

# Money, Money, Money!

How many times have you heard people say, “the church is only after your money?”

**(Mike)** When I was younger, I became fidgety at the offering time and my bladder would say, “it’s time you and I take a walk!” After all, my hard-earned money was mine - **right?** I earned it and I could spend it as I liked - **right?** There were other times when I would put my loose change into the offering or I would just nod as if to say ‘pass-by-me’.

Over the years I have heard many reasons why people choose not to give some of their hard-earned cash into the offering bag.

**The most sensitive nerve in our bodies is the one that connects our head to our wallets!**

Maybe this is why people become uncomfortable or sceptical when money is being spoken about from the pulpit? Have I lost you already?

**The Bible has a lot to say about money and possessions.**

- Approximately 500 verses on prayer and 500 verses on faith.
- But there are 2,000 + verses on money and possessions.
- More is said in the NT about money and possessions than heaven and hell put together!

**Jesus talked a great deal about money and possessions.**

**According to Dr Ken Chant;**

- 16 of the 38 parables are about how to handle money and possessions.
- 1 out of 10 verses in the Gospels (288) deal with money and possessions.

*Matthew 6:19-21 NIV 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. 21: For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

*Haggai 1:1-11 NIV (background)*

- In 586 BC, the armies of Babylon had destroyed the Temple in Jerusalem – God’s house, the symbol of His presence.
- In 538 BC, King Cyrus announced that the Jews could return to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon and rebuild the Temple.
- But the Jews lost sight of God’s purpose to rebuild the Temple upon their return. A lack of interest and opposition brought the work to a stop.

*In the second year of King Darius, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest: <sup>2</sup> This is what the Lord Almighty*

says: “These people say, ‘The time has not yet come to rebuild the Lord’s house.’”<sup>3</sup> Then the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: (Haggai called the people back to what God wanted)<sup>4</sup> **“Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your panelled houses,** (the interior was fitted out or decorated with nice wooden panels most likely cedar) **while this house** (the Temple) **remains a ruin?”** (God questioned the people how they could live in luxury while His house lied in ruins? Instead of rebuilding the Temple; they put their energies into improving their lifestyle)

<sup>5</sup> Now this is what the Lord Almighty says: **“Give careful thought to your ways.** <sup>6</sup> You have planted much, but harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. **You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it.**” (We have all experienced this - wondering where our money has gone. We get our wages and it is as if it falls through the holes in our pockets)

<sup>7</sup> This is what the Lord Almighty says: **“Give careful thought to your ways.** (Then Haggai calls the people to action - urging the people to get back to doing God’s work - to get back on course)

<sup>8</sup> Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build my house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored,” says the Lord. <sup>9</sup> “You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?” declares the Lord Almighty. **“Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with your own house.”** (Through the ministry of Haggai and Zechariah, the temple was eventually rebuilt around 520-515 BC)

**BIG IDEA** As Christ followers, **God, and His purposes are to be our first priority when it comes to our money and possessions!**

*Matthew 6:33 NLT* He will give you all you need from day to day if you live for Him and make the **Kingdom of God your primary concern.**

## **Our motive for giving is more important to God than our money!**

- The way we give reveals our affection for the object or person who we give to.
- Our motive is more important than the gift!

**Our motive for giving should be in response to God’s generosity He has shown toward us.**

*John 3:16* For God so loved the world that He **gave** (generously) His one and only Son...

**God’s motive in giving Jesus to the human race was to make a way possible for mankind to come back into a relationship with their Creator.**

- God gave His best to achieve this purpose.

Remembering as a Christ follower, **God, and His purposes are to be our first priority when it comes to our money and possessions!**

*Matthew 6:33 NLT* He will give you all you need from day to day if you live for Him and make the **Kingdom of God your primary concern.**