

THE LAST WEEK OF THE LORD JESUS ON EARTH
IV. Jesus' Final Day of Public Teaching (cont.)

Jesus Proclaims Truth (Part 21⁰) First Watch c. 7:30 P.M. Wednesday, 12th Nisán (April 1), A.D. 33. Lesson: **Stewardship in the Light of His Coming Continued⁷ The Reasons for Giving to The God Concluded** (Mt. 6:19-21; Col. 3:1,2; 2 Cor. 9:6-10; 1 Tim. 5:17,18; Phil. 4:10-17).

Introduction: Having examined the Lessons that The Lord Jesus taught in The Temple to the multitude and His disciples during the day on Wednesday, we then considered:

I. His exit from The Temple (c. 6:30 P.M.) and

II. His prophetic teaching on the journey up to and upon The Mount of Olives.

A-E. After answering the disciples three questions (c. 6:40-7:45 P.M.) concerning when and what signs His disciples were to look for to indicate the Time of His Return To Earth to set up His Kingdom, He then told The Parable of The Fig Tree followed by a description of the Conditions on Earth which shall prevail before The Son of the (Hu)Man Returns to Earth. The fourth Prevailing Behavior Reveals Laxity of Stewardship (c. 7:15-7:30 P.M.). This led to a deeper study of Stewardship.

F. EXCURSUS: The Scriptural Concept of Stewardship.

We covered so far the following topics:

1. What Stewardship is.
2. What a Steward is.
3. Seven Categories For Which We Are Responsible to Manage Well.
 - a. **The Totality of Your Life;** b. **The Teaching (Truth) Received;** c. **Your Time;** d. **Your Talents;** e. **Your Talk;** and f. **Your Treasures:** These include Material Treasures and Spiritual Treasures.

(1) The God views our Material Treasures:

- (A) As Our Seed - The Word of Truth including The Gospel.
- (B) As Our Righteousness in giving to spread The Gospel Truth, which gifts shall be returned to each regenerated saint according to their faithful stewardship as the wedding garment to wear at The Greatest and Largest Attended Wedding of all time in Heaven (Rev. 19:7,8).
- (C) As Our Liberal Distribution - in ministering to those saints struggling from famine or disaster.
- (D) The Interest: fruit, gifts - the offerings and tithes given to The Lord for the bondslaves ministering The Gospel were multiplied and produced 3,000%; 6,000%; or 10,000%.

To clarify the much confusion and worldwide misunderstanding about stewardship of one's treasures and the full picture of what The God desires and expects of one's proper use of money, giving, and income and the consequences of failure to fulfill The God's declared will on the matter was considered, answering several categories: Where to Begin, Where to Give, The Way to Give unto The **LORD** God, and Why Give Abundantly unto The **LORD** God.

(2) **Where to Begin** (Mt. 22:15-21).

(A) First, we must **Recognize What Is The God's;** What is yours; and What The God Claims is His.

(a) Recognize What Is The God's: Everything we have.

(b) Recognize What Is Yours or Mine: Nothing! All that we

have and are was purchased by The Lord Jesus Christ by His paying the debt of Sin for us on the cross of Calvary, which every human owed. Therefore our bodies, souls, and spirits and every possession of ours was purchased by Him to use as He intends. But He will not force anyone to surrender it. It must be voluntarily surrendered to Him.

(c) Recognize What The God Claims to Be His and see that it **is** His and that it **is used** for His intended purpose. Each one individually has the responsibility to see that The **LORD God** receives this portion that He claims is His and that it is used for His ordained threefold purpose, i.e. to spread The Gospel throughout the whole Earth, to make disciples and instruct them, and to build His Church.

(B) Reckon (or account to be so) What The God Claims, is His and that it is used for His intended and declared purpose.

In order to render “unto The God the things which **are** The God’s,” it is necessary to reckon or count in one’s mind what **is** The God’s. Count ten percent of your income to be The God’s for His bondslave-servants to spread The Gospel throughout the world, and therefore **not** to be used **for anything else**.

(C) Render Unto The God, That Which Is The God’s.

These bondslave-servants of His are The Lord Jesus Christ’s fellow-workers in building His Church (1 Cor. 3:9-12) locally and worldwide and He expects His redeemed children to participate with Him in caring for these fellow-workers of The Lord Jesus Christ.

(3) **Where to Give** - The storehouse (Mal. 3:10) = the bank (Lk. 19:23; 1 Cor. 16:2).

In our days The local church, to which one belongs, **if** she operates her finances according to Scripture with the deacons all together controlling the outflow without partiality and without personal preference, but spiritually and prayerfully sensitive to the exercise of The Holy Spirit and the burdens of The God’s people in the congregation. Such local church is to be ‘the local bank’ for deposits. Otherwise prayerfully seek to find a doctrinally sound, reputable, financially responsible, and accredited mission or ministry that does not ask for funds or resort to worldly ways, means, or bargains to solicit funds.

(A) How to Determine Where to Give.

A distinction must be made between The Kingdom of The God and the Kingdom of Heaven. We spent most of our last week’s lesson clarifying the meaning of this Truth which is so often overlooked. Such intensive study of The Lord Jesus Christ’s teaching will prove very helpful in determining those churches, pastors, missionaries, and ministries, who **are** in The Kingdom of The God and truly serving The God and His Christ and The Complete Gospel and therefore are worthy of financial and prayerful fellowship and support. There is a marked distinction between mere profession of conversion (Kingdom of Heaven) and confession as a result of regeneration (Kingdom of The God); between a mixture of wheat and tares on the one hand and a pure, cleansed, sanctified, and obedient body of regenerated saints on the other hand. We spent most of last week’s lesson clarifying

the meaning of this distinction and the means of by which this distinction can be discerned. In addition to calling attention to this comparison, some guidelines and warnings were supplied for due and careful consideration.

(B) What to consider in order to determine where to deposit The **LORD**'s money to be sure that you are investing in what is truly and solely The **LORD**'s ministry so that The God receives it and not the enemy.

(a) Consider The Jesus, The Christ, that is proclaimed!

This calls for an accurate evaluation, governed by discernment and followed by a difficult decision. We must be careful to distinguish and note the difference between judging and discerning or distinguishing between two antagonistic parties, especially when the antagonism is subtly against The God and His Son, The Lord Jesus Christ. Discerning is not judging.

These false prophets preach some of The Truth, even in the name of (another of the same kind of) Jesus, but they do not preach The Whole Truth. Therefore the result of their sowing, according to the parable of the wheat and tares, produces tares among the wheat). Every member, especially the elders or leaders of a local church of The True Body of Christ, The True Church, is to be on guard against false believers unobtrusively sneaking in and teaching false doctrine. The apostle Paul explained to the Corinthians (see above) that the false gospel, proclaimed by false apostles and deceitful workers, contained another Jesus of the same kind.

When considering the Christ that is proclaimed consider the emphasis upon the kind and result of His death and resurrection immediately on the third day.

(b) Consider The Gospel that is preached or proclaimed. Did you know that there are five different gospels recorded in The New Testament, four that are other than The Gospel of The Christ? (A) The Gospel of The Kingdom of The God; (B) The Gospel of The Kingdom of the heaven(s); (C) Another gospel of a different kind; (D) The pre-gospel of Faith To Abraham; (E) Finally The Everlasting Gospel shall be proclaimed during the Great Tribulation. Make sure that the recipients of The Lord's money are proclaiming The Complete Gospel of The Kingdom of The God (Mt. 6:33).

(c) Consider The Spirit that is proclaimed (Jn. 16:7-13-15). If it is The Holy Spirit Whom Jesus sent, He shall guide into all Truth and shall not speak of, nor call attention to, Himself but only speaks that which shall glorify The Lord Jesus Christ.

(4) The Way to Give unto The **LORD** God.

What attitude does God expect us to have toward giving? How is giving to be considered? As a matter of fact? or as a ritual? or to be practical? or efficient? or led by The Holy Spirit? What do the Scriptures say about the way to give? Four things! We are to give Cheerfully; Abundantly; Freely ('without cost and without restraint' because we have so freely received undeservedly, unreservedly, and without cost or obligation, we are to give unreservedly and without cost or obligation); and Confidentially ('in secret').

(5) Why Give Abundantly unto The LORD God.

Some will raise the questions, Why should I give the tithe? Why should I give abundantly over the tithe? There are nine good reasons to consider why you should give abundantly above the tithe. Some of the reasons are beneficial to the giver as well as to the work of The Lord.

(A) To Show Gratitude and Appreciation to The God.

By giving, we show gratitude and appreciation to The God for all His blessings, for His wonderful Salvation at such a cost, and for The Truth taught to you at others' expense. The Lord Jesus said, "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils, freely (without-cost and without restraint) you have received, freely (without-cost) give" (Mt. 10:8). Since, in His lifetime, He did give in this manner and gave so much for us and gave so much to us, and made Himself poor for us, we should readily demonstrate our gratitude to The God for **all** His blessings to us. One way we can demonstrate that gratitude is by giving freely to Him and for Him as He has freely (without cost and without restraint) given to us.

(B) To Increase the Fruits of Your Righteousness

By giving freely and abundantly over and above the tithe, especially to the servants of Christ (missionaries), who are poor because they have made themselves poor for Christ and the Gospel's sake, we increase the fruits of our righteousness, which gifts are counted for righteousness and are being accumulating in Heaven until the Lord comes again to take us to Heaven when they shall be returned to us with increase (2 Cor. 9:10 cf. Rev. 19:8).

Paul moved quickly from the topic of 'sowing and reaping' to 'giving.' What he said in essence is, that when we give we are sowing in the spiritual sense. When we invest in the work of the Lord souls are won, and God will multiply the seeds sown--the money you give to purchase spiritual Gospel seed in order that it might bear fruit. That is why it is vitally important that we be so careful where and to whom we give. Not only is your seed sown, but He will increase the fruit of your righteousness, but only **if** what we give serves His intended purpose, salvation, **and** discipleship of souls. It's not the fruit of **His** righteousness (which is imputed to us and is emphasized in the Epistle to the Romans), but the fruits of **your** righteousness. Thus this giving is a benefit to the giver as well as a reason for giving. The third reason to give abundantly unto The **LORD** God is:

(C) To Prepare a Wedding Garment in Which to Be Married to The Lord Jesus Christ in Heaven.

In Heaven, after the rapture and after The Judgment Seat of Christ, then the bride of Christ, The True Church will be united to Him in a great wedding. The God indicated that the righteousness of saints is going to make up the wedding garment for that blessed occasion (Rev. 19:8).

According to 2 Corinthians 9:8-11 this righteousness is giving to The God for the care of His servants who are poor because they made themselves poor for the sake of The Gospel even as The Lord Jesus Christ made Himself poor to

come to Earth in order to save us. Now you cannot take your treasures with you when you die! But you can send them on ahead. Treasures in Heaven are laid up, as treasures on earth are laid down **if** they are given to The God for **His** work. The wedding garment which we will wear at The Marriage of The Lamb, The Lord Jesus Christ The Bridegroom, and The Marriage Supper of The Lamb following it, is the righteousness of saints, i.e. the sacrificial giving to The **LORD** to be used by His bondsman-servants for the spread of The Gospel, Salvation and discipleship of souls. This also is an ultimate benefit to the giver. The fourth reason for giving abundantly is:

(D) To Lay-up Treasures in Heaven.

If your treasure is on Earth, your heart is going to be with that treasure. As you invest in the work of The **LORD**, you 'lay up' treasures in Heaven (Mt. 6:19-21). What these treasures are has not been revealed in Scripture, but are withheld from our knowledge so that we do give out of love for and in the generosity to Our **LORD** so that we shall be greatly surprised in Heaven. All that we know is that the interest rate is 3000 %, 6000 %, and 10,000 percent. Here is a wonderful cycle: the more treasures you have in Heaven, the more rejoicing you have. The more rejoicing you have, the more effective The **LORD's** work is in which you invest and the more desirous you become to give and to lay up treasures in Heaven. This also is a **benefit** to the giver as well as to the receiver and a reason for giving. Fifthly,

(E) To Set Your Heart on Heavenly Things.

The Lord Jesus taught His disciples that your treasure attracts your heart. "But lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt. 6:20,21). The more treasures you have in Heaven, the more desirous your heart will be to be with The Lord Jesus Christ in Heaven. Paul encouraged the Colossians,

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the Earth" (Col. 3:12).

Thus giving to The God for the purpose that He intended is another spiritual benefit to the giver. Sixthly,

(F) To Reap Rich Blessings and Dividends.

Anything extra above the tithe is a gift to The God, such as giving to reputable missionary ministry or Gospel ministers worldwide beyond our local church. The God will give back to us the seed we sow (our giving, 2 Cor. 9:6-10) and increase it thirty-fold, sixty-fold, and a hundred-fold when we get to Heaven (Mt. 13:23). That is equivalent to paying 3,000%, 6,000%, and 10,000% interest. No bank on earth can compete in giving that much interest. This is a special benefit that The God has provided for the giver.

Seventhly,

(G) To Provide for The Lord's Work and The Lord's Servants.

In what other way could The God's work and The God's

servants be financed? Surely you would not expect any of The God's enemies to contribute to His work! We need not think that The God is going to drop supplies and funds out of Heaven or even send angels to do so. The only way that The God has provided to finance his work and support His workers is through the free will offerings of His people.

The eighth reason for giving abundantly to The God is:

(H) To Enable The LORD's Servants to Continue and Further Their Ministry.

If the servants of The LORD are to continue their ministry, their physical needs and materials to spread The Gospel, teach, instruct, and disciple converts must be supplied. If there is short supply, they certainly cannot further their ministry of building and expanding The LORD's Church adequately and may find it necessary to curtail a vital aspect of their ministry.

However, Paul wrote to Timothy that those elder men who have labored well in The Word and doctrine or teaching should be paid well, even receive double salary (1 Tim. 5:17,18). The word translated 'honor' here is a translation of the Greek noun that means 'highly respected precious value, price, or pay.' The true servants of God sacrifice greatly to get out The Gospel and to spread The Word of The God at great cost. Those servants of The LORD, living by faith and not asking for funds, who teach, instruct, and disciple are worthy of your financial support and help. "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. ". . . as we-have-opportunity^[due season], let us continually-work the intrinsically-good-thing~ to^[the-face-of] all people, especially ^[the-face-of] them who are of 'the household of faith'"(Gal. 6:6-10APT).

Theninthreasonforgivingabundantlyis:

(I) To Honor The LORD and Store up Fruit in Your Heavenly Account.

Solomon exhorted his son to insure physical and temporal benefits through giving to the Lord.

"Honor The LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine" (Prov. 3:9,10).

The apostle Paul instructed the Philippian church that financially fellowshipping with him as a servant of The Lord resulted in fruit (souls saved) that will abound to their account to be rewarded in Heaven (Phil. 4:10-17).

"¹⁰But I rejoiced in ⁰Lord greatly because once at last you flourished again, with reference to the process of minding in behalf of me, for whom you[&] were continually minding, but you[&] were continually being without opportunity. ¹¹Not that I am speaking in respect to deficiency; for I myself learned^[by practice, trained as a disciple], in what[&] lever circumstances I am, to be content^[self-sufficient]. ¹²I am aware also to be continually humbled and I am aware to be in continual abundance. In everything and in all places I have learned^[v. 11] the secret^[by initiation] both to be satisfied with food and to be

hungry, both to be abounding and to be lacking^[deficient].
¹³With reference to all~ things I prevail by means of Christ Who empowers me. ¹⁴Nevertheless you& did well by repeatedly fellowshipping together with my /affliction ^[tribulation]. ¹⁵Now O Philippians, you& also yourselves are aware that in The Gospel's ⁰beginning, when I departed away from **Mahkehdohnéeah**, not one church fellowshipped with me in an account of giving and of receiving except yourselves only. ¹⁶Because also in **Thehssahlohnékay** even once, in fact twice, you& sent unto my /need. ¹⁷Not that I am anxiously seeking the gift, but on the contrary I am anxiously seeking the fruit which keeps abounding unto your& /account'' (Phil. 4:10-17)

The nine reasons for giving abundantly to The **LORD** are:

1. To Show Gratitude and Appreciation to The God;
2. To Increase the Fruits of Your Righteousness;
3. To Prepare a Wedding Garment in Which to Be Married to The Lord Jesus Christ in Heaven;
4. To Lay-up Treasures in Heaven;
5. To Set Your Heart on Heavenly Things;
6. To Reap Rich Blessings and Dividends;
7. To Provide for The Lord's Work and The Lord's Servants;
8. To Enable The **LORD**'s Servants to Continue and Further Their Ministry; and
9. To Honor The **LORD** and Store up Fruit in Your Heavenly Account.

G. Summary of **EXCURSUS: The Scriptural Concept of Stewardship**.

It is so important that the child of God understand the concept of stewardship and learn early the principal of tithing to the local church and additionally giving to missionaries and poor saints suffering adversity. The continuance and furtherance of The Lord's work depends upon it. And the child of The God who puts this blessed Truth into practice early in his or her new life in Christ will greatly benefit by it. So also the one who has been saved for years will benefit by taking a fresh look and adjusting to increase his or her faithful stewardship.

Conclusion: Today we briefly retraced an abridged portion of our study of Stewardship that was previously covered. Then we reviewed Where to Give and observed How and Where The Early Church deposited the giving by the saints throughout the history of The True Church and considered how we can follow in their steps. Then we considered How and What to Consider in order to Properly Determine Where to Give. Be sure to consider The Jesus, The Christ, The Gospel, and The Spirit that is proclaimed! Be sure to distinguish between the gospel of the kingdom of heaven and The Gospel of The Kingdom of The God! [Please note that it is necessary to consider the use of the capitalization, i. e. 'T,G,K, etc.'] in the titles, which according to Noah Webster is used to denote emphasis and specify the only one of its kind (Webster's New International Dictionary, 1924 edition, p. 2138). Be sure that the gospel that is preached is The Gospel that results in Regeneration and Eternal Life! Be sure that the spirit that is proclaimed is The Spirit who focuses attention upon The Lord Jesus Christ and not upon Himself. Then we considered the Way to Give unto The **LORD** God. We are to give cheerfully,

abundantly, and freely out of love, and confidentially, because of all that The Lord Jesus Christ did for us to provide Salvation, Regeneration, and Eternal Life. We are not to give out of obligation or because of pressure by pleading or bargaining. Finally, we observed nine reasons why the redeemed disciples of The Lord Jesus Christ should give abundantly above the tithe: 1. To Show Gratitude and Appreciation to The God for all His blessings, for His wonderful Salvation at such a cost, and for The Truth taught to you at others' expense; 2. To Increase the Fruits of Your Righteousness; 3. To Prepare a Wedding Garment in Which to Be Married to The Lord Jesus Christ in Heaven; 4. To Lay-up Treasures in Heaven; 5. To Set Your Heart on Heavenly Things; 6. To Reap Rich Blessings and Dividends; 7. To Provide for The Lord's Work and The Lord's Servants; 8. To Enable The LORD's Servants to Continue and Further Their Ministry; 9. To Honor The LORD and Store up Fruit in Your Heavenly Account.

Application: Beginning today what advantage will you take of the nine benefits of giving abundantly above the tithe to The God for the care of His bondslave servants and the spread of The Gospel locally and worldwide and making and teaching disciples?

Dr. Fred Wittman

For next week: **Read and meditate upon: Jesus' Final Day of Public Teaching** (First Watch of Night c. 7:30 P.M.): **The Parable of the Faithful, Prudent, and the Evil Bondslaves** (Look up and read: (Mt. 24:45-51; Lk. 12:35-48).