

(Basics) 48. Giving Everything to God

by Zac Poonen

To be delivered from the power of mammon, we must learn to give back to Caesar what is Caesar's and give to God what is God's, being righteous and faithful in our money matters.

Duration: 13:08

Scripture: Deuteronomy 8:18, Matthew 22:21, Luke 14:33, Romans 13:8, 1 Corinthians 10:26

Topics: "Financial Stewardship", "Faithfulness To God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of being righteous and faithful in money matters. He encourages the audience to give back what is rightfully owed to others, including borrowed money and any cheated funds. The speaker also highlights the need to put God first in financial decisions and to be accountable for every rupee earned. He reminds the audience that all money ultimately belongs to God and that He is the one who gives the power to make money. The sermon concludes by encouraging the audience to make a covenant with God to be faithful with their finances and to trust that God will bless them.

Transcript

We want to turn today to a verse of scripture that tells us how we can be delivered from the power of mammon and serve God with all of our heart. Money is a wonderful servant, but a terrible master. Like fire, a wonderful servant when kept in control on the gas stove, a terrible master when it's allowed to burn down the house.

Jesus said in Matthew 22 and verse 21, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. Teaching us, first of all, to be righteous in money matters, and second, to be faithful in money matters. To be righteous is, first of all, to give back to other people what is rightfully theirs.

If you have borrowed money, return it. If you have cheated, return it. If you have cheated the income tax department or the customs department, give it back.

If you don't do it, you'll be dragging a chain on your feet all your life. You'll never be able to run the Christian race, I'll tell you that. Settle it now.

It's better to get God's blessings than to hang on to money which is not yours. Do you know that if you have even one rupee which is unrighteously earned with you, that money will be a curse to you and to

your children? You will not be ready for the coming of the Lord if you have not settled matters down on this earth. No, we must not have one rupee with us which has been unrighteously earned.

And concerning this matter which the Bible says in Romans 13, verse 8, owe nothing to anyone. We should avoid all borrowing as far as possible. Avoid getting into debt.

It's a bad habit. Be happy with what God gives you and live within that income. The advertisements in the papers say, buy now and pay later.

That's the surest way to get into debt. Let me give you another motto. Save now and buy later when you have enough money with you.

Now, I want to make something clear here. Many people get loans from their offices for buying a vehicle, a two-wheeler, or a building loan to build a house. Now, there's nothing wrong in taking a loan like that because for that money you have something to show, like a vehicle or a house.

And if you are unable to repay that money, they will take back the house and take back the vehicle. So, in that sense, you are not in debt at all. So, that is all right.

But when you take money to spend on something that disappears, for example, for a wedding, the slavery of believers to mammon is seen most clearly at weddings. There you can see the covetousness and the greed and the honor-seeking displayed unashamedly. You consider the dowry system practiced not only by unbelievers, but by believers in almost every denomination.

Those who ask for a dowry before deciding whether this is the girl God wants me to marry are a disgrace to the name of Jesus Christ. And they are certainly not His disciples. How do you find out God's will? Whether this is the girl whom God wants you to marry? By finding out whether her father can give you so much money? You are serving mammon.

And it doesn't matter if your pastor or your priest says it's okay. God's word does not encourage it. If you were to ask Jesus, what would you say? What would Jesus tell you when you prayed? Would Jesus tell you, go and ask Him for some more dowry? Can you imagine the Lord Jesus saying such a thing? Then where are you getting that advice from? You are getting that advice from unconverted people.

We must not even expect a dowry when it comes to marriage. No. Consider also the great waste of money there is at many wedding receptions.

Now there's nothing wrong in having a good wedding reception, if you can afford it. Jesus Himself made extra wine for people at a wedding reception. But I know many believers who have borrowed money in order to have such a grand reception and they remain in debt for years.

Isn't that a stupid way to start a marriage? That's evil. It's far better in such a case to have a simple reception. Don't compete with some other family who had a grand reception for their wedding and borrow money to show that you are also able to have such a grand reception.

You may say, but if I have a simple reception, what will others say? Why not ask yourself, what will God say? Are you more afraid of man's opinion or God's? Do you think what God wants you to start your married life in debt? We must never adulterate the message of Christ in the Christian church. This is our standard. We will not get into debt as far as possible.

Now there may be situations when in an emergency you have to borrow money from somebody. You know, emergency situations which you didn't anticipate. But then you must seek to return that as soon as possible.

The word of God is very clear in Romans 13 verse 8. O, nothing to anyone. Be content with what you have. Don't be in competition with any other believer.

Once you have learned to be righteous in money matters, you go on to being faithful. What does it mean to be faithful? Render to God what is God's. That's the second thing he said.

What is God's? Many people will say 10%. Well, in the Old Testament it was 10%. In the New Testament, Jesus said, if you don't forsake all that you have, you cannot be my disciple.

How much is all? All means 100%. When you say, give to God what is God's, he wants 100%. What would you think of a wife who works and tells her husband, I'll give you 10% of my income, the other 90% I'm giving to somebody else.

Is that a good partnership type of relationship? No. In the Old Testament, the people were not married to God like we are to Christ. They were servants.

Servants can give 10% to their master. That's okay. But we're not servants.

We are a bride. We are the wife. We have got a joint account.

Not separate accounts. Masters and servants don't have joint accounts. They have separate accounts.

But a husband and wife have a joint account. Like Jesus said to the father in John 17 verse 10, All that is mine is thine and all that is thine is mine. That's a joint account.

And that's what we say also as Christians. Lord, all that is mine is yours, not 10%. And you know what he says to me? All that is mine is yours too.

Isn't that wonderful? That you give your little 10 paise to God and he gives you his millions. Isn't it wonderful to have a joint account with God? But you can't have a joint account with God if you give 10%. You have to give everything.

You have to say, Lord, first of all, everything that I have belongs to you in any case. 1 Corinthians 10 verse 26 says, The earth is the Lord's. And everything that the earth contains is the Lord's.

Have you read that in 1 Corinthians 10 verse 26? All the houses, all the lands, all the gold, all the silver, everything on earth belongs to God. Once you recognize that, you don't think you are doing God a great favor when you give everything to Him. No, you are giving what belongs to Him.

Have you earned much? Has God given you intelligence, ability, qualifications, and capabilities and talents to earn a lot of money, whether in business or in a profession or whatever? Don't forget Deuteronomy 8 verse 18. It is the Lord who gives you power to make money. Don't ever forget that.

It is the Lord who gives you power to make money. You could have been paralyzed. You could have been retarded.

You could have been sick. You'd have earned nothing. You could have been stupid.

Don't ever forget that all the money you've earned in your life, God helped you to do it. So, your money is not your own. Every way you look at it, it's not yours.

Now, that doesn't mean you have to take all your income and give it for God's work. No. That's not what I mean.

We give it to Him, first of all, because it belongs to Him, and secondly, because we love Him. And so, we say, Lord, this is yours. Now, tell me what I can spend on myself.

Do you think God doesn't want you to live in a decent house? Do you think He wants you to live in a slum? That's not true. I don't believe it. Jesus didn't live in a slum.

Jesus didn't live in a dirty slum. His house in Nazareth was not a dirty slum. And God wants you to live with proper food, clothing, and house and education for your children.

He wants you to spend on all these things. There's nothing wrong in all these things. So, to give 100% to God doesn't mean to give it all to God's work and to live on the streets.

No. But to recognize that I'm a steward. I'm only a manager handling somebody else's money.

And though you earned it, you recognize it's God's, but I want to use it faithfully, recognizing all this is God's. That's the only way to be detached from mammon. That's the only way to be delivered from the power of mammon in your life.

Jesus said in Luke 16, verse 13, If you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous mammon, Luke 16, verse 10, 11 onwards, that whole section. If you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous mammon, who will entrust the true riches to you? You know, if you're not faithful, we're not talking about righteousness here. We already finished with righteousness.

To be faithful means you say, Lord, I don't want to waste any money. I don't want to spend unnecessarily on myself. I want to be wise in what I spend.

I don't want to be luxurious. I want to live simply so that I can have money to give for your work, to serve you, to live for you. And when we are faithful, you know what God gives us in exchange? The true riches of heaven.

Revelation on his word, likeness to Christ. If we learn to be simple in our expenditure, being careful not to waste anything that God gives us. This is the reason why many people are spiritually poor.

Because they are not faithful with money. Or they have not been righteous with money. Will you make a decision right now? Say, Lord, I not only want to give back to Caesar what is Caesar's.

I also want to give you what's yours. In every area, I want to put you first. I don't want to waste money on myself anymore.

I want to be faithful, knowing that I have to give an account to you one day of every rupee that I've earned. Make that covenant with God and see if from this day, God doesn't bless you. I believe he will.

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