

DECLARATIONS OF GOD REGARDING MONEY AND THINGS

Last week we began a series entitled “God, Giving, and Gifts.” Although not very “catchy,” like—“Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is”—it does emphasize **this truth**: When it comes to **giving**...and **what** to give...and **how much** to give...we must **start with God**.

That’s why last week’s sermon wasn’t about **giving money**—it was about **giving ourselves** as a living sacrifice to God. Why? Because God wants **you** before He wants your money!

How strongly do I believe that? So much so that I wanted to preach on it again today! Because even though **we heard** that God wants us to give ourselves to Him—and even though **we agree** we should live for Jesus because He died for us—**not very many of us** make a whole-hearted commitment to live for God!

I was reminded of that truth last Sunday night while my wife and I—and our granddaughter and her friend—were watching the Christian movie, “Play the Flute.” The main storyline is about a youth group leader trying to motivate **spiritually apathetic teens** to live for God. The teens are each given a **small white flag**—and a stand to put the flag in. They were challenged to surrender their life to God and the indicator that they had made that commitment was them **putting the flag in the stand** so that it **stood upright** instead of laying on the table...or desk...or dresser... next to the stand.

Throughout the movie, there would be scenes of the white flags laying next to its stand. One by one, though, the teens began putting their white “surrender” flags **into** the stands—indicating that they had turned their lives over to God! That is my heart-beat as your pastor—and **not just** for the teens!

My desire as your pastor is much more than you **coming to church** and **maybe learning** something. And my desire is more than you just **getting saved** so you can go to heaven after you die! My heart-beat is that you first **become** a child of God, then **give yourself to Him** in order to serve Him and become more like Him. And that is God’s desire, too!

I won’t be giving you white flags, though—and I certainly won’t preach on your need to give yourself to God **every Sunday**—but I will be reminding you that that is what God wants!

Back to the topic at hand. Why preach on money? Because the Bible has a lot to say about it—to the tune of **2350 verses** as mentioned last week! Another reason—also mentioned last week—is that our attitude toward money is an indicator of where **our heart is** with God. In other words, it indicates what **our priorities in life** are! There’s another reason—which is also the **main reason** I felt led to preach on giving in the first place! Here it is: Because how we use our money is a tangible way **to show—and grow**—our faith!

We’ll talk more about that in the future, but as you already know from your outline, this morning we will be looking at declarations God makes about money and things.

1. Declaration #1—God owns all things

Do you believe that? We need to—because the Bible says that—and in more than one place! Please take your Bibles and turn to I Chronicles 29. In the way of background, this chapter is primarily about David’s **prayer of thanksgiving**. What was David thankful for? That he **could give toward** the building of the temple! Before we look at the truth that God **owns** all things, I want to give you a little more of the context.

Notices vss 1-2. Here we see that **Solomon** is going to build the temple—**not David**—but that David had prepared gold, silver, brass, iron, wood, and precious stones for the building of it.

In vs 3, we see that David “of mine own proper good”—meaning **from his personal possessions**—was also going to contribute to the building of the temple.

In vss 6-7, we see other leaders stepping up and giving gifts for the house of God. And now David’s prayer, beginning with verse 10. Please follow along as I read through vs 16.

--Vs 11 “...for **all that** is in the heaven and in the earth is thine....”

How much of what is in heaven and earth belongs to God? **All that is** in heaven and earth!

--Mid of vs 14 “...**all things** come of thee...” If all things come from God, they obviously belong to Him!

End of vs 16 “...**all is thine own.**” Multiple other verses where that truth is taught, here are a few:

Genesis 14:19 “And he [Melchizedek] blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, **possessor of heaven and earth:**”

Psalms 24:1 “The earth **is the Lord's**, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

Ps 50:10-12 “For **every beast** of the forest **is mine**, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. ¹¹ I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field **are mine.** ¹² If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: **for the world is mine**, and the fulness thereof.” **Declaration #1?** God owns all things!

So if God owns **all** things—and you have **some** things—you have them because God has **given them** to you! There is one obvious **exception**, though: if you have something because **you stole it**, that wasn't **a gift** from God! But—generally speaking—another declaration God makes about money and things is this...

2. Declaration #2—God gives us what we have!

I was quite surprised by how times the Bible declares that fact—and guessing you might be, too!

A. The declarations that what we have is from God

--Vs 12 “Both riches and honour come **of thee...**”

--Notice again the middle of vs 14. Impossible to miss the point—“all things come **of thee**”—meaning from God, of course—and anything we **give to God** came from God in the first place!

--And in vs 16, we have the same thought: “What we have prepared for your temple came from **your** hand!”

Deut 26:10 “And now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land, which thou, O Lord, **hast given me.**”

I Sam 2:7 “The Lord **maketh poor, and maketh rich**: He bringeth low, and lifteth up.”

Job, after losing all his possessions—and his children—on the same day, made this startling statement:

Job 1:21b “the Lord **gave, and the Lord hath taken away**; blessed be the name of the Lord.”

God's view on Job's words? **Job 1:22** “In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.”

Job 42:10 “And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also **the Lord gave Job** twice as much as he had before.”

I Timothy 6:17 “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, **who giveth us richly all things** to enjoy;”

James 2:17 “Every good gift and every perfect gift **is from above**, and **cometh down from the Father** of lights,”

Pretty hard to miss the point—what we have is **from God** and God wants us to make sure **we know** that...and **believe that**...and **treat what we are given** as belonging to Him—**not as belonging to us!**

If our attitude is, “**No one** is going to tell **me** what to do with **my money**,” we obviously have the wrong view on **where** our money and possessions come from—and **Whose** they really are!

But how do we get what we have from God? God doesn't daily send **money from heaven** like He sent manna to the children of Israel in the wilderness—and He doesn't use Amazon, Fed Ex, or UPS, either! So how is that we get things from God? Generally speaking, in one of **three** ways.

First, B. God usually gives us things in the “natural” way

What do I mean by the “natural” way? **By working!** In fact, God has ordained that if **a man doesn't work**, he shouldn't eat! Does the Bible say that? Yes, it does! **II Thess 3:10** “For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.”

And let's not forget that God gave man work to do **before** he fell into sin in the garden of Eden! We see that in **Gen 2:15** “And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden **to dress it and to keep it.**” In other words, work did not come about **because** man had sinned—God gave Adam a job to do **before** he sinned. That means work was part of the perfect earth that existed before Adam and Eve disobeyed God!

So how is God **the giver** if we have to do the work? Even though you already know the answer, I'm going to give it to you anyway: God is the One who gives us **the abilities and strength** to work! We are not “self-made” men—or women; we are **God-created** men and women! And God is the One who gives us our abilities!

I Cor 4:7 is a wonderful reminder of that: “For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?”

Simply put, don’t boast about your abilities and talents—they are gifts from God!

Not only does God give us our abilities—He can also **ble**ss the work that we do!

--God promises in Joshua 1:9 that if we meditate on God’s Word—and obey it—that “then thou shalt make thy way **prosperous**, and then thou shalt have **good success**.”

--A similar promise is found in Psalms 1:3 “And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and **whatsoever he doeth shall prosper**.”

--Luke 12:16 “And He [Jesus] spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:” Who makes the ground “bring forth plentifully”? God, right?!

--Deut 8:18 “But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for **it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth....**”

The natural...normal...usual way that God gives us things is for us to work—and God blessing our work!

C. Sometimes God gives to us through others

My guess is that some of you have heard the story I’m about to tell. I’m not entirely sure what it is called—and I know there are a few variations of it—but the main point remains the same. The story goes like this:

A very religious man was once caught in rising floodwaters. He climbed onto the roof of his house and trusted God to rescue him. A neighbor came by in a canoe and said, “The waters will soon be above your house. Hop in and we’ll paddle to safety.”

“No thanks” replied the religious man. “I’ve prayed to God and I’m sure He will save me.” A short time later the police came by in a boat. “The waters will soon be above your house. Hop in and we’ll take you to safety.”

“No thanks” replied the religious man. “I’ve prayed to God and I’m sure He will save me.” A little time later a rescue services helicopter hovered overhead, let down a rope ladder and said, “The waters will soon be above your house. Climb the ladder and we’ll fly you to safety.”

“No thanks” replied the religious man. “I’ve prayed to God and I’m sure He will save me.” All this time the floodwaters continued to rise, until soon they reached above the roof and the religious man drowned.

When he arrived at heaven, he asked to speak to God. Ushered into God’s throne room he said, “Lord, **why am** I here in heaven? I prayed for you to save me; I trusted you to save me from that flood.”

“Yes, you did my child” replied the Lord. “And I sent you a canoe, a boat and a helicopter. But you never got in.” (<https://www.reenadavis.com/blog/2016/11/30/i-sent-you-a-rowboat>)

The point, of course, is that God sometimes gives us things through people! Can we be like this “religious” man and sometimes **refuse the help** of others? Yes, we can! We don’t want to “impose” on others or accept the help of others, so we **refuse what they are offering** without even considering the possibility that **God put it on their heart** to help you! The pastor that introduced me to the bus ministry in Eau Claire would sometimes say to me, “Don’t rob people of the chance of being a blessing to you!”

Do we have a Biblical example of that? We certainly do! The young Christ was visited by wise men—we’re not told how many—when He was probably **a year or so old**. What did they bring Him? Gold, frankincense, and myrrh! What happened to those gifts? We are not exactly told, but they were quite likely used to pay for Mary, Joseph, and Jesus to flee to Egypt and live there for a while!

God gives us things the natural way—through **work**—and sometimes He gives us things through **people**.

Thirdly... D. Sometimes God gives to us in miraculous, supernatural ways

It might be something “explainable”—but unexpected—like a pay raise or promotion, but it also could be what we would call miraculous—like the guy in Kentucky who recently found 700 Civil War coins worth \$2 million or more in his cornfield!

Biblical examples abound. Jesus fed thousands of people—on two different occasions—with just a few loaves of bread and some fish. In the OT, Elijah, a widow woman, and her son lived for probably a year or more on a handful of meal—flour—and a little bit of oil! And during the time of Elisha the prophet, **four lepers** were going to surrender to the Syrian army because they were on the verge of starving to death.

Instead of being halted by a guard as they neared the camp, they encountered no one. What they did find, though, was the food, clothing, silver, and gold that the Syrian army had left behind! Why had the army fled?

II Kings 7:6 says, “For **the Lord had made the host** of the Syrians to **hear a noise** of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host...” They heard the noise of an army—but there was no army! But they fled—and left everything behind for God’s people!

Declaration #1? God owns all things!

Declaration #2? God gives us what we have!

3. Declaration #3—God wants us to be givers!

We’ll come back to this thought again in the future, but for now I want to look at just a few statements God makes regarding His desire that we be givers.

A. God declares that He wants us to be givers

II Cor 9:7b “...for God loveth a cheerful giver.” It is true that God wants us to be **appreciative receivers**, but He also wants us to be ones **that give!**

Acts 20:35 “I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is **more blessed to give than to receive.**”

If it is **more blessed to give** than to receive, God obviously wants us to **be a giver!** One of the many things Jesus said about giving is found in Luke 6:38 said, “**Give**, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.”

Not only does Jesus say we are to **be givers**, He also implies we are to be **generous** givers! That is what is meant by “good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over.” Fill it to the brim and pack it down—then add some more!

First, we know God wants us to be givers because He **declares** it!

But we also know because... B. God demonstrates that He wants us to be givers

God provides us examples of those that gave—and then commends them for giving! I believe we have an example of that right here in this chapter.

Vs 2 talks about giving for the house of God, so does vs 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9. So does vs 14...and 16... and 17! The point I’m making is this—much of this chapter is about **giving toward God’s house** and God saw fit to put it in His Word for us to read about and think about—and follow as an example!

I think it is also important to consider **the rejoicing** that was going on **with their** giving.

--Vs 9 “Then the people **rejoiced**, for that they **offered willingly**, because with perfect heart **they offered willingly to the Lord**: and David the king also rejoiced with **great joy.**”

--Vs 13 “Now therefore, our God, we **thank thee, and praise** thy glorious name.”

--End vs 17 “...and now have I seen **with joy thy people**, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee.”

--Vs 22 “And did eat and drink before the LORD on that day **with great gladness....**”

Quite a picture, isn’t it? There is a lot of **giving** going on—and a lot of **rejoicing!** They certainly understood that God **loves a cheerful giver**—even though the verse hadn’t been written yet!

Think with me about some of the other examples where God demonstrates He wants us to be givers. A not-so-obvious one is the **lad who gave his lunch** of five loaves and two fishes to Jesus so He could feed the 5000! And then there was the account where Jesus was **watching how much money** people were putting into the money chest for the temple. The rich were “putting in much” Mark 12:41 says, but Jesus commended the **poor widow woman** who hardly gave anything at all. Why? Because the rich cast in of **their abundance**—their excess—but the little that the widow gave was an **incredible sacrifice** for her.

I think it is noteworthy that Jesus did not say, “She shouldn’t have done that, she is too poor!” Instead, He pointed her out as an example! Why? Because God wants **all of us**—whether rich or poor—to be givers!

Three declarations God makes about money and things.

Declaration #1—God owns all things. So do you look at what you have as **yours**—or God’s?

Declaration #2—God gives us what we have. Are you thankful?

Declaration #3—God wants us to be givers! Are you a giver?

So what would God have us do in light of His Word this morning?

1. First, I want to direct your thoughts to the somewhat silly story I told about the man who drowned in the flood. Why did he drown? Because he refused to get in the canoe...and the boat...and the helicopter.

--Why did people die in the flood in Noah's day? Because they refused to get in the ark!

--And why do many go into destruction after they die—meaning hell—and not to heaven?

Because they refuse to receive the gift God sent to rescue them—Jesus!

Do you have Him? Have you received Him? Are you in Him?

2. Second, wave the white flag and surrender yourself to God. That's what He wants—and that is what He deserves. Your outlook on money and possessions will be significantly different if you surrender wholeheartedly to God and His will.

3. Third, ask God to stir within you a desire to hear what He says—and do what He says.

Do you love God? Then obey Him—in all areas of life!