

Sermon Discussion Guide **October 7, 2007**

Sermon Title: CHRIST'S PURPOSE FOR THE CHURCH, PART 8
THE ROLE OF FINANCIAL GIVING

Anchor Text: Luke 16:1-15

Big Idea: Everything you have has been given to you by God. How well do you manage those gifts and offer them back for His purposes within His body?

Approach: *getting learners interested/immersed in the topic*

1. What was your first job, and how much did it pay? What did you do with the money?
2. Have you ever caught yourself daydreaming about what you might do if you won the lottery? Just out of curiosity, what would you do?

Life Exploration: *helping learners relate the topic to their lives*

1. How would you know or recognize when you have an unhealthy and unbiblical concern about money?
2. What is the most common kind of frustration you face when making money decisions?
3. What is your typical approach to tithing and charitable giving? Do you plan for it? Worry about it? Avoid it? Do so only when asked? Look for the tax breaks? Other?

Bible Exploration: *helping learners build a bridge from their lives to the Scriptures*

1. After reading the parable in Luke 16, what character and heart attributes do you detect in the shrewd manager?
2. What do you think might have happened if the master had not discovered the waste being caused by the manager?
3. How do you think the master felt upon discovering the indiscretions of the manager?
4. What evidence do you see of self-protection on the part of the manager upon being discovered?
5. What appears to be the consequence for the master of the manager's self-protective measures in response to his being discovered?

6. The scripture offers two summarizing principles in regard to this parable.
 - a. The first is in v. 10-12. How would you describe it?
 - b. The second is in v. 13-14. How would you describe it?
7. What evidence do you see that Jesus was touching a 'sacred cow' when he gave this parable and its summarizing principles?

Heart Exploration: *helping learners build a bridge from the Scriptures to their hearts*

1. What role has money play in your life and faith journey?
2. In what ways do you think your heart attitudes could be similar to that of the shrewd manager?
3. What happens in your heart when a potential threat to your provision, livelihood and lifestyle occurs?
4. How does your relationship with money influence your tithing and the way you see your relationship with God?
5. What do you think God would need to do in your heart to mature you as a manager of that which He has given you?
6. What might it look like in your present circumstances to become a trustworthy manager of those things in your care? How might this be reflected in your tithing and giving?

Conclusion and Decision: *helping learners integrate the Scriptures into their lives this week*

1. As a result of this weeks study, what one thing do you sense God calling you to change about the way you deal with money?
2. As you look to the coming week and month, how might you begin responding differently to opportunities to tithe?