

1 Chronicles 29:1-22
Give God Your Resources

Main idea: Everything you have is God's. Give it back to Him.

[God Pie video]

So God made the pie, brought the pie, and gave us the pie, and yet so often we give Him little to nothing in return.

These weeks leading up to Christmas, we're focusing on how Jesus is the greatest gift, and because God gave us the greatest gift, we naturally should want to give back to God. We've talked about how we should give God our strengths and abilities, and our time, and next week, we'll be talking about how in light of being given the greatest gift, we'll want to give God all of ourselves. So once again, I encourage you to invite your friends and family to come next Sunday so that they will hear the gospel of Jesus Christ, and how we are to respond to that good news.

This week, we'll be talking about how we should want to give God our resources, like our material possessions, and our money.

Now, I realize that money is often a touchy subject, and that when churches talk about money, a lot of people think that's all we care about. And we could all probably point to many examples of when churches and ministries have been greedy and have talked about money in unbiblical ways, and have encouraged giving for unbiblical reasons. So a lot of people would prefer that churches never talk about money.

But if we're going to look to the Bible as our source of guidance for life, then it would actually be a huge mistake to never talk about money, because the Bible has a lot to say about it.¹ In fact, I don't think it would be an exaggeration to say that how we view and use money is one of the most important aspects of our discipleship as followers of Jesus.

According to J.D. Greear, the current president of the Southern Baptist Convention:²

"Jesus talked about money more than any other earthly subject." - J.D. Greear

And if you go through the Gospels and count them, you'll find that about a third of Jesus's parables mention money, sometimes as an illustration, but often to teach on stewardship. That would be like if I devoted 17 sermons every year to talking about how we're to use our money. So if you don't like it when churches talk about money, it seems that you also would not have liked Jesus's preaching very much. Jesus was clear that how you view and use money is a huge indicator of your spiritual health. Jesus said in Matthew 6:21:

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:21)

And then just a few verses later, He said:

You cannot serve God and money. (Matthew 6:24b)

¹ A small sampling: Proverbs 13:11, Ecclesiastes 5:10, Luke 12:15, Hebrews 13:5, 1 Timothy 6:10

² Listen to his sermon: <https://www.summitrdu.com/message/pray-act-watch/>

The word translated “money” in that verse is the Greek word “mammon” which generally means riches, or the world’s stuff.³ It refers to all that this world offers, specifically physical things like possessions and money.

So how we think about and use money says a ton about what we value. And if you really treasure Jesus as your Savior and Lord, then how you use money will reflect that. That’s true if you’re rich, and that’s true if you’re poor, because it really doesn’t matter how much money you have, what matters is what you do with what God’s given you.⁴

Well, this morning, we’re going to be looking at a man who was both poor and rich in the course of his life. His name was David. He started out as a shepherd boy, but ended up as king over all Israel. Please turn with me to 1 Chronicles 29.

Our Scripture this morning takes place at the very end of David’s reign as king. It’s the last thing that’s recorded that David did as king, and in fact, it’s one of the very last things David did at all, as we see just a few verses later that he dies and his son Solomon becomes king in his place. So we see that one of the very last things that David did had to do with using his resources for God. 1 Chronicles 29:1.

And David the king said to all the assembly, “Solomon my son, whom alone God has chosen, is young and inexperienced, and the work is great, for the palace will not be for man but for the LORD God.” (1 Chronicles 29:1)

So what’s going on here is that David wanted to build the first Jewish temple. Up until this point, ever since it was first established in the wilderness when Moses led the Israelites out of the land of Egypt, the Jews had worshipped and offered sacrifices at the tabernacle. But the tabernacle was simply a big tent with cloth partitions, and it was getting worn out from all of its being put up and taken down. And David looked at this tent and thought, “Is this the best we can do? Is this the very best that we can offer to God?”⁵ God had earlier declared that David’s son, Solomon, would be allowed to build this temple,⁶ but David also wanted to be a part of building this most beautiful building for God, because God deserves our very best.

You see, our giving is not merely to man, but to God. Even when it seems like we’re giving to men, we’re really giving to God. When you go to work, you’re to work not for men, but for the Lord.⁷ Jesus said through a parable that if you give someone food, or something to drink, or clothing, even when it seems like we just give normal things to normal people, we’re really giving to Him.⁸

But if you refuse to give to those who are hungry, or thirsty, or in need of clothing, then by not doing so, you also refused to give to God.⁹

I know I’ve been guilty of that. I can think of many times over the years when people have asked me for help, and I’ve told them no. Sometimes I was afraid they’d use the money for drugs, or that at the very least they were just trying to take advantage of my kindness, and so I refused to help them. Jesus said:

³ See Thayer’s Greek Definitions: μαμμωνᾶς

⁴ Matthew 25:14-30

⁵ 1 Chronicles 17:1

⁶ 1 Chronicles 17:11-12

⁷ Colossians 3:23

⁸ Matthew 25:35-40

⁹ Matthew 25:42-45

Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. (Luke 6:30)

Give to everyone! Do we do that?

Now, I'm not sure Jesus meant this as a law even toward the lazy and greedy, because Paul also wrote this:

If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. (2 Thessalonians 3:10)

So, it seems that there is actually a biblical time to say no to giving to others, and it's a matter of wisdom. Today with Facebook and the Internet, you could easily in a matter of minutes find good Christian causes to give all your money to, and even dig yourself into debt. So I'm definitely not saying that every single time you see a Gofundme request, you need to give to it. And I'm not even saying that every time you see a homeless person, you need to give money to them. But don't use all the legitimate "no's" to give you an excuse to close your ears and your heart so you can't hear when God is telling you to give. Because in general, it seems that we're much more quick to embrace Paul's command without really considering Jesus's command. Our gut instinct shouldn't be to hoard our stuff, but to freely give it to others in need. I mean, even if we're being taken advantage of, isn't that more the heart of God? When it comes to our salvation, don't we all kind of take advantage of the kindness of God?

So give, expecting nothing in return.¹⁰

I think I've shared before how Abby always makes sure that we have bags to give to homeless people that we see on the side of the road when we're in the city. It usually contains a few snacks, a bottle of water, and a pocket-sized New Testament. It's really not much, but it's one way that God has laid it on her heart to give.

So notice that we're not just talking about how we give money, but how we give and use all of our stuff. I think David made this clear, starting in verse 2:

So I have provided for the house of my God, so far as I was able, the gold for the things of gold, the silver for the things of silver, and the bronze for the things of bronze, the iron for the things of iron, and wood for the things of wood, besides great quantities of onyx and stones for setting, antimony, colored stones, all sorts of precious stones and marble. Moreover, in addition to all that I have provided for the holy house, I have a treasure of my own of gold and silver, and because of my devotion to the house of my God I give it to the house of my God: 3,000 talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and 7,000 talents of refined silver, for overlaying the walls of the house, and for all the work to be done by craftsmen, gold for the things of gold and silver for the things of silver. (1 Chronicles 29:2-5a)

David gave gold for the things that were to be made of gold, and silver for the things that were to be made of silver, and so on. He even gave wood for things that needed to be made of wood. In other words, whatever the need required, that's what he gave.

We often think of our giving to God as just the money that we put into the offering plate. But sometimes God wants you to give something else. Maybe you see a need that the church has, and you want to give above and beyond your normal giving. Several people over the years have generously given large items that they could

¹⁰ Luke 6:35

have sold and made a profit on, but they gave them to the church because they saw a need. Things like TV's, or computers, or couches they no longer needed in their homes. By the way, if any of you have decent couches that you're thinking about replacing soon, we could certainly replace a few couches in the youth room as well.

Now, I'm not suggesting that you go home, clean out your house, and dump all your junk at the church. I think we can agree that if we all did that, we'd have a huge problem. But I am suggesting that you think about how you might use all of your stuff to meet the needs of the people around you. If you have an extra car, consider loaning it, or even giving it to someone who might need it. If you have the resources to have an extra child in your house, consider adopting or becoming a foster parent. Listen, it's not easy, and they won't pay you back, but it's one of the most rewarding things that you can do with the resources God has graciously given you.

That's what David understood. He understood that he had all these things, gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and precious stones not so that he could hoard them for himself, but so that he could joyfully give them back to God. And after giving all these resources back to God, David gave an invitation. End of verse 5.

Who then will offer willingly, consecrating himself today to the LORD? (1 Chronicles 29:5b)

So David gave all this stuff, and then said, "Who of you will do the same?"

When I preach on giving, I'm not telling you to do anything that I'm not willing to do myself. I've always struggled in exactly how to share what we give because I don't want it to come across as boasting. But David just laid it all out there!

David seemed to say that what you give of your resources is a reflection of whether or not you've consecrated yourself to God. It's all well and good to say that you're going to devote yourself to God, but what does that actually look like? David is saying that if you really want to consecrate yourself to God, by serving Him, and being His, then that's going to show itself in the way that you willingly offer not just your strengths, not just your time, but even your resources in service to the Lord.

Now, I need to be clear here, because David was clear. David was not saying that you get right with God by giving money. David was not saying give, and you'll reap financial blessings as a result of your good deed. And David was certainly not saying that you could buy God's favor. No, David was saying simply that a heart that's received the overflowing generosity of God will itself overflow with generosity.

And it's the same for us. When you receive Jesus as your Savior, you'll begin to be generous. You'll have a new mindset in regards to your resources, no longer seeing them as objects to accumulate, but rather as resources to bless God and others with. So just as David invited the people to respond to God's goodness with generosity, so I invite you to do the same.

Give to the Lord with a generous heart, just as God has so graciously given you His Son, and with Him, all things.¹¹

And when David gave this invitation to the people, the people responded with generosity. Verse 6.

¹¹ Romans 8:32

Then the leaders of fathers' houses made their freewill offerings, as did also the leaders of the tribes, the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, and the officers over the king's work. They gave for the service of the house of God 5,000 talents and 10,000 darics of gold, 10,000 talents of silver, 18,000 talents of bronze and 100,000 talents of iron. And whoever had precious stones gave them to the treasury of the house of the LORD, in the care of Jehiel the Gershonite. Then the people rejoiced because they had given willingly, for with a whole heart they had offered freely to the LORD. David the king also rejoiced greatly. (1 Chronicles 29:6-9)

They gave, and rejoiced as they gave, because they willingly gave with their whole hearts to God.

You see, God loves a cheerful giver.¹² God loves a cheerful giver because that reflects how God gives to us. God doesn't give to us reluctantly, but because God loves to give! He gave us His Son so that all who trust in Him would not perish, but would have eternal life.¹³

And just as Jesus gave us all of Himself, we should want to give all that we have to Him. And we instinctively know this, and we want it to be realized in the area of moral living, but for some reason we hold back in the area of our finances. It's almost like we try to give the bare minimum. And yet no one ever sang, "I surrender one tenth!" God calls us to give it all.

Now, listen, I understand if you don't completely trust me. Like, you've heard so many preachers tell you to give to their ministry, and you're just a little skeptical because it sounds like they're just saying that because they're greedy for your money. So listen, if you can't give cheerfully to our church, that's okay. But don't use that as excuse not to give to the Lord. Find a ministry that you can give to cheerfully. Give to the Lottie Moon Christmas offering. We don't keep a single cent of that for our ministries here; it's all passed along to our Southern Baptist missionaries who are sharing the gospel all over the world.

Or maybe you just want to start by giving a portion of your income every month to Compassion International, a great organization that helps children in third world countries, and you can even write to the children that you sponsor, and let them know you're praying for them even as you give to meet their needs.

So if that's where you are, that's fine. Give in those other ways. But I do hope that you'll eventually trust me and our church enough to give here as well, because it's good and biblical to give to the Lord through your church as we serve our community with our ministries here. But I don't want any of this to come across as a plea for your money. In fact, our church is doing quite well financially right now. I'm not preaching this message today because we're behind on the budget, or because I think we need more money for something. No, I'm preaching on giving because we need to be reminded from time to time that we give not out of obligation, but because as recipients of God's grace, giving is another way that we're to rejoice in Jesus as the greatest gift.

So after David gave, and after the people of Israel gave, we read this prayer that David prayed starting in verse 10, and his prayer reminds us how giving isn't a burden, but a joy. Verse 10.

Therefore David blessed the LORD in the presence of all the assembly. And David said: "Blessed are you, O LORD, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever. Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor

¹² 2 Corinthians 9:7

¹³ John 3:16

come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name. “But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you. For we are strangers before you and sojourners, as all our fathers were. Our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no abiding. O LORD our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a house for your holy name comes from your hand and is all your own. I know, my God, that you test the heart and have pleasure in uprightness. In the uprightness of my heart I have freely offered all these things, and now I have seen your people, who are present here, offering freely and joyously to you. O LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, keep forever such purposes and thoughts in the hearts of your people, and direct their hearts toward you. Grant to Solomon my son a whole heart that he may keep your commandments, your testimonies, and your statutes, performing all, and that he may build the palace for which I have made provision.” (1 Chronicles 29:10-19)

David said several things in the course of this prayer that really remind us why we give. In verse 11, he prays:

Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all. (1 Chronicles 29:11)

So everything belongs to God! Your house is God’s, your car is God’s, and whatever number your bank says is in your account is actually God’s. So giving your resources back to God is simply an acknowledgment that it’s not really yours to begin with. And it’s an act of trust that says, “God, this stuff isn’t mine, but Yours, and I know I can trust You to give me everything that I really need.”

David said that again at the end of verse 14.

For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you. (1 Chronicles 29:14b)

Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians:

“What do you have that wasn’t given to you?” (1 Corinthians 4:7b)

And James wrote:

“Every good and perfect gift comes down from above, from the Father.” (James 1:17a)

In the very beginning, God told Adam and Eve, “Fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”¹⁴ That wasn’t giving us permission to kill all the animals and pollute the earth however we see fit. God was giving them, and us, a stewardship. Because everything we have is from God to be used for God, and we have the responsibility to manage His resources well.

¹⁴ Genesis 1:28

And we've all abused this stewardship. We eaten the last piece of the pie. We've squandered His wealth in reckless living.¹⁵ We've tried to get away with giving the bare minimum, and we've treated all that God's graciously given us as our own, to be used however we please.

But listen, the king of the Jews, not David, but Jesus, did what we could not do. He gave it all. He wasn't rich by the world's standard; He didn't even have a place to lay His head. And yet, He gave something worth far more than money: He gave us His very life.

So I hope that you won't walk away from this sermon and think to yourself, "I'm ashamed. I haven't been using my resources for God. And I really need to do that because I need to prove myself worthy of heaven! So I'm going to get it right this time! From now on, I'm going to give God everything! I'm going to give the church a full 10% of my income, and write the church into my will, and spend the rest in a way that honors God! And that way I'll make God happy with me, and God will surely give me eternal life!"

Listen closely. I hope you do use your resources for God, but that's not what saves you. You're saved through faith in the greatest gift: Jesus Christ.

¹⁵ Luke 15:13