

Study Sheet: GIVING as a Christian.

Vow 4 :

"I promise to give a fitting proportion of my time, talents, and money for the Church's work in the world"

Christian Giving

or "A practical expression of spiritual values."

1.MOTIVES:

(or "Why bother?")

Isaiah 58.6-7.

What do these verses tell us about God's attitude to sharing our possessions?

Matthew 19.16-22 and Luke 12.13-21.

What was Jesus' attitude to personal wealth? Is money getting between you and your relationship with God?

Romans 12.13 and Philippians 4.14-16.

Is there something specific that Christians should consider beyond being generally "charitable"?

Galatians 6.6 and 1 Timothy 5.17-18.

What does this tell us about the support of Christian teachers and ministers?

2.MALPRACTICE:

(or "Wrong attitudes")

Mark 7.9-13. What excuse did the Pharisees make for not supporting their families?

1 Timothy 5.3-4. What does Paul say about the place of family responsibilities?

Malachi 3.6-10. God had already given his chosen people clear and precise instructions for giving. What was their attitude during Malachi's ministry?(verse 7). What was God's attitude? (verse 8). Did God leave it at that?(verse 10).

2 Corinthians 9.1-5. Paul encourages the Corinthian believers to think about their giving practice before his friends visited them. Why? (verse 5). What is the right attitude to giving stated here?

Luke 12.13-21. It is often said, "You cannot take it with you when you go." Do I really believe this? How should this shape my attitude at different stages of my life?

1 John 3.17-18. Is giving optional for a Christian?

3.MANNER:

(or "Right attitudes")

Matthew 10.8. Does Jesus expect his disciples to have a particular manner of giving?

Matthew 6.1-4. The Pharisees were showy and self-serving in their giving. Do I make this an excuse for not giving at all?

1 Corinthians 16.1-2. What does Paul recommend the new Corinthian believers to adopt as a pattern? Is my giving "inspired" or merely erratic?

2 Corinthians 8.3-4 and Luke 6.38. What other principle is at work here?

2 Corinthians 8.12 and Acts 11.29. If we have little to give, does this matter? Should we be concerned that others can give more (or less) than we can?

Ephesians 2.8-10. What is distinctive in the Christian view of "good works" compared with for example the Buddhist view of salvation by "making merit"? Can we be proud of our giving?

4.MODEL:

(or "To whom?")

2 Corinthians 8.9. What is the principle here?

Philippians 2. 1-8. What kind of model of giving was Jesus?

5. REWARDS:

(or "High Interest?")

Matthew 6.19-21. How would we please Jesus in our attitude to wealth?

Philippians 4.18-19. Does God take any interest in our giving?

Mark 12.41-44. Jesus loves all people, but can we please him in a particular way?

For meditation:

2 Corinthians 9.6-8.

Some harder/different questions:

- What do I spend per month on “entertainment”, on socialising with friends and on personal pleasures? Is my giving “a fitting proportion”?
- Should we only give if we have a salary or professional/vocational income?
- Should we always make the local Church the only group we support?
- If we do not agree with everything the Church spends our money on, should we still give?
- Should we always only give when we see we have enough in our bank account/wallet/purse?
- Should we always give at the same level throughout our life/career/vocation/circumstances?
- Is giving something we don’t talk about, or can we encourage one another in this as in all faith practices?
- Giving is a Christian duty : should it ever become a burden?
- Do small amounts count for anything when large amounts are needed for Christian work?
- Is there a difference between a “collection” and an “offering”?