths of the Poor"**

- He should have **Invested his Surplus in Others**

Christian.... Don't put your heart ONLY on things of this world...  
**How you dole wealth out and give it away reveals your heart**

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**Possessions are mentioned 2,172 times in Scripture**

3x more than Love / 7x more than Prayer / 8x more than Belief

## Jesus talked about Money more than Heaven and Hell Combined

- I think Jesus is asking the question:
  - *"In what or whom do you ultimately put your trust?"*
  - *Do you put your trust in God, or in riches and money?*
- Jesus gives us the antidote to *"the love of money"....*  
**Antidote is Generosity**



[ Mark 12.38-44 NLT ]

*Jesus also taught: "Beware of these teachers of religious law! For they like to parade around in flowing robes and receive respectful greetings as they walk in the marketplaces. 39 And how they love the seats of honor in the synagogues and the head table at banquets. 40 **Yet they shamelessly cheat widows out of their property** and then pretend to be pious by making long prayers in public. Because of this, they will be more severely punished."*

*41 Jesus sat down near the collection box in the Temple and watched as the crowds dropped in their money. Many rich people put in large amounts. 42 Then a poor widow came and dropped in two small coins.*

*43 Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has given more than all the others who are making contributions. 44 For they gave a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she had to live on."*

### We think this passage is only about...

- The Widow gave everything, whereas
- Many Rich just gave a percentage  
 .....**Maybe we are supposed to give our all?**
- I read another explanation....
  - **The Widow should not have to have given everything**
  - If Others had their hearts in the right places, they would be taking care of her
  - She **would not have to give** her last fraction of a penny

Lets talk about Principles of **TITHING**

- TITHING started with Abraham giving to Melchizedek 10%  
(King of Jerusalem & High Priest)
- Question for US TODAY.... *"Is 10% where I START or END at??"*
- How Generous do you have to be? Pre-tax or After tax??

Earlier I said: *"I prefer **Generosity** over Stewardship"*

- Stewardship sounds like a cold, Calculating Management  
*"There... I have done that, check the box, I am done"*
- Whereas, Generosity does not spend so much time calculating  
..... It is from our heart

Jesus said, *"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"*  
GENEROSITY is going to show up in life

EXAMPLE: Tipping at Restaurants can be a sign of where your heart is

QUESTION: *Who works in the food service industry? ...Look around  
Who got excited when a **church group came in??***

Do you Calculate HOW CHEEP you can get by....

When we have this attitude, we are loving MONEY



[ Matthew 6.24 NKJV ]

*"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."*

*MAMMON: Wealth regarded as an evil influence or false object of worship and devotion. It was taken by medieval writers as the name of the devil of covetousness*

- When Money becomes too hard to give away... It becomes an idol to us
- **GIVING is only way to break the stranglehold money has over us**

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## There is more than One way to Give... Giving of our **ABILITIES / SKILLS / TIME**

- Abilities are what God gives us
- Skills are the abilities we Develop & Grew

### Tell Parable of the Talents

- The Master gives different talent amounts to 3 servants
- TALENT was a huge amount of treasure
- First 2 increased their Talents / *"Well done, good and faithful servant"*
- 3rd Buried his Talents



[ Matthew 25.24 NLT ]

*"Then the servant with the one bag of silver came and said, 'Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn't plant and gathering crops you didn't cultivate. (This is how the wicked servant viewed his master) 25 I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.' 26 'But the master replied, 'You wicked and lazy servant! If you knew I harvested crops I didn't plant and gathered crops I didn't cultivate, 27 why didn't you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.'*

- Burying his Talents **in the Earth** is thinking only of this Physical Realm
- **Servant was condemned for not Giving what God gave him**

The reason evil servant gave his master for NOT USING Talents:

*'Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn't plant and gathering crops you didn't cultivate. 25 I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.'*

*26 'But the master replied, 'You wicked and lazy servant! If you knew I harvested crops I didn't plant and gathered crops I didn't cultivate, 27 why didn't you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.'*

**What the Servant really Missed was:**

- God is a GENEROUS God / Giving God!

- If he'd Realized who God REALLY is....  
then he would have given his Talents away



- If we misperceive who God really is *"....stern and stingy and out to get us!"*

Then **we Misperceive who *WE are Supposed to be!***

### Here is the **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE** part

Force yourself sometimes do things that you do not want to DO or GIVE

- Don't go through life Squeezing / Grasping / Holding On
- Be GENEROUS with MONEY / POSSESSIONS / TIME / ABILITIES
- Share these things FREELY



[ TITLE SLIDE ] Jimmy \_\_\_\_\_

### How are you **EXERCISING** in **YOUR** Spiritual Disciplines??

- PRAYING & FASTING / SIMPLICITY / SILENCE & SOLITUDE
- Remember our goal is to be CONFORMED to the Image of Jesus
- Conforming requires us to Agree with God's will for us
- To WORK it out, knowing it is Changing us

CLOSE

When we ignore, squander, or abuse what we have been given (money, skills, abilities)  
We are **ONLY** thinking of **THIS WORLD** and not **ETERNITY**

