
Seven Points for a good Theology of Stewardship

Alms-giving in addition to regular giving to the church is part of Lent. Here are seven principles for a solid and Biblical theology of giving:

1. **Giving is motivated by gratitude, not guilt.** A gift that is coerced is no gift at all.
2. **The amount is less important than the attitude.** The standard for measuring our stewardship is the tithe (10% of our income). But, for some the standard is impossible, and for others it is not enough. God will lead you to the right level of giving, if you open yourself to him in gratitude and ask to be led.
3. **God has made abundant provision for us, and he is the source of all that we have.** We say with King David: *“But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.”*¹⁵ *We are aliens and strangers in your sight, as were all our forefathers. Our days on earth are like a shadow, without hope.*¹⁶ *O LORD our God, as for all this abundance that we have provided for building you a temple for your Holy Name, it comes from your hand, and all of it belongs to you.”* 1 Chron 29:14-16 (NIV)
4. **The Lordship of Christ extends to every part of our life, including our money.** It is not an accident that Jesus spends as much time teaching about money (both its dangers and its right use) as he does. Remember these words of Jesus because they say it all: *“No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.”* Matt 6:24 (NIV)
5. **God’s plan is to provide abundant blessing when we put him first in our giving.** Remember the words God spoken through the prophet: “Bring the whole tithe into the store-

house, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and *see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.*” Mal 3:10 (NIV)

6. **God’s plan also provides protection for those under His Lordship.** The images from agriculture may not be familiar to us, but the message today is the same. Those who trust in the Lord will not be put to shame. Those who make sacrifices and take risks by the standards of the world, will be covered by God’s protection. ¹¹ I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit,” says the LORD Almighty. ¹² “Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land,” says the LORD Almighty. Malachi 3:11-12 (NIV)
7. **When we stand before God, we will be asked for an accounting of what we did with what we were given.** That is the meaning of stewardship. The words we wait to hear are these: *‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’* Matt 25:23 (NIV)

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