

CHURCH FINANCES

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INTRODUCTION

- The church of God is engaged in the greatest mission under heaven. Money is an absolute requisite in carrying on its work and hence the proper use of money becomes an important theme in the new testament & assumes an important place in the Christian life. The first sin in Jerusalem church that we are told was the sin of Ananias & Sapphira in the matter of giving money to the Lord. (Acts 5: 1-2). Christian's in making money must take "thought for things honorable in the sight of all men" and using the money they make must have the glory of God in mind.

General Principles Governing Church Finances

- **I. Stewardship (Luke 16: 1 – 14) Christians are stewards. Stewards are Trustees, Caretakers of that which belongs to another:**
- Must be found faithful as good stewards (I Peter 4: 10); I Cor 4:1 – 2). Not wasting goods (Luke 16:1).
- Must someday render account of stewardship (Rom 14:12).

General Principles Governing Church Finances

- Must not hoard for our own security (Luke 12:13-21).
- God does not allow us to take out all that we want or feel that we need & give Him a little of what is left. “He demands a first fruit offering” (Lev. 23:9-14; Matt 6:33).
- It is then not a question of how much of our substance we are willing to give to the Lord but, on the contrary, the problem is, “How much of what the Lord has entrusted to me shall I keep?”

II. Fellowship (Acts 2:42) Co-ordination, Mutual Participation & Efforts:

- In love, “Love one another from a pure heart” (1Peter 1:22). “Knit together in love” (Col.2:2).
- In suffering “Bear ye one another’s burden” (Gal 6:2).
- In service (Gal. 2:9-10); Phil.1:5; 4:16).

II. Fellowship (Acts 2:42) Co-ordination, Mutual Participation & Efforts:

- 4. In Finance “Let each one of you “(I Cor 16:1-2). “According to his ability” (II Cor 8:12). “Equality” (II Cor 8:13-15). Equality in bearing the Financial burden of the Church does not mean one giving as much as another (II Cor 10:12) but each one giving according to his ability. Individual ability is the basis of personal responsibility (Matt 25:41-44). One cannot be in “full fellowship” until he is doing his part. The widow’s mite comparison (Mk 12:41-44).

III. Discipleship (Matt 16:24)

- Requires self-sacrifice and giving up the world (Lk 9:57-62; Matt 19:27-29).
- Rich young ruler failed here (Matt 19:16-22)
- Christ our pattern (Phil 2:5-8; II Cor 8:9). Measure yourself by this standard and do not be afraid of giving too much.

Conclusion

- **IV. Love!!! Consecration (Sacred) of self the basis of Giving**
- **(II Cor 8:1-5)** And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. ² In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. ³ For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, ⁴ they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. ⁵ And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us.

Conclusion

- **(II Cor 8:8)** ⁸ I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others.
- **(II Cor 8:24)** ²⁴ Therefore show these men the proof of your love and the reason for our pride in you, so that the churches can see it.

Cannot serve both God & money

- **(Lk 16: 13-15)** ¹³ “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”
- ¹⁴ The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. ¹⁵ He said to them, “You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of others, but God knows your hearts. What people value highly is detestable in God’s sight.

- **(Matt 6:19-24)** ¹⁹ “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
- ²² “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy,^[c] your whole body will be full of light. ²³ But if your eyes are unhealthy,^[d] your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!
- ²⁴ “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.
- **Thanks & God bless!!!**