

Use Wisdom in your Giving
PROVERBS 4:5-7

I. Wisdom is the main thing.

- a. ⁵Get wisdom, get understanding; don't forget or turn away from the words from my mouth. ⁶Don't abandon wisdom, and she will watch over you; love her, and she will guard you. ⁷Wisdom is supreme—so get wisdom. And whatever else you get, get understanding.
Proverbs 4:5-7
- b. Knowledge-facts, information, and skills acquired by a person through experience or education; the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject.
- c. Wisdom-- the ability to use knowledge with good judgment, experience, and understanding to make sound decisions and live a meaningful life.
- d. Understanding--comprehension, grasp, insight, knowledge, perception, awareness, or empathy;

II. Who should give?

- a. **Grateful People give:** For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, met Abraham and blessed him as he returned from defeating the kings, ²and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. First, his name means king of righteousness, then also, king of Salem, meaning king of peace. Hebrews 7:1-2
- b. **Generous people give:** ²¹The one who despises his neighbor sins, but whoever shows kindness to the poor will be happy. Proverbs 14:21
- c. **Prosperous people give:** ³⁵In every way I've shown you that it is necessary to help the weak by laboring like this and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, because he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"Acts 20:35
- d. YOU AND I SHOULD GIVE!

III. What should I give?

- a. **Time**-³³But a Samaritan on his journey came up to him, and when he saw the man, he had compassion. ³⁴He went over to him and bandaged his

wounds, pouring on olive oil and wine. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. Luke 10:33-34

- b. **Talent-** ¹⁰ Whatever your hands find to do, do with all your strength, because there is no work, planning, knowledge, or wisdom in Sheol where you are going. Ecclesiastes 9:10
- c. **Treasures-** ⁴¹ Sitting across from the temple treasury, he watched how the crowd dropped money into the treasury. Many rich people were putting in large sums. ⁴² Then a poor widow came and dropped in two tiny coins worth very little. ⁴³ Summoning his disciples, he said to them, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. ⁴⁴ For they all gave out of their surplus, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had —all she had to live on." Mark 12:41-44
- d. Time, Talents and Treasure all constitute a good steward. If we are to be good stewards we must be personally and totally involved. Our personalities, abilities and power to acquire material possessions are all gifts from God. We have the power to choose whether we will develop ourselves and our talents, or whether we will misuse or neglect them. Through developing, using and giving our resources, we grow to be rich in Christian living. Through greed and selfish use and misuse, we lose the gifts we have. Although all our talents and abilities are gifts from a loving heavenly Father, He will not force us to use them for His kingdom. The first step for man is to give himself wholly to God, worshipping Him in "Spirit and in Truth." When the Wise Men from the East came to see the babe in Bethlehem, they brought with them valuable gifts. But when they found Him, their first act was not the presentation of gifts. Instead "they fell down and worshipped Him," then offered gifts.

IV. Why should I give?

- a. **Honor the Lord** -³¹The one who oppresses the poor person insults his Maker, but one who is kind to the needy honors him. Proverbs 14:31
- b. **Help my brother**- ¹⁷Kindness to the poor is a loan to the Lord,
and he will give a reward to the lender. Proverb 19:17
²⁷When it is in your power, don't withhold good from the one to whom it belongs. ²⁸Don't say to your neighbor, "Go away! Come back later. I'll give it tomorrow"—when it is there with you. Proverbs 3:27-28
- c. **Support the ministry**- ¹⁰Bring the full tenth into the storehouse so that there may be food in my house. Test me in this way," says the Lord of Armies. "See if I will not open the floodgates of heaven and pour out a blessing for you without measure. Malachi 3:10
- d. **Shows where your heart is**-- ²⁰But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves don't break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matthew 6:20-21

V. Where should I give?

- a. ²⁴But if the distance is too great for you to carry it, since the place where the Lord your God chooses to put his name is too far away from you and since the Lord your God has blessed you, ²⁵then exchange it for silver, take the silver in your hand, and go to the place the Lord your God chooses. Deuteronomy 14:24-25
- b. ²take some of the first of all the land's produce that you harvest from the land the Lord your God is giving you and put it in a basket. Then go to the place where the Lord your God chooses to have his name dwell. Deuteronomy 26:2

- c. We give to other causes outside of the church but our primary place for our gifts ought to be the local church.

VI. When should I give?

- a. **Give Regularly**- ²On the first day of the week, each of you is to set something aside and save in keeping with how he is prospering, so that no collections will need to be made when I come. 1 Corinthians 16:2
- b. **Give as needed**- ²⁷When it is in your power, don't withhold good from the one to whom it belongs. ²⁸Don't say to your neighbor, "Go away! Come back later. I'll give it tomorrow"—when it is there with you. Proverbs 3:27-28
- c. **Give as you are led by the Spirit**: ¹⁷I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, would give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. Ephesians 1:17

VII. How should I give?

- a. **Give Faithfully**- ²In this regard, it is required that managers be found faithful. 1 Corinthians 4:2 But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property. ²However, he kept back part of the proceeds with his wife's knowledge, and brought a portion of it and laid it at the apostles' feet. Acts 5:1-2
- b. **Give Expectantly**-
¹⁷Kindness to the poor is a loan to the Lord, and He will give a reward to the lender. Proverbs 19:17
- c. **Give generously**- ²⁵A slacker's craving will kill him because his hands refuse to work. ²⁶He is filled with craving all day long, but the righteous give and don't hold back.. Proverbs 21:25-26
- d. **Give joyously**. ⁵Therefore I considered it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you and arrange in advance the generous gift you promised, so that it will be ready as a gift and not as an extortion. ⁶The point is this:^[b] The person who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the person who sows generously will also reap generously. 2 Corinthians 9:5-6

STEWARDSHIP

The idea of Stewardship implies that something of value has been committed to the steward for which he or she is responsible or accountable. Stewardship according to Ephesians 3:9, broadens the scope to the totality of our Christian efforts far beyond finances. God's perfect plan for His steward includes the entrustment of the Gospel message to humankind.

The modern emphasis on the stewardship of possessions, while true, may tend to obscure the fact that our primary stewardship is that of the Gospel and includes the use of our whole life as well as our money.

The main focal point of stewardship must not be neglected or limited to money. Matt. 23:23 reminds us of the weightier matters which keeps the stewards perspective clear. One cannot have an unbalanced relationship with the Master and expect balanced results. Stewards are charged with giving intelligent attention to God's Word so that the mysteries may be known and understood (Col. 1:25 - 27; 1 Pet. 4:10). Seeing also that God owns all, the Christian owes all, now Christ expects all. When an individual accepts Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, he becomes a "new creature." Christ is the Lord of his life, with every right to expect full surrender and consistent living.

Why should God expect anything? Since He's all powerful, why should He require us to pay or give anything? These questions have probably been asked many times, but there is another side of the coin. Consider this, with man's inabilities, limitations, his unworthiness, his sinful nature and failures, why should he expect anything from God? We are all stewards of God, whether we think so or not. I Timothy 6:7 declares: "For we bought nothing into this world and it is certain we can carry nothing out." Deuteronomy 8:18 says "But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is He that giveth the power to get wealth, that He may establish his covenant which He swore unto thy Fathers, as it is this day."

Our tithes and offerings allow the ministry to continue. The first mention of tithing is found in Genesis 14:17 - 20. The Bible does not say this was the establishment of tithing but it seems as if

Abram was doing the usual thing, paying his tithes to God's representative. At Bethel, Jacob made a vow to tithe (Genesis 28:22). Moses taught tithing as a part of the law given him by God (Lev. 27:30 - 32). Malachi had some strong statements about tithing, (Mal. 3:8 - 12). He accuses the people of robbing God in tithes and offerings. He further tells them of the curse on them and commands them to bring all the tithes into God's storehouse. Our Store house is where we worship and serve. We must bring God the first fruit of our service, not the leftovers.