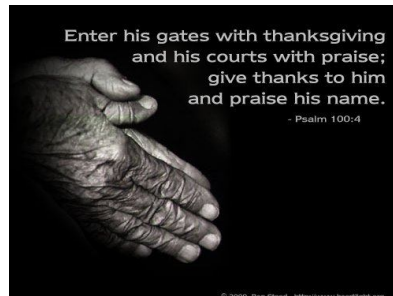


## Going Deeper: Reflection and Response

These inserts are provided as a way of enhancing and extending the learning process beyond Sunday mornings. They are produced regularly and can be downloaded from our website, where you can also engage in dialogue with others (see below for info).

### Consider the following Questions for Discussion...

- *What principles of giving from 2 Cor 8 & 9 do you wrestle with or disagree with the most? Which seems natural for you?*
- *With what else besides money are you generous?*
- *What do you think it means to have the spiritual gift of giving? Are there any downsides to this? How might a person grow in that gift?*
- *How does life-stage influence giving (or what can be given)?*
- *What are the tension points and the relationships between debt and generous living? (For example, should you go into debt to give towards a worthy cause)?*
- *To become more generous, what would have to change: Your job, time priorities, spending habits, mission, vision, or what?*
- *How is giving contagious? How does it reflect God's grace?*



### Food for Thought:

One of the greatest Christian writers and thinkers of the 20th Century was C.S. Lewis. Here are his reflections on giving:

*"Charity...is an essential part of Christian morality...I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare... If our charities do not at all pinch or hamper us, I should say they are too small. There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot do because our charitable expenditures exclude them."* (Mere Christianity)

### It's one of JRCC's CORE VALUES... 'Generous Living'

*"We commit to living as faithful stewards, willing to cheerfully share what we have with others. We listen to and depend on God in every circumstance with a humble spirit of gratitude. Generosity touches all aspects of our lives – our friendships, our service, our time, our gifts and abilities, and our material resources" (see the rest of our Core Values online at [www.jerichoridge.com/core\\_values.html](http://www.jerichoridge.com/core_values.html))*

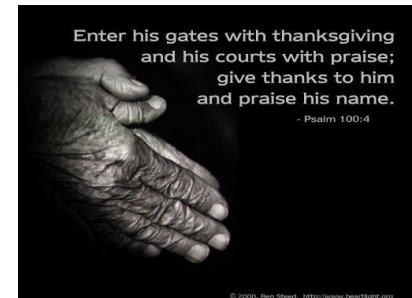
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## Going Deeper: Giving is a Key to Good Stewardship

Adapted from "Getting a Grip on Your Resources" Published by MB Stewardship Ministries (p. 29-30)

A godly budget needs to include a line for charitable donations. Giving is an investment in eternity. Giving back to God involves us in the work of God around the world. People's lives are changed by our investments in kingdom work. The Bible teaches that giving is both a privilege and opportunity - it is also a witness to the reality of our faith.

**Think about the following biblical principles as you decide how much to give:**

1. Giving is like planting seed. The more seed you plant, the greater the harvest you can expect ( 2 Corinthians 9:6-10)
2. Give with joy! God is not just concerned that we give, but also about our attitude and desire as we give (2 Cor 9:7 Deuteronomy 15:10-11)
3. Give as the Holy Spirit directs you. Remember that God supplies all of your needs: (Phil 4:19; Luke 6:38 Mark 11:23-26)
4. Give according to your ability ( Luke 12:48 ; 2 Corinthians 8:12)
5. We give to God alone - not so others will notice our generosity -(Matthew 6:3-4)

### Q&A on Giving...

**Q) I hear people use the word Tithe (I think they usually mean 10%)? Is that in the bible anywhere? Is it legalism or is it a challenge? Does the tithe apply today?**

**A)** The Bible speaks of giving 'off the top' or from the "first fruits". Look up Leviticus 23:9-14 and Proverbs 3:9-10 and ask: what would that look like in my situation today? As a general guideline, consider 'tithing' as a minimum when giving.

**Q) Where should I direct my giving?**

**A)** As a general guideline, start with ministries you know well and with which you already have a relationship.

1. Support your local church—You know and trust its leaders and they already are accountable to you. Your giving will be an extension of your personal involvement in your church's ministry. (JRCC also gives 11% of our budget away to mission work)
2. Support other Christian organizations with which you have contact—They may have ministered to you or they may employ friends whose ministry you wish to support.
3. Support other worthy Christian or secular charities—Remember that charities with which you are not personally familiar will require some diligent investigation.

**Q) How do assess if my giving is making a difference or being used appropriately?**

**A)** Consider the following criteria:

1. For Christian ministries, is the organization communicating the true Gospel?
2. Are people responding to the organization positively? Does its work change lives?
3. Does the organization have well defined goals? Is it reaching them? Can it explain those goals to you? Do they communicate forthrightly and regularly and avoid attempts at emotional manipulation?
4. Are the lives of those in leadership positions consistent with scriptural principles?
5. Is there a standard of excellence and financial responsibility? Are its overhead and budget allocations costs reasonable? Are they transparent in their dealings?
6. Does the organization have a good reputation in the Christian community?

**WEB Extras—For more on giving and healthy financial priorities (stewardship), check out:**

- "Talking about Money" - [www.mbherald.com/44/03/index.en.html](http://www.mbherald.com/44/03/index.en.html)

- "Getting a Grip" - [www.mbconf.ca/home/products\\_and\\_services/resources/financial\\_stewardship\\_training](http://www.mbconf.ca/home/products_and_services/resources/financial_stewardship_training)

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