

“**Financing the Mission**” Part 2 10/21-28/07
Philippians 4:10-19

6 p.m.; 9 & 10:45 a.m.

OPEN to Philippians 4:10 (**PAGE** 1830)

INTRODUCTION

“A man called the church and asked if he could speak to the Head Hog at the Trough.

The Secretary said, ‘Who?’

The man replied, ‘I want to speak to the Head Hog at the Trough!’

Sure now that she had heard correctly, the secretary said, ‘Sir, if you mean our Pastor, you will have to treat him with more respect -- and ask for ‘The Pastor’ or ‘Pastor Bob.’ But certainly you cannot refer to him as the Head Hog at the Trough!’

At this, the man replied, ‘Oh, I see. Well, I have \$10,000 I was thinking about donating to the Building Fund.’

Secretary: ‘Hold the line -- I think the big pig just walked in the door.’”

Last week we began looking at Philippians 4 and saw two truths when it comes to financing the mission Jesus has given us:

I. We Give in the Context of Valued and Trusting Relationships (v. 10)

Paul and the people in the church at Philippi had a deep friendship with one another. They saw themselves as family and as partners in spreading *The Message* about Jesus.

II. We Give So That *The Message* Will Reach More People

(v. 15-16)

The Philippian church supported Paul financially as he went to areas where The Message had never been shared. In this way, they partnered with Paul in taking the message to unreached areas. Before we look at three more truths about giving, let’s read:

READ Philippians 4:10-19

III. When We Give, We Store Up Treasure for Ourselves in Heaven (v. 17)

Philippians 4:17 “**Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account.**”

Through Epaphroditus, the Philippians sent a financial gift to help Paul with his physical needs. This allowed Paul to devote more of his time to the ministry, and less to earning an income by making and repairing tents.

So, their giving is for a noble purpose, the expansion of God's kingdom on Earth.

When Paul says, in v. 17, "**Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account,**" he is setting forth a truth about giving:

When we give to God's purposes, we store up treasure *for ourselves* in Heaven.

Philippians 4:17 "Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account."

Let's look at a few other verses that talk about this same idea:

Matthew 6:19-20 **"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on Earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.**

20 But store up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal."

Paul expresses our giving to God's purposes as **"credit to your account."**

Here Jesus calls it **"storing up for yourselves treasure in Heaven."**

When we give to God and His purposes on Earth, it goes to His work here **and** is also sent ahead to Heaven.

Luke 12:33 **"Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in Heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys."**

Here, Jesus speaks of **giving to the poor**. This is one way of giving to God's purposes.

He says that when we do this, we are providing **heavenly treasure for ourselves**.

1 Timothy 6:17-19 **"Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.**

18 **Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.**

19 **In this way they will lay up treasure *for themselves* as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.**

Doing what is good, doing good for others, and being generous with physical possessions all contribute to our **treasures in Heaven**.

The picture here is that everything we give to God for His purposes on Earth is also stored in Heaven, awaiting our arrival.

So, what does this mean for us?

ILLUSTRATION

“Suppose your home is in the US and you’re working in Germany for three months, living in a hotel. You’re told that you can’t bring anything back to the U.S. on your flight home. But you can send the money you earn to your bank in Modesto.

“Would you fill your German hotel room with expensive furniture and paintings? Of course not. You’d have to leave it all behind.

“You would send your money where your home is. You would spend only what you needed on the temporary residence, sending your treasures ahead so they’d be waiting in the bank when you got home.

“Heaven is our home ... and this world is our temporary work residence.

“If we would let this reality sink in, it would forever change the way we think and live. We would stop laying up treasures in our earthly hotel rooms and start sending more ahead to our true home.” (Based on “*The Treasure Principle*,” Randy Alcorn, page 45)

Some people live in a very short-sighted way ... living and working and saving for the day of retirement, so they can then take life easy and enjoy. That is very short-sighted.

Now, we should save in order to provide for years when we cannot work (Proverbs 6:6-8).

But, we are not supposed to be living for retirement years; we are supposed to be living for Heaven.

You see, if we believe this, we will send as much as we responsibly can ahead to our eternal home.

Turn to Genesis 1 and we'll read the first verse. See the period at the end of the verse? That dot represents the length of this life. Now flip through the pages of the rest of the whole bible. That represents eternity. Do you want to make your greatest investments in the dot or this life, or in eternity?

So, what does this mean for us?

I found myself asking, "What will I do with treasure in Heaven? What is its purpose?"

In Matthew 25, we are told that we will give an accounting to God of how we invested what He entrusted to us. The treasure we sent ahead through giving to His Kingdom's work, will be there to give an account with. (Matthew 25:14-19)

God rewards us based upon how we invested what He entrusted to us. (Matthew 25:20-30)

III. When We Give, We Store Up Treasure for Ourselves in Heaven (v. 17)

IV. When We Give, We Are Giving to God (v. 18b)

Philippians 4:18 **"I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God."**

"... the financial gifts the Philippians sent to Paul were a **fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.**

"The words "**fragrant offering**" were used of OT (in the LXX) offerings that **pleased** God. It also was used in Ephesians 5:2 of Christ's offering of Himself." (BKC)

Since the mission we have been given is from God, our giving to fulfill the mission, is, actually, giving to God.

So, how do we go about financing the mission in a way that is pleasing to God?

Does God give us any direction for how to go about it?

Throughout the Bible, the primary method for supporting the work of God is giving the tithe.

A. We give God the tithe (“tenth” “10 percent”)

Giving the **tithe** to God began with **Abraham**. His grandson **Jacob** also tithed to God.

Later, when God was writing all the laws that would govern His people when they settle in the promised land and became the nation of Israel, He told them that He expected all of His people to give to Him a tithe, or a tenth, of all their income.

This was not the full extent of their giving, only a part.

God had a special purpose for the **tithe**. It is summarized in Malachi 3:10:

Malachi 3:10a: “Bring the **whole tithe** into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house.”

The **whole tithe** was always brought to “**the storehouse.**”

The storehouse was the tabernacle, later the Temple.

The **tithe** provided for the daily sacrifices to God, special offerings, and for the Levites who were permanently assigned by God to the work of the Temple as their full-time vocation.

Today, the equivalent to “**the storehouse**” is the **congregation** to which God has called you to grow and serve.

It is to **finance the mission** to which God has called us ... locally and to far-away places.

The **tithe** was communicated by God to His people before the Law was inscribed, was practiced during the period of the law, and Jesus affirmed it in Matthew 23:23.

So, it is the Biblical practice of God’s people for supporting God’s work.

In addition, when we look at other passages about financial giving in the NT, we see a much greater generosity than just the **tithe**.

So, for years, we have taught that giving the tithe through the congregation to which God has called you, is the starting place of Christian financial stewardship.

Many people in this church give the tithe and beyond.

In terms of applying this concept in this church family, the **tithe** is a key factor in setting the scope of our ministry locally and around the world.

In doing this *together* we are able to do things for the Lord that we would never be able to do as individuals.

*God's direction for financing His mission and ministry is through His people bringing the **tithe** and other offerings.*

One way that God gives to help us be consistent in giving to Him is to:

B. We give to God first

Proverbs 3:9 “**Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops.**”

“**First**” is pretty clear, making our offering to God the first priority ... first in rank before other things we do with money.

Why would God direct us to give like this?

Because He wants us to put Him and His mission first, by faith, and watch Him provide for us, beyond our expectations, with the 90% that is left.

V. When We Give, God Gives Back to Us (v. 19)

Philippians 4:19 “**And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.**”

God will meet *all* our needs!

Malachi 3:10: “**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 you will not have room enough for it.”**

God will always give us more than we give Him.

V. When We Give, God **PROMISES** to Give Back to Us

CONCLUSION

Next Weekend, Commitment Weekend.

Last week we sent a letter of explanation and a commitment card.

If you did not receive one, please take one from the information pouch / rack front of you.

Next week will be a glorious time of worship as we give ourselves and our financial commitments to the Lord.

“Father in Heaven, as I’ve trusted You with my soul for all eternity, I will trust You with finances. Thank You for Your promises to care for me as I give to You. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.
