

Applaud my Giving and Living

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 13 April 2014

[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. Take your Bibles if you would and go with me to Matthew chapter 6. Matthew chapter 6.

And we're going to read a very exciting passage of Scripture. If you want to take down the title of the text, or what I'm going to put here, applaud my giving and my living.

Applaud my giving and my living. That was kind of the thing. They wanted a round of applause. I've been living for Jesus. They wanted a round of applause. I've been doing righteous things. I've been giving money and I want people to notice it.

And that's what's going on. So we're going to read Matthew 6. We're going to read chapter 6 verse 1 down to about verse 23. And if you would, if you got your ink pen and you have your Bible open, I want you to notice the word reward.

That's going to be like the key word in this section of the Scripture. It's like reward. So read with me. I'll help you notice it as we go through. Verse 1. Take heed that you do not your alms before men to be seen of them.

[1 : 02] Otherwise, you have no reward. Underline that. Of your Father, which is in heaven. Don't do it in front of people so people can see you or you'll get no reward of your Father in heaven.

Verse 2. Therefore, when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men.

Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. Underline the word reward. Verse 3. But when thou doest thine alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth, that thine alms may be in secret, and thy Father which seeeth in secret himself shall underline reward thee openly.

Verse 5. And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets that they may be seen of men.

Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. Verse 6. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, and pray to the Father which is in heaven in secret, that thy Father which seeeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

[2 : 14] But when you pray, use not vain repetitions as the heathen do, for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. But be not ye therefore like unto them, for your Father knows what things you have need of before you ask him.

After this manner therefore pray ye, Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen. For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Moreover, when you fast, be not as the hypocrites of a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast.

Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. Underline the word reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face. That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto the Father which is in secret.

[3 : 23] And thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. Father in heaven, I pray now that you would deal with our hearts. I pray God that you would cause us to grow in this aspect of giving, and serving you, and honoring you, and doing good things before your face.

I pray God that you would bless your people. I pray you'd save those that don't know you. I pray that you'd show your power. And I will give you great honor and glory and praise for what you do.

In Jesus' precious name, amen. All right. If you would now, take your Bible, go back with me. Did you notice all the rewards? So you got reward, reward, reward. And they're looking for reward in the wrong places.

There are three things. And we're only going to talk about one of them today. They want to seek reward for their giving. They want to seek reward for their praying. And they want to seek reward for their fasting. And so they were going about the street.

And they wanted to make sure everybody looked at them. And so they were spiritual people, religious people. And so when they were going to do their giving, they liked to, in effect, blow the horn in front of it.

[4 : 27] They didn't literally do that. They just liked to make a big show of it. So when it came time to give somebody some money, they'd see a beggar on the street, they'd be like, Everybody notice? Everybody notice? Here you go, buddy.

Let me give you a little money. Selfie. Take a picture. Facebook. I just did that. I just gave that money to that poor guy. Everybody noticed what I did. Thank you. A hashtag, I like me.

And so they are really happy about what they're doing. And then they go along a little further. It's time to pray. And they can pray walking down the street with their eyes open. God doesn't care.

But they don't do that. They get a street corner. They go, hey, hold it. Hey, buddy, watch this. Watch this. God in heaven. Everybody look. Look. Take my picture. God in heaven. I pray.

And they put on a little show. And they get through it. And he said, man, you're doing it all the wrong reason. You're not going to get any reward from the Father. Because you're doing it all to get your own reward. And then a little later on, they get up. And they said they're going to fast.

[5 : 22] And when they're going to fast, they get up. And they actually put black makeup on under their eyes, you know. And they figure out any way they can to make themselves look hollow-faced. They aren't really fasting.

They just want to look like they're fasting. They go about to say, oh, so hungry. Oh, no, no, no. I don't want you to give me anything to eat. I'm fasting. So just so the Lord will do something good and big.

Y'all pray for me. I've been fasting for 50 days now. Can you tell? And they just want people to brag on them. And that's the key. So today we're going to talk about the giving part of it.

And the idea was, hey, clap, boys and girls. I'm giving money to Jesus. Clap. I'm getting involved in the work of God. And they wanted to get people to look at them.

So the emphasis in the passage is on reward. And you can be rewarded either by the Father or by men. They were hypocrites. Hypocrites.

- [6 : 16] These are the hypocrites. That word's used a couple of three times in the passage. You ought to go back and mark that word. I didn't show that to you. I'll get that to you in a couple of weeks when we go back over. They were hypocrites calling attention to themselves.
- The word hypocrite was originally the word used for an actor on a stage. He was a stage player. He was someone pretending to be who he was not.
- That's where we get the word. And, you know, if you go back to the old dramas, even the Shakespeare type things, they use these big plastic faces and they got a stick that they hold out there and they make all kinds of sounds.
- Even the women actors were men with a woman's face and they did their voices in different ways. They were hypocrites. They were playing a part that wasn't really them.
- And so the Lord says, don't be a hypocrite. Don't be a hypocrite. Don't give for the wrong reason. Don't give for the wrong motive. Don't pray for the wrong motive. Don't pray wrong.
- [7 : 15] Don't fast wrong. Don't fake it. In other words, don't be an actor. Let it be real with you. That's what the passage of Scripture is going to be about as we work our way through it.
- They were doing spiritual things, but they were doing them to be seen of men. They wanted to be seen giving, seen praying, and seen fasting. The passage here is not about not giving an offering with an envelope or with your name on it.
- I've grown up all my life. I've been in church. And there are people who read this passage of Scripture and they'll say stuff like, Well, I'm not going to fill out one of those giving envelopes or I'm not going to mark something for faith promise or I'm not going to fill out a faith promise card because I don't let my left hand know what my right hands are doing.
- That's why. Because I don't want anybody writing my name down and keeping up with what I've been doing. And it's a misinterpretation of the text. And I'm going to show you that pretty clearly if you hang around. The passage is not about being extreme and hiding what you are doing for the Lord.
- It is, however, about your motivation for what you're doing in the service of the Lord. It must be for Him. It must be for Him.
- [8 : 22] So here you go. Write some things down if you would. Number one, be careful about your motives when you do right. Be careful about your motives when you do right. This giving alms was doing right.
- It was living a righteous life. It was living out who they were in Christ. The Bible says in chapter 6, verse 1, take heed that you do not your alms before men and underline it to be seen, to be seen of them.
- Otherwise, you have no reward of your Father, which is in heaven. So the emphasis is on they were doing. It's good to do alms. It's OK even if people see you do alms. You don't have to sneak in under the cover of darkness.
- You don't have to swoop in like Batman while nobody's watching and do something. You can do it, but you don't do it to be seen of men. Would you underline that in that verse? You don't do it to be seen of men.
- We're to be careful how we live out our faith. It's tempting to call attention to ourselves. We're to be careful to not play spiritual games or get into competition about how good we're doing.
- [9 : 27] The problem is they wanted to be noticed. They wanted to be noticed. Well, you grow up in church. I've been in church all my life. I mean, I was in church nine months before I got here on the planet.

And I've been in church all my life. You know, buddy, sometimes you don't put somebody's name in the bulletin and say thank you for what they did. A while ago when I was naming the Sunday school classes, horror hit me from back when I used to be a young person in church.

Did you forget to mention the wrong person? And right after church, they buttonhole you and say, why didn't you mention my class, huh? Talked about you being good looking. Talked about all them other classes. Forgot my class, didn't you, huh? And that's exactly the whole point was I want to be seen.

I want to be seen doing what I'm doing for God. It doesn't refer to being secretive about what you're doing or about your giving. They're not doing it so no one knows.

That would be a contradiction of what's going on. I'll show you the verse in just a second. We're either doing things for God to see or to get man's approval. So I'm supposed to give. And if you see me giving, that's fine.

[10 : 29] I'm supposed to do right. And if you see me doing right, that's fine. But if I'm doing right because I want God to see it, that's right. If I'm doing right so you can see it, that's wrong. If I never pray in private and I pray in public, that's wrong.

If I never give in private and I give in public, that's wrong. If I go, hey, guys, watch this. Check this out. I'm writing a check. You know, some of us, when we give a check, we want to do it like those that do on TV. Check is about this long, about that long.

Hey, here's my check for the church today. We come to walking in the church. We got a great big check. Everybody check it out. Mine's bigger than your check. But watch. Did you know it says here? Don't let your left hand know what your right hand's doing.

But did you forget what you read? In Matthew chapter 5 and verse 16, we're coming through the Bible. You're supposed to keep all this together. So you learn the story. In Matthew chapter 5 and verse 16, he actually said, let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works.

And glorify your Father which is in heaven. So back in Matthew 5, 16, he said, hey, guys, let them see what you're doing. Live out your life. That doesn't mean, the point was, the point was you're supposed to live out your life.

[11 : 33] I mean, it ought to be obvious I love my wife. I ought to be very tender and kind and sweet to my wife. But when I walk down the street, I don't go like this. Hey, everybody check it out. I'm a good husband. Check me out. Check me out. Get in the house.

I punched her in the nose one time. That's not the point. The point is just be a good husband. Just do right. Just give alms. Take care of people. We're supposed to be a people that love doing good things.

Love helping other people. But what's the motive? What's the motive? Are you doing it to be seen? Or are you doing it to glorify the Father?

Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works. And glorify your Father which is in heaven. That is not a contradiction to let not your left hand know what your right hand is doing.

They're both saying the same thing. Look at the key word in verse 16. Glorify who? Glorify who? Help me. Glorify your? Glorify who? Glorify your Father.

[12 : 27] And who are they looking to glorify in chapter 6? They're looking to glorify themselves. And so it is the motive that matters. The point is don't call attention to yourself.

Look at Matthew chapter 6 and verse 2. Matthew 6. Therefore when you do your alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets that they may have glory of men.

Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. Underline it. In Matthew 5, 16 it was the glory of the Father. In Matthew 6, 2 it is glory of men. It's the motive.

Don't make a show of your giving. Now I don't think that honestly, you know, when you read a little history, I don't think they really ever did trumpet blows when they were going to give an offering.

He's speaking with hyperbole. He's trying to say, man, they did it so people would know. They loved having, in fact, I've been in some of those churches. You know, you've got all kinds of churches that take up all kinds of offerings.

[13 : 31] You've got churches that have the offered baskets on the front and they pass them to the back and everybody puts the money in and they go out the back. You've got churches where they take up in sacks and it's like a sack on the end of a pole and you drop your money in the middle of it.

You've got churches that have boxes in the back and you've just got to find the place to put your money. And then I've been in churches where the guy would stand up and say, the Bible says, bring all your tithes. And the pastor just stands here while you come.

I'm looking over there at you, Mr. Boy. I haven't seen you move yet. Get up, get up. I'm watching. And so he said that. So that's what's going on in the passage.

It's what's your motive. What's your motive in your giving? What's your motive? Don't do anything for God. So men will brag on you. Don't do anything for God.

So men will brag on you. Don't call attention to yourself and your ministry. No fanfare. No horns blowing. No selfies. No hashtags. No Facebook entries.

[14 : 28] Check me out. Am I doing good today or not? He said, don't do that. Number two. Do right because it's right. Do right because it's right not to get praise.

Matthew chapter 6 and verse 3. But when thou doest thine alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth, that thy alms may be in secret, and thy father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

The left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing is a saying that indicates don't be showy. It's impossible for one hand not to know what the other hand is doing.

Can you imagine this? Watch this. I'm going to give an offering, and I don't want my left hand to know it, so I'm going to go. There's my money.

Don't want my left hand to know. That's not what's going on. It's because your left hand and your right hand don't have brains. It ain't like my right hand center said, what you doing over there? That's not what's going on. He's just saying, don't be showy.

[15 : 32] All my life working with people in church, I've watched them, and they're like, man, I'm not going to fill out one of those tithing envelopes. I'm not going to mark money for missions. I'm not going to fill out the faith promise thing because I don't want my right hand and all my left hand doing.

It already does. The point was don't be showy. The point was don't be showy. Don't try to hold up and fake what you're doing.

Neither hand thinks for itself, so don't overplay these words. The point is to do ministry in such a way that God will get the glory and not you.

It's to do the ministry in such a way as to point to Jesus and his power rather than to get our name in lights. God will reward you if your giving is for him and his causes.

So God in heaven knows why we're giving. God in heaven knows why we're giving. God in heaven knows why we're giving. And if you gave, so back there in the back, you know, you gave a big check this morning. You wrote it in real big letters so the deacons would pass out dead when they saw how much you gave.

[16 : 36] That guy dropped a million bucks in the plate, and you only did it so you could watch one of them fall dead. That's not going to work. The whole point is you don't do it to be seen of men.

You don't do it to call attention to yourself. Please stop using that as an excuse to do nothing. Some of us walk around like this.

I don't want anybody to know I'm a Christian. I don't want anybody to know I do good because I'd be getting a reward for myself. So no, no, no, no, no, no. Don't mention my name. I'm not going to do anything. And if you do anything, you've got to do it while nobody's watching.

So you're like sneaking around. That's not what the passage is about. The passage is not about that at all. The passage is simply about this. Quit trying to be a show-off. Quit trying to get attention.

I always thought it was funny. I've always thought this. Sorry. Tennessee Hillbilly thinking. But they always have these telethons on TV, and they get millionaire actors to get poor people to send 50 bucks.

[17 : 35] When they could write a check for everything they're going to take up that day if they wanted to. But no, they're on there saying, this is my telethon. I am sacrificing to get you to give your \$50. When I could actually write a check for \$2 million and never even feel it.

They're doing it to be seen. He said, I don't want y'all doing that. I don't want y'all doing that. I want you to give because you love me. I want you to give so the Father gets glory.

Now I'd like to give you number three, the third thing today. I'd like to give you some biblical lessons to be learned about giving. Biblical lessons about giving. The first lesson, obviously, is we don't give to be seen.

We don't give for glory. Here's the lesson. The next lesson I want to show you is this. Biblical giving is giving to God. Go with me, if you would, to Luke chapter 6 and verse 38.

Luke chapter 6 and verse 38. This first passage is about giving. It's about living out who you are. It's about an expression of your faith. It's about who you are in Jesus Christ.

[18 : 37] And you're going to give not to be seen of men. You're going to give. You're going to give because you love God. And you're going to give so God rewards you. So when you give, you need to know that you're giving to God.

We give to God. We're not giving to the church. We're not giving to the pastor. We're not giving to the missionary. We're giving to God. This is a passage where Jesus talked about giving. And he showed us clearly that we're giving to God.

And it's God that rewards us. Read the verse with me, if you would. Give, and it shall be given unto you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, shall men give unto your bosom.

For with the same measure that you meet, with all it shall be measured to you again. Let me put that in Tennessee Hillbilly for you. It says, give, and I'll see to it it's given to you. In the same measure, the same amounts you're giving away, I'll get it back given back to you.

Men will give to you. So God's up here in heaven. I'm giving to God. And God's working out the giving part. Now listen, I'll tell you something real quickly. I learned a long time ago, God blesses those who learn to give to Him and His work.

[19 : 43] I learned a long time ago that God's a great big blesser. Betty and I, when we were young, I don't know, I don't think we had, maybe we had Chris. If we had Chris, that's it. We were working at Dykes Creek Baptist Church.

It was our first church. And I heard about this missionary in Atlanta that worked with homeless people. He was the first missionary I'd really heard much about. And I made \$240 at the time a month.

\$240 a month. And so I took, so it was like Chris was born. And so I took that week, and I gave our tithe and our offering to our church. So let's say I put in 25 bucks or whatever.

We're rounding off. So I got 200 left. And I told Betty, I said, I want to try out Luke 638 and see if it works. I said, we won't tell anybody anything, and we'll see what God does. And so I took \$100, and we mailed it off to that missionary.

And I told Betty, I want to see what God does and how He meets our needs. And it was amazing. Nothing happened. And then we came home from church one day, and we had told us so.

[20 : 46] And there was an envelope stuck on our door that says, you have been a blessing. We want to be a blessing. It was written around the outside of that bank envelope. You can stick a \$50 bill, and there was a \$50 bill in there.

And I said, hey, half of it's back. And then I went off to preach at a place, and I just knew when I got over there to preach, man, they'll give me a good love offering, and I'm going to turn out all right.

And when I got there, it was like four old ladies. They were probably 60. I mean, they were so old. You got to remember, I was 19. I was old as Betty. Amen. And I walked in that room, and I thought to myself, I ain't getting none of this.

I'm going to spend all my money driving back and forth over here. And when I got through, I expected, if anything, I was going to get five bucks to cover my gas. Back then, it would buy a tank of gas just about. And they gave me \$100. I got home.

I said, hey, \$150. Doing all right. We made \$50 on that investment. And then, I had resigned that church, and when I got ready to leave, the man, the treasurer of the church, without the church vote or anything, I'd only been there two weeks, and the treasurer of the church said, we're going to pay you for the whole month.

[21 : 48] I said, I don't think the church voted on that. He said, I'm not running the money around here. You just take a check. Don't worry about it. I said, I will meet, buddy. I ain't going to argue with you. So, he handed me \$240, and I got \$120 extra.

I got to the next church, and the treasurer walked up to me, and had me my paycheck. And he said, this will just be for two weeks. I said, that's twice what y'all agreed to pay me. He said, I'm treasurer around here. I found out them treasurers, write them checks.

Amen. And I said, praise Jesus. I love both you treasurers. Amen. And so, I ended up racking up pretty good. Here's the whole deal. I wasn't giving to the man in Atlanta that was visiting homeless people.

He couldn't do anything for me. But I was giving to God. And the God in heaven knows that when I give to Him, He sees to it that I'm giving so I can continue to give. It's never about being showy.

It's never about you getting to show about Him. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 9, verse 6, But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly. He which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

[22 : 43] It's an investment. We give to Him, and He gives to us. Our investment determines our return. God will not take advantage of us. We will reap according to how we sow.

Our giving determines what God gives back to us. I wish you'd just learned that. There's a God in heaven. And if this were simply your dues at the club, that'd be a different deal.

But we're not giving to the dues at the club. We're giving to the great God of heaven who sees and hears and answers and meets needs. We know that when we give, we say, God, this is for you.

You say, That preacher, I'm not sure I like you too much this week. Give it to God. Don't give it to the preacher. Give to the Lord. Give to the Lord. Number two, biblical giving is sacrificial.

Biblical giving is sacrificial. In 2 Samuel 24, verse 24, And the king said unto Aaronod, Nay, I will surely buy it of thee at a price. Neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which cost me nothing.

[23 : 45] So David brought this fleshing floor and the oxen for 50 shekels of silver. It's an interesting story. David needs to make an offering. A man offers the king the land for free and the oxen for free.

And the king's answer is, No, sir. I don't give to God what doesn't cost me. If anybody's of value to you, it ain't re-gifting.

It ain't, Hey, they gave me this mug and I don't like it anyway, so I'm going to give it to you next Christmas. It is not a white elephant gift. It is, Man, I love God and He is worthy of my sacrifice.

And David said, I won't give to God what doesn't cost me. We believe that the one we give to deserves our offering. Sacrifice, by the way, is never determined by the amount you give, but by comparing it to what you didn't give.

A guy that's got a million dollars that says, I'm going to write a check for \$10,000. He got a million dollars in his check account.

[24 : 45] I mean, he won't even notice that. He'd get that out of the seat cushions. And the guy that's got \$100 gives \$10. That'll be a whole lot more money. And so the comparison, it's not about, well, rich people ought to sacrifice.

No, I ought to sacrifice based on what God gives me. I want to give to God. What cost me? The Bible said, Jesus said that, by the way, big money can make big gifts that are not sacrifice.

Mark chapter 12, verse 41. In Mark 12, 41, Jesus sat over against the treasury and He watched and He saw how the people cast money into the treasury and that many that were rich cast in much.

So the rich guys were throwing in a lot of money. Jesus said, just watch it. Because there was a way they could give. And the way they gave, you know, I mean, there are people standing around watching. I mean, it ain't like Jesus has got a telescopic lens on a sniper rifle two miles away.

Watch it. He's just standing there like everybody else. And here comes everybody bumping their money in. They're coming in with big bags and throwing in their big money and everybody's watching. You can see bigger bags, big, bigger money, smaller, maybe you get all your offering in dollars.

[25 : 53] So it really works out to be a lot. And they're throwing in their money, but they're giving big amounts of money. But he says something in that verse. In Mark chapter 12, verse 43, there comes a widow lady, a poor widow, and she cast more in.

If you've got your Bible open in 1243, she cast more in. He said, they did cast in of their abundance and she of her living. They had tons and they gave and the other lady was barely making it and she gave and Jesus said she gave more.

years ago, a person gave big amounts of money to my ministry and we had a wonderful experience one day. I was in Tennessee in a little country church and I don't remember how much the offering was but this lady came up to me and she said, Austin, we want to write a check to help you in your ministry and she said, and she wrote a check for all she could and it was something like \$12.43.

And I talked to my friend and I said, look what she gave and he said, I've never given that much money. because that \$12.43 obviously represented probably what the lady had in the bank account.

Who gives \$12.43? Make it \$15, make it \$10, make it \$12, make it \$13. \$12.43 and the comment we made was she probably gave all she could.

[27 : 17] God's watching your giving. We give to God. We give to God and as we give to God, we give sacrificially. But how much you give is never, how much you have doesn't determine what not you ought to give.

Here's another big thing. A lot of us have the idea, well, if I ever get rich, I'm going to be a giver. No, you won't. The Bible says in Luke chapter 16 and verse 10, he that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.

And he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. Years ago, we were living in Arequipa, Peru, and we, first time in our life, Mexico and Peru is the first time we've ever had anybody that helped us in our house.

So we would go off to language school and a lady stayed at our house or in Arequipa. A lady came and she helped us all day. In fact, she still works in our family, still works for my daughter and my son. And we knew her.

She got saved at our kitchen table. And when she began to work in our house, I was like, you know, do you let somebody in your house you don't know that well? So I on purpose would take and lay on the floor the equivalent of a dollar.

[28 : 26] And I'd lay it on the floor and I would wait to see what she would do. And she'd come downstairs and tell everybody, hey, I found this dollar on the floor. I don't know if it fell out of the preacher's pocket or what, but here's that dollar. Then I'd leave a dollar in my pockets and she'd pull it out of the wash and give it to Betty.

And then I'd left \$10. And I'd left \$100. After a while, I figured out she's going to give it all back. She was faithful over that which was least. We could trust her. And that's exactly what the Lord's saying. I give you a little bit of money and you don't honor me with the little bit you have.

Why would you think I would trust you with bigger amounts of money? You don't honor God with \$10. Why would you honor Him with \$10,000? That's what's going on. By the way, the real lesson here is this, that money is not real valuable.

The honest truth is you place the real value in money, but the real value is in souls and lives and ministry that you could be involved in. Money's not got real value. People have real value.

Money's not got real value. Men have real value. Money's not got real value. Ministry has real value. There's no biblical teaching that you should wait until God gives you large amounts of money before you start giving.

[29 : 29] God is watching what you do with what you have now. How you handle what you have will determine if God will trust you with greater riches. Look at Luke 16.11. Luke 16.11.

If therefore you have not been faithful in the unrighteous man that are money, filthy money, just money, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

And if you have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? Could it be that God withholds from us greater spiritual blessings because we don't handle our financial blessings correctly?

True riches aren't money, but men, ministry, souls. Last lesson for today. Tons of Bible lessons about how to give.

We're not to give like hypocrites. We're not to give to be seen. We are to give. We're to give to God. We're to give sacrificially. The way we handle our money determines a lot about us. The way you handle our money determines a lot about us.

[30 : 29] But you do determine how much you're going to give. That's not something I determine for you. Not somebody ought to guilt you or manipulate you into. You give because you want to. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 9 in verse 7, Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver.

You give as you decide in your heart, but you decide who's valuable and who's worth it. There's no limit to the amount of money, the amount of time, the amount of sacrifice I would make for my wife.

She is worthy of everything I have, everything I ever will have. I would risk my future on her. My God is of much greater value than even my wife.

In 2 Corinthians 8 and verse 1, they were giving when they had nothing. In 2 Corinthians 8 and verse 1, it says, Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God, but so do in the churches of Macedonia, how that in great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded under the riches of liberality.

That church in Corinth was extremely poor. They were in deep poverty. They were in a recession like you've never known a recession to be. And they gave. He says, their affliction of the bond, their great trial of affliction, their deep poverty, but they were rich in liberality, rich in giving.

[31 : 58] It wouldn't have been the amount of money. It was the heart. Let me explain something to you about money. When you love, you give. For God so loved the world that He gave.

And some of us may not love the work of God and the ministry of God because we've not invested enough in it because biblically, basically, we'll find this out in Matthew 6 as we go further, when you put your money there, your heart follows where your money goes.

So invest. I could have stood in Arequipa and all those works and all those ministries you saw there. I left blood and holes I helped dig to plant columns. I left sweat.

I left tears in all those ministries down there. I left money. We gave away everything we had to get that thing going down there. We took all the money I told my wife we'd save forever and we invested in building churches and God always met that need.

I'm just telling you, here's the lesson. You don't give so you can get praise. You give so God can get glory. But we give and God's people ought to be a giving people.

[33 : 05] You ought to be involved in the faith promise giving of our church. You ought to be involved in helping with all the ministries of the church. Matthew chapter 6 is not a verse that says you don't need to give. Don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing.

I've never written a check and both hands didn't know what was happening. I've never eaten a hamburger. I've never said I'm on a diet. Right hand's on a diet. Left hand will eat and I'll eat with my left hand.

It doesn't work that way. That's not how it works. That's not what he was saying. What he was saying is don't do it to get men to brag on you. Don't do it to get men to brag on you.

Do it. So Jesus rewards you in heaven for how you're honoring him. Father, I love you and I thank you for the chance to serve you. I pray that your name would be honored and glorified.

I pray that you'd draw people to you. I pray you'd help your people to give like they've never given before. I pray you'd help your people to be involved in your ministry. I pray that your name would be honored and glorified. I pray you'd show your power in real ways in our lives.

[34 : 04] And I pray that this day would make a difference in us. And I'll give you honor for all you do. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. For more information log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recording.