

Habits of Fully Devoted Disciples

THE FIFTH HABIT - GIVING

Philippians 4:10-20

A. A disciple honors God by stewarding (managing) the time and treasures God has entrusted to them and giving a portion to support their local church and to build God's kingdom

B. Stewardship includes:

- 1. Our Talents:** God blessed us with spiritual gifts (last week)
- 2. Our Time:** our lifetime; it is non-refundable and not recyclable
- 3. Our Treasures:** All we have is a gift from God; we must manage it all wisely
- 4. Our Testimony:** The story God is writing in our life we can share

C. The hardest aspect of discipleship is stewarding our finances and calendar

THE REMITMENTS (WHY DON'T PEOPLE GIVE?)

A. ...Because they don't think the Bible requires it

"The Lord God took man and put him in the Garden of Eden to...take care of it." (Gen. 2:15)

B. ...Because they don't see the need

C. ...Because they are careless

- 1. Giving is not integrated into their lifestyle or budget**
- 2. This carelessness is often the result of poor training in their life**

D. ...Because there are circumstances they think prevent them from giving

- 1. Some people are in crisis for reasons beyond their control**
- 2. Other people are in crisis because of poor decisions or over-spending**

E. ...Because they are not a disciple

THE REASONS (WHY DO PEOPLE GIVE?)

A. ...Because giving to God is an act of worship

- 1. By bringing our first fruits, we worship the One who provides for all our needs**
- 2. So we give to God because we love him - as an act of our worship and gratitude**

"If God hasn't done anything for you, you don't need to give him anything at all..."

B. ...Because giving to God is an act of faith

- 1. In our giving, we receive; we always receive more than we give**

"Cast your bread upon the waters, for after many days you will find it again." (Eccl. 11:1)

- 2. It is impossible to out give God. Have you ever trusted God enough to try?**

C. ...Because giving to God promotes humility

- 1. Giving reminds us all we have belongs to God - not us**
- 2. Giving reminds us we don't deserve any of what we have**

D. ...Because giving is the antidote to materialism and self-centeredness

- 1. Give ten percent; save ten percent; and live on remaining eighty percent**
- 2. Of 120 waking hours, 10% for family; 10% for ministry; 40% for employment; 40% for the routines and responsibilities of life**

E. ...Because it all belongs to God

F. ...Because our giving stores up treasures in heaven

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for your selves treasures in heaven..."
(Matthew 6:19-21)

- 1. We can't take it with us...but we can send it ahead**
- 2. The sacrifices we make on earth will be rewarded a hundred times in heaven**
(Matthew 19:29)

G. ...Because - bottom line - a disciple is obedient

THE REWARDS (WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I GIVE?)

A. Lives are changed for Jesus

B. We have more time with Jesus

- 1. First, our prayers are answered.... (cf. Isaiah 58:6-10)**
- 2. Second, giving brings increased freedom**

C. Our life is filled with Joy

REFLECTION

A. The *Five Habits* picture a fully devoted disciple of Jesus' Christ

B. Fully devoted disciples are the building blocks of a fully devoted community

MEMORY VERSE:

"It was good of you to share in my troubles...no one shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving - except you only." (Philippians 4:14,15)

SOME QUESTIONS TO REFLECT ON:

- How does Jesus being Lord of your life impact your time?**
- How does Jesus being Lord of your life impact your use of money?**
- How are you sharing your time and money to support Park's ministry?**
- How are you sharing your time and money to build God's Kingdom?**
- How does your giving reflect the sacrifice of Jesus Christ?**