

“I Will Give Generously” – 2 Cor. 9:6-15; Matt 6:19-24

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What we need at our church are more ‘money sermons’. How many of you are thinking that right now? Oh, sure, there are those who claim the church is always asking for money. And sometimes the criticism is valid. But what is potentially worse than ‘always’ asking for money is not talking about it at all. Sometimes we are so concerned about offending people that we don’t deal with things that make them, and us, uncomfortable. Money is not the issue. ‘Serving’ money is the issue. Valuing money is the issue. Money is a tool, and it has great potential for use within the Kingdom, when we are serving the One Who has redeemed us, not with gold or silver, but with His holy precious blood.

I. Introduction: Where is your treasure?

- a. “You can tell more about a person from his checkbook than anything else.”
- b. Who is the Lord of your life? Who is sitting on the throne of your heart?

II. Sermon Text(s):

“Don’t collect for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. But collect for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves don’t break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matt 6:19–21)

“No one can be a slave of two masters, since he will hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot be slaves of God and of money” (Matt. 6:24)

III. Point 1 – You Cannot Serve Two Masters

- a. Matt 6:24 – oil and water – can’t mix
- b. From *Our Daily Bread*, a devotional I get on my phone very morning, Godfrey Davis, who wrote a biography about the Duke of Wellington, said, "I found an old account ledger that showed how the Duke spent his money. It was a far better clue to what he thought was really important than the reading of his letters or speeches."

How we handle money reveals much about the depth of our commitment to Christ. That's why Jesus often talked about money. One-sixth of the gospels, including one out of every three parables, touches on financial stewardship. Jesus wasn't a fundraiser. He dealt with money matters because money matters. For some of us, though, it matters too much.

c. This whole topic of money and God makes us uncomfortable because we learn who our Master really is – “You cannot serve both God and money.”

IV. Point 2 – A Delicate Matter

a. There has been a shift in many churches, starting somewhere 1970s or 80s where money and stewardship became a delicate, in not taboo, topic in church. Some pastors believe talking about money may drive away guests or that money sermons may come across as legalistic.

b. Money talks may reveal idols in many hearts (in both members and pastors) When you go to a doctor for your annual check-up, he or she will often begin to poke, prod, and press various places, all the while asking, "Does this hurt? How about this?" If you cry out in pain, one of two things has happened. Either the doctor has pushed too hard, without the right sensitivity. Or, more likely, there's something wrong, and the doctor will say, "We'd better do some more tests. It's not supposed to hurt there!"

So it is when pastors preach on financial responsibility, and certain members cry out in discomfort, criticizing the message and the messenger. Either the pastor has pushed too hard. Or perhaps there's something wrong. In that case, I say, "My friends, we're in need of the Great Physician because it's not supposed to hurt there."

c. Another reality is that many church members have developed a consumer mindset on giving to local churches. If the church does not do things exactly as they want, they will withhold funds or reduce their giving. But Paul and Jesus encourage us to give cheerfully, even when we don't agree with everything. We cannot think of the funds we give as “our funds.” The act of giving is the act of letting go. Such is the definition of a gift.

Giving is the true indicator of our heart. Giving is the true indicator of the type of church member God has called us to be.

V. Point 3 – The Motivations for Giving

a. 2 Cor. 9:6-7 - The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

b. Wrong motivations for giving (legalism)

c. Right motivations for giving – in response to what God has done for us in Christ (Gospel)

d.

Joy in giving leads to joy in God (cheerful)

VI. Conclusion – The Action Plan

a. Prayer

- b. How much does God have to give? (The unlimited resources of God)
- c. Just do it