

LINKS PLAYERS

DAILY DEVOTIONAL FRIDAY BIBLE STUDY FOR FEBRUARY 24, 2012

HOW MUCH SHOULD I GIVE?

Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on.” (Mark 12:33-34, NIV)

It’s a powerful question, causing us to dig our oars deep against the tide of selfishness. How much? How much of my money, my time, my life do I give away—to family, to friends, to the needy, to “good causes,” to the church?

In an age where our financial advisors speak of “financial freedom” and “expandable income”—key expressions for those of us who’d like to put some money toward golf, for instance—those who follow Christ must remain watchful. *What*, we must keep asking ourselves, *does Jesus really want us to do with the resources he has given us?* If we miss this essential question, we miss the core of life in his kingdom.

The widow Jesus commended is not prescriptive—Jesus never suggested that every person should give everything away—but she was certainly singled out as instructive for us all. Why? Because her actions were based on complete trust that God would continue to provide for her daily needs.

We may, like the rich men at the temple that day, give out of our wealth. In fact, we must. But we can be certain of this: whereas we may miscalculate in our holding back, playing to our own desires more than to God’s call to surrender, we run almost no similar risk when we give all. It has been said that if the earth is truly the Lord’s and everything in it (Psalm 24:1), then our thinking should be led not by the question, “How much of my money do I give away?” but instead by the question, “How much of the Lord’s money do I keep for myself?” So here are two good places to start:

- **Give in trust.** If the Lord (or perhaps a mentor in the kingdom) has pushed you to give, do it. Always, always, God wants to increase our faith. And there is no better way for him to do this than by moving us to a place where increased faith is required. A life of leaner living may just be that place.
- **Give generously.** “Freely you have received,” Jesus told his disciples. “Now freely give” (Matthew 10:8). Practice what he preaches, and watch the freeness of your hand increase the freeness of your spirit in him.

Generous living

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-15. What would you consider hallmarks of a cheerful giver?

What promises are given in verses 8-11? What could be gained from memorizing and meditating on these promises?

Who benefits from our generosity (verse 12)?

In addition to monetary giving, in what other ways may Christ’s generous spirit be evident in us?

Firstfruits

The Mosaic law included directives to bring firstfruits and tithes to the Lord. Although the Mosaic law is not still in effect in the age of Christ’s grace, what value remains in remembering God first in our free giving?
