

Christian Spiritual Disciplines



Stewardship of Time

Eph 5:15 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil.

Stewardship of Money

1 Tim. 5:8 If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Deut. 16:16 ... **No man should appear before the LORD empty-handed:** 17 Each of you must bring a gift in proportion to the way the LORD your God has blessed you.

“The use of your money and how you give it is one of the best ways of evaluating your relationship with Christ and your spiritual trustworthiness.” Whitney, p. 146.

There are the 3 foundational principles in the New Testament concerning resources.

- a. God owns everything (1 Cor 6:19-20; Rom 11:36; Col 1:16)
- b. We are managers of God's resources (1 Cor 4:2, 7; Luke 12:13-21)
- c. We are to invest them for God (Matt 6:33; 25:14-30; Acts 20:35)

The New Testament Principles For Giving...

1. As God has blessed you (2 Cor 8:11-14; 1 Cor 16:2)

Now you should finish what you started. Let the eagerness you showed in the beginning be matched now by your giving. Give in proportion to what you have. ¹² Whatever you give is acceptable if you give it eagerly. And give according to what you have, not what you don't have. ¹³ Of course, I don't mean your giving should make life easy for others and hard for yourselves. I only mean that there should be some equality. ¹⁴ Right now you have plenty and can help those who are in need. Later, they will have plenty and can share with you when you need it. In this way, things will be equal.

(2Co 8:11-14 NLT)

The New Testament Principles For Giving...

2. Give consistently (1 Cor 16:1-2)

Now regarding your question about the money being collected for God's people in Jerusalem. You should follow the same procedure I gave to the churches in Galatia. ² On the first day of each week, you should each put aside a portion of the money you have earned. Don't wait until I get there and then try to collect it all at once.

(1Co 16:1-2 NLT)

The New Testament Principles For Giving...

3. Lean towards generosity (2 Cor 8:1-5; 9:6-13; 1 Tim 6:18-19)

Now I want you to know, dear brothers and sisters, what God in his kindness has done through the churches in Macedonia. ² They are being tested by many troubles, and they are very poor. But they are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity. ³ For I can testify that they gave not only what they could afford, but far more. And they did it of their own free will. ⁴ They begged us again and again for the privilege of sharing in the gift for the believers in Jerusalem. ⁵ They even did more than we had hoped, for their first action was to give themselves to the Lord and to us, just as God wanted them to do.
(2Co 8:1-5 NLT)

The New Testament Principles For Giving...

4. Give with joy (2 Cor 8:2; 9:7)

You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully."

(2Co 9:7 NLT)

The New Testament Principles For Giving...

5. Give with intent and purpose (2 Cor 8:12; 9:7)

You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully."

(2Co 9:7 NLT)

The New Testament Principles For Giving...

6. Giving is part of transformation (2 Cor 9:11-14; 1 Tim 6:17-19)

Yes, you will be enriched in every way so that you can always be generous. And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God.¹² So two good things will result from this ministry of giving-- the needs of the believers in Jerusalem will be met, and they will joyfully express their thanks to God.¹³ As a result of your ministry, they will give glory to God. For your generosity to them and to all believers will prove that you are obedient to the Good News of Christ.¹⁴ And they will pray for you with deep affection because of the overflowing grace God has given to you. (2Co 9:11-14 NLT)

The New Testament Principles For Giving...

7. Trust God to provide (2 Cor 9:8-11; Phil 4:18-19; 1 Tim 6:17; Heb 13:5)

Don't love money; be satisfied with what you have.
For God has said, "I will never fail you. I will never
abandon you."
(Heb 13:5 NLT)

Individual Simplicity

“Simplicity is an *inward* reality that results in an *outward* lifestyle.” Foster, p. 80.

We need a Spirit of Trust in order to live simply. “If what we have we receive as a gift, and if what we have is to be cared for by God, and if what we have is available to others, then we will possess freedom from anxiety.” Foster, p. 88.

Foster's 10 Step Program to Mammon Addiction

1. Buy things for their usefulness rather than their status.
2. Reject anything that is producing an addiction in you.
3. Develop a habit of giving things away.
4. Do not accumulate endless needless gadgets.
5. Learn to enjoy things without owning them.
6. Develop a deeper appreciation for the creation.
7. Look with healthy skepticism at all “buy now, pay later” schemes.
8. Obey Jesus' instructions about plain, honest speech (Yes be Yes).
9. Reject anything that breeds the oppression of others.
10. Shun anything that distracts you from seeking first the Kingdom of God.

Communal Simplicity

Private Property? Lev. 25:23 "The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you are but aliens and my tenants."

- **Usury?** "Lend, expecting nothing in return." (Luke 6:35; cf. Neh. 5:7-11).
- Exo. 22:25 "If you lend money to one of my people among you who is needy, do not be like a moneylender; charge him no interest."
- Prov. 28: 8 He who increases his wealth by exorbitant interest amasses it for another, who will be kind to the poor.
- BUT cf. Matt. 25:27 "Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest."

The Two Cultural Enemies of Simplicity

1. The culture of debt
2. The culture of now

A Culture of Now Attacks Us in Two Ways

1. It targets out discontent
2. It targets our lack of self-control

No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money. Matthew 6:24 NLT

God and Money

1. Both can grip the heart
2. Both demand to be served
3. Both demand a choice



The Cycle Of Greed

1. We live in a culture of escalating financial demands
2. It fosters an environment where money rules
3. It creates a climate of financial fear
4. Financial fear will manifest itself as greed
5. Greed manifested from fear will provoke debt dependency
6. Institutions feed the fear and the cycle continues