

HOW DOES GOD SEE OUR GIVING ?

Originally published in **BOARDWISE**, April 18, 2002, used by permission

“God makes it apparent that it is His business to watch us with intent interest to see what we do with the money He has entrusted to us. We are being tested and what we do with our money will influence the course of eternity.” Randy Alcorn

As a board member, most likely you are frequently asked to provide financial support and asked to get others to give to the organization(s) that you serve. Generally, you give to meet the budget, provide capital expansion or support a project of interest within the organization.

Have you ever taken a moment to consider how God sees your giving from His eternal perspective? In God’s eyes, giving is primarily a spiritual matter, an act of obedient worship. Do you acknowledge that God owns everything and has asked us to be managers of these possessions as stewards? Does your giving reflect God’s priority of growing faithful disciples and seeing you mature spiritually. Do you give joyfully and generously knowing that how you use your stuff on earth affects your souls eternal status.

Consider these six ways in which God views the use of possessions:

- 1) God provides you with possessions as a tool to bring others to Christ.** Wise stewards will assess all possessions entrusted to them to determine if they are being used wisely as tools on God’s behalf. Your car, your home, your clothes, your stocks, your collections: are you leveraging these possessions to glorify God? Who will greet you in heaven because they are there as the result of how you used possessions on earth as a tool to bring them into heaven? (Luke 16:9)
- 2) The stuff entrusted to you is a test of who is master and Lord of your life.** We cannot serve both God and money, and God knows our attitudes and our actions better than us. Is God or money in charge of your life? Can you provide

examples of how you use God's stuff to demonstrate that God's eternal kingdom is your highest priority. (Luke 16:1-9)

- 3) **Your use of possessions demonstrates how much responsibility you are worthy of assuming in heaven.** If God cannot trust you with small things on earth like your house, your belongings, your 401K, how can you be trusted with true riches in heaven that will last forever? Can you cite examples of how you use the possessions entrusted to you on earth as proof to God that you are capable of assuming truly important responsibilities in eternity. (Luke 16:10-12)
- 4) **Your giving is an opportunity to reciprocate God's grace.** Because God is overwhelmingly generous with His grace to us, we should likewise be generous with the stuff entrusted to us. Giving provides us with the opportunity to thank God for His kindness towards us, and as imitators of God we are called to follow Him in His generosity. What evidence is there that you are a faithful dispenser of God's grace? (1 Peter 4:10)
- 5) **God keeps track of how you use possessions to assess what honors or crowns you will earn in heaven.** Scripture points out that we will be rewarded in eternity according to what we do on earth and that there will be different levels of rewards in heaven (Prov. 24:11-12, Matt, 19:27-30, Luke 14:12-14). What have you done to earn crowns in heaven as a "good and faithful servant" in the use of possessions?
- 6) **How you use possessions indicates your trademark.** One of the most visible signs of our values is our stuff. As your neighbors, friends, or colleagues look at your life, what brand or trademark do they see? Is it clear from how you use your stuff that you value your home in heaven more than your stuff on earth? Try taking an inventory of all you have? Ask, "Am I using this room for God or myself?" What specific evidence is there from how you use possessions that your trademark is that of a Christian? (Luke 6:13)

The wise board member will understand how God sees our giving and use of possessions and, consequently, will make adjustments to align more closely with God's

eternal perspective. The next time you are asked to give or ask someone else to give, consider the God's eternal perspective and the vital link between your earthly possessions and your eternal soul.

Wesley K. Willmer, Ph.D., is Vice President for University Advancement and Professor at Biola University.