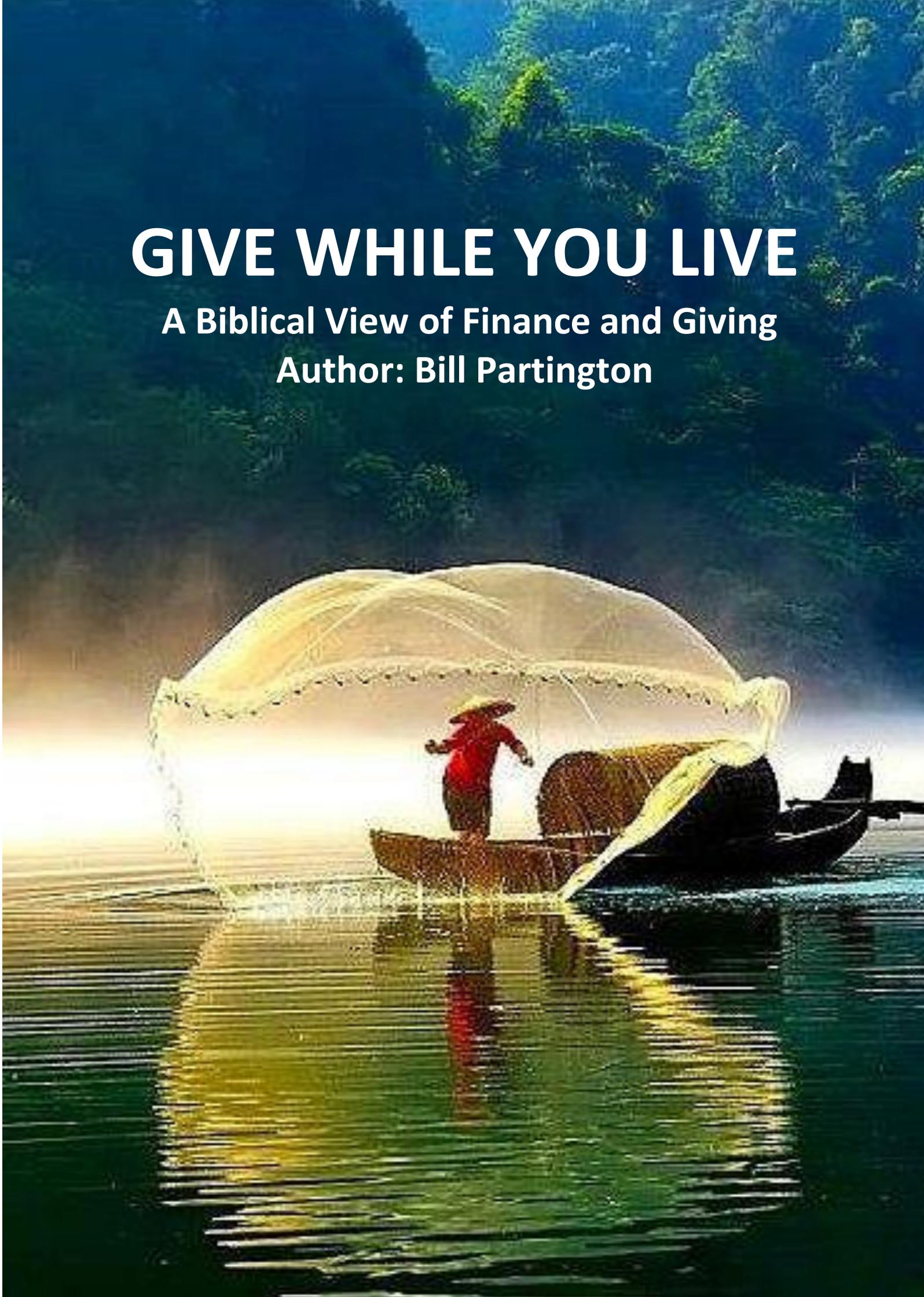


GIVE WHILE YOU LIVE

A Biblical View of Finance and Giving

Author: Bill Partington



Give While You Live: A Biblical View of Finance and Giving

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About the Author

Born in 1953 and raised in a Christian home, the son of an itinerant preacher, Bill Partington made a commitment to follow Jesus Christ from the age of 10.

Following a career in sales Bill was ordained in 1992 and spent the following 2 years traveling as an itinerant preacher in the UK, India and the Philippines. In February 1995 he began working for UCB UK (United Christian Broadcasters), promoting the ministry and building the distribution of their daily devotional and the database of supporters.

He served as Promotions Manager, Head of Ministry, Executive Assistant to the CEO, Head of Strategic Ministry Relations - hosting & leading Leadership events with many of the world's leading ministers - and then, most recently, Head of Affiliate Development - where his responsibility was to help several UCB affiliated ministries across Europe to grow and impact their own nations more effectively.

Since leaving UCB UK's employ in April 2019, he has continued to serve on 6 Boards of Trustees of various UCB ministries in Europe, whilst also returning to itinerant ministry, preaching across the UK as well as much further afield.

A strategic Kingdom leading connector, Bill flows with and across the 5-fold ministry. His life and ministry is marked with integrity, humility, longevity and consistency. He has preached in over 10 nations, spoken and operated in many more – and now heads up the ministry, Global Missions, serving Churches, Conferences and Outreaches - always with a word in season.

This year he and his wife, Therese, will celebrate 40 years of marriage. Together have also hosted around 10 tours of Israel and plan more in the coming year. They have two sons, one daughter, a granddaughter and a grandson.

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Introduction

This booklet developed from a study about what the Bible said about how Christians should make preparations for their money, property and other material possessions after their death. Its purpose is to present the Biblical principles regarding what should happen to the inheritance we leave behind, and to provide guidance relating to tithing and giving.

There are many questions that believers have regarding finances, for example, what will happen to our money, property and possessions when we have gone? How do we ensure that our wishes will be carried out fully, with no problems and delays? What do we know about tax laws? Should we give property or finances while we are still alive, or decide to benefit others after our death? What about inheritance tax?

Advice should be sought from a solicitor. Cost-saving alternatives can be a false economy, because a solicitor will still have to 'prove' the will and complicated legal action may be necessary if the will is found to contain technical errors. Before rewiring a house we would consult an electrician, and before installing a boiler, consult a plumber. Yet some people end up producing one of the most important legal documents of their lives, without any help or advice. In fact, our last will and testament will be *the one significant document* that we leave behind when we die. Sadly, many others die without even making a will, leaving numerous problems and complications for others to resolve later.

As I researched the subject, I was surprised to find little indication in scripture that money or property should be bequeathed beyond the person's own family. Gifts during a person's lifetime are another matter. They can and should be given, as God guides and directs, anywhere and in any amounts, with the proviso that family needs are also being met. There are many charities conducting will-making campaigns to receive legacies, however, what is written here is intended for Christians, who want to deal with the resources that God has given them in accordance with the Word of God, the Bible.

I pray that as you read further, you will be blessed and also challenged. God has already promised a blessing for *you* when you give, as well as for those who receive from you.

Part One: Foundations

A solicitor will resolve the practical issues, but what about the spiritual ones? Let's start at the beginning with who God is, and make sure that we have the foundations in place, on which to base our findings.

Creation

God created everything by speaking it into existence. Everything was created by Him, and for His pleasure. Humanity's long-held attitude is that everything revolves around *us*. However, consider these verses which express *God's* point of view:

*'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth [...] And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.'*¹

*'You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for You created all things, and by Your will they were created and have their being.'*²

*'For every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. I know every bird in the mountains, and the insects in the fields are mine. If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is mine, and all that is in it.'*³

In Deuteronomy, the Children of Israel are warned not to forget the Lord their God, who had brought them out from the land of Egypt, when they began to prosper and become rich.⁴ They were not to think that their own power and ability had done this, but were to remember that *God* had given them the power and ability to produce wealth. We also, would be wise to bear that in mind in our own lives. Everything we have is due to *His* grace, *His* mercy and *His* impartation of gifts and talents.

Blessing

We have seen how God created everything by speaking it into existence, but He also chooses to pour out His blessing on what He has created.

*'All things have been created through Him and for Him.'*⁵

*'So God created mankind in His own image, in the image of God He created them; male and female He created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number..."'*⁶

Such was His heart of love towards those whom He created in His own image and likeness that the first thing He spoke into their lives was blessing. When God first made a covenant with Abraham, He said that it would also flow through to Abraham's descendants, and that they too would be blessed.

¹ Genesis 1:1,3

² Revelation 4:11

³ Psalm 50:10-12

⁴ Deuteronomy 6:10-12

⁵ Colossians 1:16

⁶ Genesis 1:27-28

*'God is not human, that He should lie, not a human being, that He should change his mind. Does He speak and then not act? Does He promise and not fulfil? I have received a command to bless; He has blessed, and I cannot change it.'*⁷

God has pronounced a blessing upon us and He will not reverse it. He has committed Himself, by His own Word, to provide for us, in every area of our lives. The devil may fight against us; we may be challenged and attacked in any part of our lives, including the financial realm, however God has committed Himself to bring us to victory.

Ownership

All the money, wealth and possessions that we 'own', actually belong to God. All the riches of creation belong to Him. We are, in effect, loaned the things that we have need of during our natural lives on this earth. When we seek to control and use anything exclusively for our own ends, we are in effect stealing from God.

*'The silver is mine and the gold is mine,' declares the LORD Almighty.'*⁸

*'Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. But you ask, "How are we robbing you?" In tithes and offerings.'*⁹

God was being robbed of tithes and offerings because the Children of Israel had promised that they would give Him the first ten percent of their goods and income, and then chose not to fulfil that vow. Their failure to fulfil the commitment that they themselves had made, meant they were robbing God of what belonged to Him.

In the New Testament, a similar thing happened:

*'Now a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, and with his wife's full knowledge [and complicity] he kept back some of the proceeds, bringing only a portion of it, and set it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and [secretly] keep back for yourself some of the proceeds [from the sale] of the land? As long as it remained [unsold], did it not remain your own [to do with as you pleased]? And after it was sold, was the money not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this act [of hypocrisy and deceit] in your heart? You have not [simply] lied to people, but to God." And hearing these words, Ananias fell down suddenly and died; and great fear and awe gripped those who heard of it. And the young men [in the congregation] got up and wrapped up the body, and carried it out and buried it. Now after an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. Peter asked her, "Tell me whether you sold your land for so much?" And she said, "Yes, for so much." Then Peter said to her, "How could you two have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Look! The feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also.'*¹⁰

⁷ Number 23:19-20

⁸ Haggai 2:8

⁹ Malachi 3:8

¹⁰ Acts 5:1-9

While it is obviously wrong, and indeed a sin, to lie to our fellow man, to imagine that someone could lie to the Holy Spirit, who sees and knows all things, regardless of whether we tell Him – and escape without serious consequences – is the height of foolishness and arrogance. Their failure to give what they had promised meant that they had robbed God of what was due to Him. Not only this, but their lies made a mockery, both of their giving, and of God Himself.

Part Two: Inheritance

The Birth-right

Before the Law of Moses came into being, there is evidence of something special concerning the firstborn male in the family.

*'All the firstborn are mine. When I struck down all the firstborn in Egypt, I set apart for myself every firstborn in Israel, whether human or animal. They are to be mine. I am the LORD.'*¹¹

The firstborn among the Hebrews of the Old Testament had particular privileges above their younger brothers:

1. They were consecrated to the Lord.
2. They received a double portion of the paternal inheritance.
3. They received pre-eminence in dignity and power.
4. They succeeded to the official authority of the father.
5. They had the right to the priesthood, providing they were fit for the priesthood, being without spot, defect or blemish. For example, Reuben was the firstborn, but God transferred the privilege to the tribe of Levi. Although his father, Jacob, acknowledged him as his firstborn, and that he also had some great attributes, he was known to be as 'unstable as water'. He was told that he would not excel because he had committed adultery with Bilhah, his father's concubine.¹² We see from this that sin, whilst forgiven, often carries serious consequences.

We also know from the story of Esau and Jacob, that there was something special about being the firstborn. Genesis describes how Esau despised his birth-right and sold it to his brother for a portion of stew and bread.¹³ By that one act he relinquished the right not only for himself, but also for all his descendants throughout history.

Take as example, a country with a monarchy, like the United Kingdom. The heir to the throne is the firstborn of the present king or queen. Until recently the first-in-line to the throne was always a male; the oldest son of the reigning monarch. Only in the case of a king or queen not having a son did the heir to the throne become the oldest daughter. If the monarch had two sons, the oldest was first in line to the throne, and

¹¹ Numbers 3:13

¹² Genesis 49:3-4

¹³ Genesis 25:29-34

the younger was second in line. Only if the oldest son died would the younger become heir in his place. If the first son had a child, *that* son would immediately become next in line to the throne, in the place of his uncle who would then be third in line. If the eldest son had more children, each of those would take precedence over the monarch's younger son, simply because the 'kingly heritage' passes down the bloodline of the *eldest* son.

Historians may like to look at King Edward VIII. He abdicated from his position as the King of England in 1936, and because he had no children, his brother Albert (who took the regal name of King George VI) was crowned King in his place. Subsequently King George's oldest daughter, Elizabeth, became queen upon his death. The next in line to the throne after Queen Elizabeth II immediately became Prince Charles, then subsequently his son, Prince William, followed by his son, Prince George.

Even from this relatively recent historical example, we can see how serious giving up one's heritage is, not only for the individual, but for their children, and children's children. In Biblical days this was exactly the same. When Esau despised his birth-right, it demonstrated that he did not value the benefits of being the eldest son, and all the privileges that he was entitled to because of his position. Instead, desperate for instant gratification, he surrendered it in return for a bowl of stew. Not only did *he* lose all the blessings that went with that position, but so did his sons, grandsons, great-grandsons, great-great-grandsons, and so on. Every blessing, right and privilege, transferred to his younger brother Jacob, and all of *his* descendants.

When the Law of Moses came into force, God Himself instituted laws that would safeguard the rights of the firstborn. Not only did this protect the individual from being robbed of his rightful inheritance, it ensured and protected the identity and distinctiveness of the nation of Israel.

Protection of the Birth-right.

God gave a clear command about the chain of inheritance:

1. It must pass to the children.
2. If there is no firstborn son, then it must be given to the daughters.
3. If there is no offspring, then it must remain in the family.

*'If a man dies and leaves no son, give his inheritance to his daughter. If he has no daughter, give his inheritance to his brothers. If he has no brothers, give his inheritance to his father's brothers. If his father had no brothers, give his inheritance to the nearest relative in his clan, that he may possess it. This is to have the force of law for the Israelites, as the LORD commanded Moses.'*¹⁴

*'No inheritance in Israel is to pass from one tribe to another, for every Israelite shall keep the tribal inheritance of their ancestors.'*¹⁵

¹⁴ Numbers 27:8-11

¹⁵ Numbers 36:7

*'If a man has two wives, and he loves one but not the other, and both bear him sons but the firstborn is the son of the wife he does not love, when he wills his property to his sons, he must not give the rights of the firstborn to the son of the wife he loves in preference to his actual firstborn, the son of the wife he does not love. He must acknowledge the son of his unloved wife as the firstborn by giving him a double share of all he has. That son is the first sign of his father's strength. The right of the firstborn belongs to him.'*¹⁶

Honour of the Birth-right

Not only was it a disgrace to sell one's inheritance, God had also commanded that land should not be sold *permanently*, for it was ultimately God's property. In addition, the inheritance was to stay in the family line, or at least in the same tribe, after the death of the owner.

In the book of 1 Kings, there is an account of Ahab and Jezebel – both of them wicked, and worshippers of Baal – and a vineyard belonging to a Jezreelite called Naboth, which was his by inheritance. King Ahab coveted Naboth's vineyard and attempted to get him to part with it. It is significant that Naboth replied:

*'The LORD forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my ancestors'.*¹⁷

Ahab returned to his home and took to his bed, refusing to eat. His wife appeared on the scene and came up with a plot to dispose of Naboth, and commandeer his property for her husband. This happened, and Naboth was stoned to death. Ahab took possession of the vineyard, stealing an inheritance that did not belong to him. The prophet Elijah then pronounced God's sentence on Ahab and Jezebel, and both met terrible ends because of their wickedness. Later on, Ahab's son was killed, and his body thrown from the chariot into Naboth's field:

*'Yesterday I saw the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons, declares the LORD, and I will surely make you pay for it on this plot of ground, declares the LORD.'*¹⁸

Ahab had not only murdered Naboth, but his sons too; he had not only stolen Naboth's inheritance, but that which was the inheritance rightly due to Naboth's sons and grandsons. God was angry at the theft of the inheritance from Naboth and his descendants, and the punishment which followed was severe. It is important to learn from this not to take the inheritance that is rightly due to someone else.

¹⁶ Deuteronomy 21:15-17

¹⁷ 1 Kings 21:3

¹⁸ 2 Kings 9:26

Old Testament Summary

All we have comes as a gift from God – He created everything, and maintains ownership of them, while loaning them to us for our temporary use. God’s desire is that His people should prosper both as a blessing for themselves, but also as a witness and testimony to others of His goodness.

Some principles in the Old Testament were laid down as a shadow of something that God would bring to full manifestation under the New Covenant. However, many things in the Old translate straight into the New, without complication. For example, the blessing of Abraham comes to the Gentiles through Christ, and numerous blessings and promises given in His word, have not been superseded or cancelled.

We have looked at how the law instigated the principles regarding leaving an inheritance to one’s immediate offspring, but here we find that a good man goes further, leaving an inheritance big enough to benefit his grandchildren as well: *‘A good person leaves an inheritance for their children’s children.’*¹⁹

However, this is not *instead* of his children but in *addition* to them – the law has already safeguarded the birth-right to the first generation.

A New Testament Perspective

Jesus tells the story of the parable of the prodigal son:

*‘There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, “Father, give me my share of the estate.” So he divided his property between them. Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living’.*²⁰

The father in the story had two sons, and the younger had no doubt that a certain share of the estate would come to him. He was confident that he had a right to a particular inheritance from his father, and the fact that Jesus did not elaborate on these points confirms that this was understood by the hearers.

After the younger brother had returned, and was received with great rejoicing by his father, the elder brother refused to go in and make merry with them. The father went out to speak to him and even though the elder brother would not go and be a part of the celebrations, the father reminds him that all that he has belongs to his eldest son:

*“My son,” the father said, “you are always with me, and everything I have is yours”.*²¹

The fact that Jesus included such details confirms that the laws of inheritance in the Old Testament were still clearly understood and honoured in New Testament times. There are many other instances where the New Testament confirms this²² and other

¹⁹ Proverbs 13:22

²⁰ Luke 15:11-13

²¹ Luke 15:31

²² See 1 Timothy 5:8; 2 Corinthians 12:14. These clearly verify that the Old Testament principles regarding the laws of inheritance still apply under the new covenant.

passages where references to wealth do not mention any need to change the previous instructions.²³

The Word of God commands us to bless and not to curse.²⁴ It might be easy today to curse by disinheriting those who may have hurt or offended us, yet the Word of God is very clear regarding forgiveness and bitterness. Bitterness defiles, and if we do not forgive we are warned that God will not forgive us. It is, therefore, essential that we deal with any root of bitterness, or lack of forgiveness, in our hearts.

The New Testament church shared everything with one another, having all things in common, and they called nothing their own. Possibly they did this because they believed Jesus would return within their lifetime, so they didn't think in terms of inheritance. This may be why there are so few references to the matter in the New Testament. In that case, how much more should that be our attitude in these days? Certainly the return of the Lord Jesus Christ is nearer now than it was then!

If home ownership, mortgage payments, and all our other lifestyle choices are restricting our ability to give, maybe we should question whether we are merely laying up treasures here on earth – living for the fulfilment of *our own* desires, rather than living according to *God's* commands and will for us. Maybe we need to be challenged regarding the way we live and spend, if it curtails our ministering in financial and practical ways when the Lord directs us.

God provides all of the funds that are needed for the Church and other ministries to function – the difficulty, however, is that sometimes those funds are in the pockets, wallets, purses and bank accounts of the people that He expects to support the work of God! Throughout the gospels, Jesus speaks at length, and in great detail, about our handling of finances, possessions and the material things of life. In fact, it has been said that there are at least 365 instances in the Bible (one for each day of the year) where we are commanded to 'fear not', however there are over 2,150 times when we are exhorted to *give!*

Overall Summary

The Old Testament gave specific laws, principles and guidelines on inheritance, which gave a birth-right to the Children of Israel. No specific changes were made to them in the New Testament. God's will for His people is still to pass their inheritance on to their children. If one has no children, the inheritance should pass to the next of kin; should there be no next of kin, then to the next of kin of the parents of the person who has died. There appears to be no other instruction should this prove impossible. It is taken for granted that somewhere there will be a rightly qualified heir.

This has a thrilling side for us today in the spiritual realm. A person cannot lose his spiritual inheritance, nor can it be taken away or stolen from him. Only *he* can sell or give up that inheritance. His father will not disinherit him. Jesus said that no-one can

²³ See Luke 12:13-21; Luke 16:20-31; Acts 5:1-9. None of these make any mention of what happened to the property after the death of the individual, so it can be assumed that it would be according to Old Testament law.

²⁴ Romans 12:14

pluck us out of His hands, or His Father's hands.²⁵ Because of the endless and unfathomable grace, mercy, and faithfulness of God, not even our sin can separate us from His love and forgiveness. We are promised that if we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive our sin, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.²⁶

The death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God's only begotten son on the cross cancelled the debt of sin against us. It not only brought us into a position of forgiveness, but also into *all* the benefits that His sacrifice bought for us:

1. Righteousness – a right-standing relationship with God the Father.
2. Justification – making us just-as-if-we had never sinned.
3. Eternal, everlasting life – knowing God; having a personal, intimate relationship with Him, and Jesus Christ, whom He sent,²⁷ and the reward of Him saying 'Well done, good and faithful servant', when this physical, earthly life is finished.
4. Having access to God with boldness and confidence.
5. Miracles and healings; physical and financial needs being met – *and so much more!*

God instilled a sense of identity, separation and integrity in His people. This also protected the structure and identity of the family. You often read genealogies recorded in the Bible, for example:

*'This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham: Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers...'*²⁸

Not only do genealogies provide position, authority and belonging for an individual, they also prove the identity of the family, tribe and the nation, and this was safeguarded by the institutions of inheritance and birth-right.

These are Biblical principles regarding inheritances, rather than accepted tradition. It is scriptural to ensure that our property, possessions and finances go to the place that God intends. By doing so, we obey His instructions, and bestow a blessing upon those we leave behind.

The Bible as a whole gives clear, unambiguous teaching on the subject of inheritance. One Biblical principle is that we should do our giving while we are living, and at the same time ensure that we leave an inheritance for our children, and our children's children. In both the Old and New Testaments, although inheritance is deeply important, God places an even higher emphasis on the principle:

'Do your giving while you're living!'

One way to do this is through tithing.

²⁵ John 10:28-29

²⁶ 1 John 1:9

²⁷ John 17:3

²⁸ Matthew 1:1-2

Part Three: Tithing

Tithing is the practice of giving ten percent, or more, of your income to God. It was to be the *first* tenth of one's crops or earnings. God saw the *first* as the root – what it was used for determined what happened to everything else. In both the Old and New Testaments, the words used in Hebrew and Greek for 'tithe' also mean 'a tenth'.²⁹

Old Testament History

The practice of paying tithes is very old. The first mention of it in the Bible was when Abraham gave tithes to Melchizedek, the King of Salem, after his return from destroying the army of Chedorlaomer. Abraham gave him, as a freewill offering, a tenth of the spoils won in the battle. There is no suggestion that he was commanded to do so by God, and this was before the laws of Moses, including any regarding tithing, were laid down. Jacob continued the practice, vowing that if God would be with him, feed and clothe him, and return him peacefully to his father's house, then God would be *his* God and he would give back, as a freewill offering, a tenth of whatever God gave him. Again, there is no suggestion that he was commanded to do so by God.

Types of Tithe

Under the law, Moses instituted that the tithe of the land, herd or flock would be holy unto the Lord. There were various types of tithe:

1. From the Israelites to the Levites, for their maintenance: *'They will receive no inheritance among the Israelites. Instead, I give to the Levites as their inheritance the tithes that the Israelites present as an offering to the LORD.'*³⁰
2. From the Levites to the priests, for their wages: *'When you receive from the Israelites the tithe I give you as your inheritance, you must present a tenth of that tithe as the LORD's offering [...] to Aaron the priest.'*³¹
3. For the Lord's feast and sacrifices, to be eaten wherever the Lord chose to put His name. *'Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year.'*³² If someone lived too far away, they could send money which could then be used to buy an animal for the sacrifice.
4. For those who had no inheritance of their own: *'At the end of every three years, bring all the tithes of that year's produce and store it in your towns, so that the Levites (who have no allotment or inheritance of their own) and the foreigners, the fatherless and the widows who live in your towns may come and eat and be satisfied, and so that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.'*³³

²⁹ In Hebrew, 'asar' meaning 'a tenth'; 'maser' meaning 'a tithe'; in Greek, 'dekatos' meaning 'a tenth', or 'a tithe'.

³⁰ Numbers 18:23-24

³¹ Numbers 18:26-32

³² Deuteronomy 14:22-26

³³ Deuteronomy 14:28-29

Tithing was something that was forgotten as people turned away from God. The prophet Malachi delivered God's word to the people:

“Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. But you ask, ‘How are we robbing you?’ In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse – your whole nation – because you are robbing me. Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.”³⁴

When the people turned back to God, tithing was something that was recognised as important, and was then reinstated. King Hezekiah cleansed and repaired the temple, and proclaimed a solemn Passover. He commanded the people:

‘Give the portion due the priests and Levites so they could devote themselves to the Law of the LORD. As soon as the order went out, the Israelites generously gave the first fruits of their grain, new wine, olive oil and honey and all that the fields produced. They brought a great amount, a tithe of everything.’³⁵

New Testament Perspective

The New Testament says little regarding tithes. However, one reference of note is when Jesus criticised the scribes and Pharisees:

‘Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices – mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law – justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former.’³⁶

In a similar way to how they had avoided looking after their family by claiming they had already given to God, the Pharisees here also adhered to the *letter* of the law, while ignoring the most important *principles* of the law. This is the only definite indication in the New Testament that the tithe is still applicable under the New Covenant.

On a practical level, some may find themselves in a position where it seems that they cannot afford to give a tithe or an offering, due to low income, high living costs, or mounting debts. Obviously, to be a good steward of the resources that we have from God, it is important to learn to look after them well; to spend, to save and to give, without being in debt. The book of Proverbs contains an important principle for those in debt:

‘Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due [its rightful recipients], when it is in your power to do it.’³⁷

³⁴ Malachi 3:8-10

³⁵ 2 Chronicles 31:4-5

³⁶ Matthew 23:23

³⁷ Proverbs 3:27 (AMP)

The New Testament reinforces this, saying:

*'Pay to all what is due: tax to whom tax is due, customs to whom customs, respect to whom respect, honour to whom honour.'*³⁸

These values are often in complete contrast to the world's system of stretching credit to its absolute limit, and paying bills as late as possible. There are many organisations that can help with finance and debt-management, including CAP (Christians Against Poverty – www.capuk.org).

Despite the necessity to be wise with money, there is also a question of priorities to be addressed. What do we give to God? Where do we place our value? God looks at the heart, and accepts what little we can give:

*'Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents. Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything – all she had to live on.'*³⁹

Even though she was not able to give much, what she gave was out of love. Low income doesn't prevent us from giving to God!

Support of Ministers

We have seen how in the Old Testament, one of the major reasons for the tithe, was to financially provide for and support:

1. The Levites.
2. The Priests.
3. The stranger, the fatherless and the widows.

To give financial, practical and material support to those who minister spiritually into our lives is a Biblical instruction, reiterated in the New Testament:

*'The elders who perform their leadership duties well are to be considered worthy of double honour (financial support), especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching [the word of God concerning eternal salvation through Christ]. For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain [to keep it from eating]," and, "The worker is worthy of his wages [he deserves fair compensation].'*⁴⁰

*'The one who is taught the word [of God] is to share all good things with his teacher [contributing to his spiritual and material support].'*⁴¹

³⁸ Romans 13:7 (AMP)

³⁹ Mark 12:41-44

⁴⁰ 1 Timothy 5:17-18 (AMP)

⁴¹ Galatians 6:6 (AMP)

In the natural realm, if a person works, he should be properly rewarded. Paul, using this as an example, says it is unreasonable to expect those who are in the work of the ministry to go without adequate provision – usually from those to whom they are ministering. We wouldn't dream of eating a meal in a restaurant, then either leaving without paying, or going down the road and giving the money to a different restaurant. Similarly, it is only right and proper that we minister in practical and financial ways to those who feed us spiritually.

The Apostle Paul personally strived not to be a financial or practical burden on the churches that he visited. He was a tentmaker by training, and laboured with his hosts, Aquila and Priscila, to pay his own way.⁴² That was Paul's decision, but the Bible, however, warns believers very strongly to provide financial and material support to those who have worked for us. In addition, the measure we use to give out will be the same measure used to give back to us. If we wish to harvest bountifully we must sow accordingly.

Payment for Workers

All workers should receive what is due to them; a principle which both the Old and New Testaments make clear. God is not happy with delayed payments, refusal to pay, not paying a living wage, or fraudulence:

*'Do not defraud or rob your neighbour. Do not hold back the wages of a hired worker overnight.'*⁴³

*'Woe to him who builds his palace by unrighteousness, his upper rooms by injustice, making his own people work for nothing, not paying them for their labour.'*⁴⁴

*'Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty.'*⁴⁵

*"So I will come to put you on trial. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud labourers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive the foreigners among you of justice, but do not fear me," says the LORD Almighty.*⁴⁶

The sin of withholding a worker his wages is spoken of in the same warning as sorcerers, adulterers and liars. It is a serious issue to God.

Those who minister to us are representing God, and speaking to us on His behalf. How we treat them is an indication of our regard for their 'employer.' Our giving must be motivated by our relationship with God. We must receive Jesus Christ as Saviour, acknowledge Him as Lord, and present ourselves to Him as a living sacrifice. Paul honoured the Macedonian church, who gave despite their poverty:

⁴² Acts 18:1-3

⁴³ Leviticus 19:13

⁴⁴ Jeremiah 22:13

⁴⁵ James 5:4

⁴⁶ Malachi 3:5

*'In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us.'*⁴⁷

We are instructed to pay a tithe to God, *in addition* to any gifts and offerings. The Israelites paid tithes via the priesthood to the temple in Jerusalem. So, where do we, as Christians, pay our tithes? Malachi's instruction is to bring the tithes into the storehouse so that there would be (spiritual) meat in God's house. So our storehouse is the place from where we are being fed. Christians should, wherever possible, be committed to a local church or fellowship, for scripture tells us not to give up gathering together.⁴⁸ The church or fellowship is the *people* – not the building they meet in. This is where we should be getting fed spiritually, and that is where we should pay our tithe.

If your church is not feeding you spiritually by teaching the Word of God, or not preaching the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ, you need to help and encourage your church to change. You may even need to pray about going to another local church where you will be fed, and enabled to grow spiritually.

The principles regarding tithes and offerings, and in supporting ministers and ministries, can be summed up as follows:

1. Abraham tithed to Melchizedek the priest, God's delegated representative.
2. The Israelites tithed to the Levites, God's representatives, in return for the spiritual service they provided.
3. We should tithe to support the primary ministers and ministries that meet our spiritual needs today.
4. We should give thoughtfully and cheerfully, as we have decided in our own hearts, not reluctantly or under compulsion.⁴⁹
5. Our giving should be in proportion to our ability – sometimes more by faith – and in proportion to our income.

⁴⁷ 2 Corinthians 8:2-5

⁴⁸ Hebrews 10:25

⁴⁹ 2 Corinthians 9:7

Part Four: Giving

God has so much to say on the subject of giving – *while we are still alive*. Jesus gives more instruction on the subject of money and material possessions than He does about any other single issue. Perhaps this is because He knew that mankind was so materially minded, taken up with transient, temporal things, instead of unseen and eternal things.⁵⁰ Jesus saw that people needed direction and guidance on this subject because it is so important. As the Bible says:

'Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also'.⁵¹

The Principle of Generosity

There are a number of Biblical laws and principles, even conditions, that God has set in place, which will dictate whether we receive a bountiful or meagre blessing. They have stood since the beginning of creation, and one of those is *the law of sowing and reaping*. When God created the earth He made trees, flowers, plants and people, all of which contained within them the seeds which would guarantee their continued existence when they were sown. This is not just an inbuilt physical principle, but also a spiritual one. What you sow in life, you will reap.

We know that if someone plants wheat in a field, they will not harvest potatoes, and if they plant tulip bulbs, they won't see a rose bush grow. There are several scriptures which illustrate the point that whatever a person sows, they will grow and reap a harvest of the same:

'Those who plough evil and those who sow trouble reap it.'⁵²

'The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.'⁵³

To put it another way, there is power in what we say; whether we speak deadly and destructive words, or words that sow life and encouragement. We will produce a harvest of the same – in our lives and in others.

'A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.'⁵⁴

'Sow righteousness for yourselves, reap the fruit of unfailing love.'⁵⁵

'Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.'⁵⁶

⁵⁰ 2 Corinthians 4:18

⁵¹ Luke 12:34

⁵² Job 4:8

⁵³ Proverbs 18:21

⁵⁴ Galatians 6:7-8

⁵⁵ Hosea 10:12

⁵⁶ 2 Corinthians 9:6

We are required not to keep God's bountiful provision to ourselves, but to grow a harvest that blesses those around us too. Whatever the level of prosperity the Lord has entrusted to us, these laws of sowing and reaping should govern and direct our giving throughout life. In all these things – ministering to the poor and needy, blessing those who minister to us in spiritual things, and cultivating a generous heart, the predominant resulting principle could be summed up as:

Do your giving while you're living!

The Principle of Love

*'If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love [for others growing out of God's love for me], then I have become only a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal [just an annoying distraction]. And if I have the gift of prophecy [and speak a new message from God to the people], and understand all mysteries, and [possess] all knowledge; and if I have all [sufficient] faith so that I can remove mountains, but do not have love [reaching out to others], I am nothing. If I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it does me no good at all.'*⁵⁷

Most modern Bible translations use the word 'love', but some older versions use the word 'charity'. The original Greek manuscript used the word 'agape', which means a *godly love*. This agape is the love that God the Father has for us, His sons and daughters. It was because of the agape love of God for mankind, that He gave Jesus to die for us, and redeem us. Jesus gives a clear commandment that we must love one another in the same way that He loves us.⁵⁸ He defines love clearly, saying that there is no greater love than that which would cause a person to lay down their life for their friend. This was a revelation of His love for us.

Everything we do must be motivated by love. Love is not simply a characteristic of God – God *is* love! Everything He does is a manifestation of that character. When we operate in love, we are allowing Jesus to manifest His life through our actions. Part of the fruit of the Holy Spirit in us, is the agape love evident in the life of a believer. We may do the right religious things, but unless it comes from the motivation of agape love, we are nothing more than loud gongs and clanging cymbals; all noise, but little content.

God expects to see the outward manifestation of His love within our lives, which remains constant, regardless of the circumstances. Jesus said:

*'By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.'*⁵⁹

All our giving – whether financial, material or spiritual – must be motivated by that love.

⁵⁷ 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 (AMP)

⁵⁸ John 15:12

⁵⁹ John 13:35

An Eternal Perspective

The devil comes as a thief, to steal, kill and destroy, but Jesus came into the world to destroy the works of the devil, to save sinners, and to bring abundant, everlasting, eternal life.⁶⁰ Eternal life means knowing God, and that relationship is what Christianity is all about. While all our doctrines, principles and teachings have their place, eternal life is, above everything else, a deep, personal and intimate relationship with God the Father, and His Son, Jesus Christ. On salvation, your eternal life has already begun!

The teachings of Jesus in the gospels centre primarily on the fact that He has brought us into the Kingdom of God, with all the benefits and privileges, as well as the responsibilities, that go with being a citizen of the Kingdom. He shows us that the eternal things we have inherited as the sons of God, far outweigh the temporary, visible things of the natural world around us. That is why much of His teaching is about *priorities*:

*'But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.'*⁶¹

*'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.'*⁶²

We have the gift of eternal life, and with it come all things that pertain to life and godliness; all spiritual blessings in the heavenly realm, and all we need to live our lives here on earth too. What we have here, in the physical, earthly realm, is only temporary and insecure, whereas we have the ability to lay up treasures in the eternal, heavenly realm, which will not pass away. We can make deposits into an account in heaven that is both secure and guaranteed for eternity. That is surely the most secure investment we could ever dream of; the 'Bank of Heaven' will never fail or go into liquidation! What God has called us to, and given to us as our inheritance, is eternal, unchangeable, and incorruptible, and is awaiting our arrival in heaven where we will possess it.

⁶⁰ John 10:10

⁶¹ Matthew 6:33

⁶² Matthew 6:19-21

The Early Church

In the time of Jesus, Israel was occupied by the Romans. The Jews had rejected and crucified their Messiah and both they and the Romans continued to persecute the Christians. However, the greater the persecution, the more the gospel spread around the whole of the known world, creating even more disciples. The first Christians inherited the Old Testament teaching on charitable giving. Under the Old Testament, God had instigated laws to provide for the poor, and also blessings on those who gave to the poor:

*'Blessed are those who have regard for the weak; the LORD delivers them in times of trouble. The LORD protects and preserves them – they are counted among the blessed in the land – he does not give them over to the desire of their foes. The LORD sustains them on their sickbed and restores them from their bed of illness.'*⁶³

*'He who despises his neighbour sins [against God and his fellow man], but happy [blessed and favoured by God] is he who is gracious and merciful to the poor.'*⁶⁴

*'Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward them for what they have done.'*⁶⁵

*'The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor.'*⁶⁶

*'A sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous'.*⁶⁷

*'To the sinner he gives the task of gathering and storing up wealth to hand it over to the one who pleases God'.*⁶⁸

Not only are those who give to the poor blessed, but those who do not care for the poor end up reaping what they sowed. God promised that the wealth of the wicked, the sinner and the extortionist will one day be delivered into the hands of the just and righteous; those who are kind and generous to the poor.

The Principle of Community

One challenge for the early church was how to care for the needy Christians who were unable to provide for themselves. This situation resulted in the transfer of finances from one group of believers to another, over long distances, to be distributed fairly and equally among those who were in need. Paul the Apostle describes this in several of his letters. After the day of Pentecost, when they were filled with the Holy Spirit, the believers instinctively started giving:

'All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet

⁶³ Psalm 41:1-3

⁶⁴ Proverbs 14:21 (AMP)

⁶⁵ Proverbs 19:17

⁶⁶ Proverbs 22:9

⁶⁷ Proverbs 13:22

⁶⁸ Ecclesiastes 2:26

together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.⁶⁹

They had an agape love for one another, which caused them to live and operate together in unity.

A total transformation of our minds is needed for us to live continually in the truth that we have an eternal inheritance, which far surpasses the visible realm. Whatever we see around us is only temporary, while the unseen, spiritual realm is actually that which will last for ever. Having this mind-set continually will produce in us the ability to hold lightly anything in the physical realm because it will soon be past. Paul talks about time being short, so that those who buy and sell should live as if it were not theirs to keep.⁷⁰

Romans tells us that we need to present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, not to be conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds.⁷¹ A *body* presented to God as a living sacrifice will still have problems unless the *mind* is renewed, because the mind will be dictating what it wants to do. Equally, a renewed *mind* in a *body* not surrendered to God will be tormented by what the body continues to crave. Both mind *and* body need to be submitted to God.

When a person's mind and body are totally surrendered to God, they will have no problem obeying Him, holding lightly whatever they possess. With a proper view of time and eternity, they understand that whatever is in their possession is merely on loan to them. We have leasehold possession of things that God owns, and we all know it is easier to give away something that is not actually ours!

When a rich young man asked Jesus how he could inherit eternal life, Jesus told him to go, sell whatever he had and give it to the poor; then he would have treasure in heaven.⁷² The problem was not that he *had* possessions, but the fact that they were *his*, and he would not relinquish ownership of them. Truly it is harder for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God. The solution would be for the 'rich man' to surrender the ownership of his riches; to give them to God, and to become simply 'a man' and enter into life.

The important, eternal, issue is that God always remains the owner of all we *appear* to possess. It is like the child with his hand in a cookie jar, clinging tightly onto a single biscuit. His mother offers him a slice of freshly baked chocolate cake; something much better, but to take hold of the cake, he must let go of the cookie! How easy it is for us to be like that child – clinging onto minor things when God has so much more for us if only we would trust Him.

The first Christians didn't consider that anything they possessed was their own; they had all things in common. Nobody lacked, because those who owned houses or land sold them and gave the money to the disciples, who distributed it to everyone

⁶⁹ Acts 2:44-47

⁷⁰ 1 Corinthians 7:29-30

⁷¹ Romans 12:1-2

⁷² Matthew 19:16-22

according to their need. They also had a practical, daily, ministry to the widows, as some people felt that they were being neglected. This led to the institution of the office of deacon, to take care of and minister to such needs. The Church was growing dramatically and the problems of distributing finances and ensuring that the growing numbers of needs were met quickly, effectively, and without dispute, meant that they appointed several honest, well respected men, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom.⁷³

Family First

God wanted to see evidence of what the people claimed to be – descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. If they were truly the children of Abraham, as Jesus said, they would do the works of Abraham,⁷⁴ such as Isaiah lists:

‘[Rather] is this not the fast which I choose, to undo the bonds of wickedness, to tear to pieces the ropes of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free and break apart every [enslaving] yoke? Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into the house; when you see the naked, that you cover him, and not to hide yourself from [the needs of] your own flesh and blood?’⁷⁵

There’s a well-known saying; ‘charity begins at home’. The challenge is that it can be easier, and more self-gratifying, when we contemplate giving at a distance, even to the detriment of our own flesh and blood. Jesus told His disciples that they would be His witnesses in Jerusalem (where they were), Judea (the area around them), Samaria (a distance away), and the uttermost parts of the earth.⁷⁶

Sometimes it is easier to be a witness, to preach the gospel, or even give in practical ways, in the ‘uttermost parts of the world’ than it is to do so where we live – amongst those we know, and who know us. It may be easier to give to others, rather than to our own families; to turn a deaf ear to their cries for help, yet respond to those of strangers. We can easily be like the Levite priest in the parable of the Good Samaritan, walking by on the other side of the road, rather than getting involved.⁷⁷

The Bible, however, has a lot to say about making our family the priority. This New Testament instruction was written at a time of great persecution of the *whole* church, yet Paul emphasised the responsibility of providing for those closest to them:

‘If anyone fails to provide for his own, and especially for those of his own family, he has denied the faith [by disregarding its precepts] and is worse than an unbeliever [who fulfils his obligation in these matters].’⁷⁸

‘Children should not have to save up for their parents, but parents for their children.’⁷⁹

⁷³ Acts 6:3

⁷⁴ John 8:39

⁷⁵ Isaiah 58:6-7 (AMP)

⁷⁶ Acts 1:8

⁷⁷ Luke 10:25-37

⁷⁸ 1 Timothy 5:8 (AMP)

⁷⁹ 2 Corinthians 12:14

Here, Paul was explaining to the church at Corinth that it was his desire, as the one who preached the gospel to them when they first became Christians, to *give* to them not to *take* from them. It was his responsibility to care for and provide for them. Paul used the word ‘children’, implying immaturity – natural or spiritual. We would not expect a ten year old to be the material provider for their parents, but when that child is a forty-five year old adult, we should regard the matter somewhat differently. It would be inconsistent for God to command a man to support the widows, the fatherless and the poor, yet allow him to neglect his own elderly parents.

Jesus in fact, called that type of behaviour hypocritical. He reprimanded the Pharisees and Scribes, saying:

‘You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions! For Moses said, “Honour your father and mother,” and, “Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.” But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is Corban (that is, devoted to God) – then you no longer let them do anything for their father or mother. Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down.’⁸⁰

People could dedicate a certain amount of money to the temple, but in some cases, not actually part with the money, so if their elderly relatives asked for financial help, they could avoid doing so by claiming that it was already dedicated to God. However, God commanded that we should honour our father and mother. The word ‘honour’ implied respect, courtesy, and in the case of children, obedience; it involved caring for, and financially supporting them, when they were in need. In Biblical times, and still in many other societies, older people were afforded great respect, and were cared for throughout their later years by their children and grandchildren.

⁸⁰ Mark 7:9-13

Above and Beyond: Extra Giving

As well as giving a tithe to the Lord through the church, there are many other ways to increase our giving. Many churches and organisations run Christian coffee bars, youth groups or clubs, senior citizens activities, and ministries to the poor and the needy. These groups tend to be short of money and need our practical support.

In many cases, Christian bookshops have stayed open by a sheer miracle, financially speaking, but they have been there for us, many times, when we have needed to buy Bibles, books and other ministry resources. Often they have struggled to survive due to lack of support, yet are a tremendous service to believers, and also stand as a witness by their presence in the local community. Choosing to give them our custom whenever we can is an easy way of financially supporting such a ministry.

Most of us owe a debt of gratitude to a number of what are sometimes termed as 'para-church' ministries. We should consider financially supporting these as well as our local place of fellowship. If you wish to give scripturally, there are two useful questions to ask yourself:

1. Are they preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ effectively?
2. Are they ministering to the needs of the poor and destitute?

Many Christian organisations make appeals for money, and may well be honest and sincere in doing so, yet we must ask ourselves whether they are an effective Christian witness, whether they are preaching the Gospel, teaching the Word of God, and helping to build His Kingdom – are they delivering spiritual aid as well as humanitarian aid?

All of us are accustomed to seeing national and international charities with their High Street shops, and radio or television appeals. We meet workers trying to sign people up in our town centres or supermarkets – or even on our own doorsteps. If we don't want to give to these charities, then we should have the courage to just say 'no', or to explain; 'I already give to a number of charities', or 'I give to my local church'. Each person must decide his or her own priorities. This is not to be mean, but our resources should be concentrated in areas that are *godly* and not just *good*. We should be listening to the Holy Spirit, not just to our feelings, each time we make a decision to give. God requires *obedient* givers not *emotional* ones.

There are many men and women of God serving Him faithfully in the mission field. Many overseas ministries are served by their own national workers and ministers, whose cry for financial assistance goes unheard because they don't bombard us with media appeals. We need to pray, asking the Lord to open our eyes to see the suffering around us and throughout the harvest field across the world. Ask Him to enable us to do what we can to bring God's healing touch, words of comfort and provision into these situations.

Questions & Anomalies

These are some commonly asked questions regarding finance and giving:

Question: How eligible is a Christian charity or ministry to receive financial legacies?

Answer: Firstly, we have a responsibility to give financially to those in physical need, as well as to the Christian ministries and the local church which support and minister the Word of God in our lives – *while we are living*. Secondly, the evidence is clear that our priority must be to leave an inheritance to our children and children's children. Having said that, once we have left adequate provision to ensure that our families are not penniless and destitute, but instead, are blessed, then we are free to consider if there are others that the Lord would have us be a financial blessing to. This must only be *as well as*, not *instead of*, our natural heirs. Some charities and Christian ministries rely heavily on the kindness and generosity of those who have seen, experienced and appreciated their work during their lifetimes, and then bequeath a monetary gift for them in their will. There appears to be no Biblical mandate against doing this.

Question: What if an old lady, with no living relatives, wishes to leave the whole of her legacy to a church, ministry or other charity? Is that going against the declared will of God?

Answer: Under the New Covenant we are all family, all sons of God; Jesus said His mother, brothers and sisters were those who did the will of His Father. So, if for example, an elderly person has no family left, and a church or other Christian ministry has become their 'family, then leaving a legacy to this 'new covenant family' would appear to be scripturally acceptable.

Question: What if a multi-billionaire decides to leave his wealth to a church, ministry or other charity, rather than to his already independently, extravagantly rich, natural sons or daughters (with their wholehearted agreement, bearing in mind that any additional fortune would make little or no difference to them). Would that be going against the declared will of God?

Question: Must the person leaving an inheritance give a "double-portion" to the eldest son – as was the custom in Bible days?

Question: Do we leave a financial inheritance to our grandchildren by name, or does the legacy we leave to our children automatically include them?

Answer: From all the Biblical evidence – there appears to be no hard and fast rule concerning these three situations and one could, therefore, conclude that this could and should be handled at the discretion of the person concerned.

Part 9: Conclusion

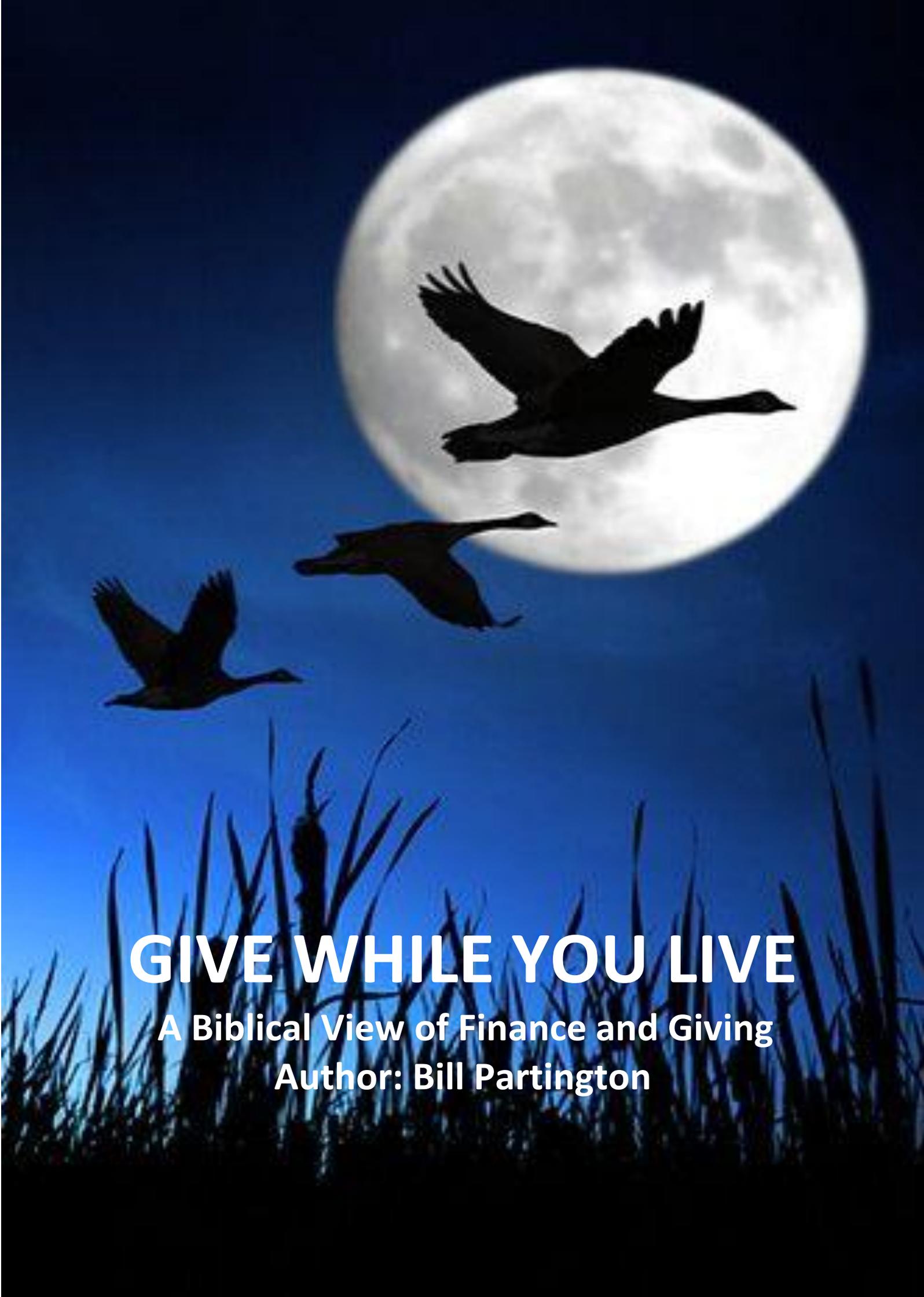
God has given us detailed instructions regarding material and financial provision; we are stewards of these things and are responsible for handling them in accordance with His Word.

While we are still resident on the earth, however, we are to use them not only for ourselves, but to minister to, and supply the needs of others; our family, the poor and needy, widows and orphans, as well as those who minister spiritually to us, through tithes, offerings and gifts. When we no longer need them, having transferred to our eternal destiny, we are to have made provision for them to pass to our heirs for their own use.

Most importantly, all of our giving must be motivated by, and overflowing from, a heart of love. The Bible reminds us:

'Let each one give [thoughtfully and with purpose] just as he has decided in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver [and delights in the one whose heart is in his gift].⁸¹

⁸¹ 2 Corinthians 9:7 (AMP)



GIVE WHILE YOU LIVE

A Biblical View of Finance and Giving

Author: Bill Partington