



Seven Lessons Learned from the Generosity of Jesus

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“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” John 13:34

Big Idea: Jesus fulfills the Old Testament law and invites followers to take hold of life in His abundant economy by exhibiting loving generosity to God, neighbor, and the poor.

Good news! Jesus fulfilled the entire law for us and gave us a new commandment: love! How does that relate to our handling of finances? Jesus modeled the way for us and gave us instructions that make no sense according to the economy of this world. That’s because He wants us to grasp life in God’s economy.

So how are we to handle God’s resources? Everything changes under grace. Life is rooted in abundance rather than scarcity. God, not money, solves all our problems. The video for this lesson summarizes seven Gospel themes on money. Those who grasp life in Jesus receive the greatest gift of all—the Holy Spirit—who produces the fruit of generosity in faithful stewards.

1. The Gift of Life in the Kingdom

Jesus is the generous giver of abundant life and the riches of the kingdom for all who seek Him first. This is good news for all, especially the poor (see Matthew 6:25–34; Luke 4:18–21; John 10:10).

2. The Invitation to Depend on God's Provision

Jesus instructs followers not to store up treasures on earth but to store them up in heaven. To live this way requires followers to depend on God for daily bread and everything else (see Matthew 6:9–13, 19–24).

3. The Instructions for Disciples Under Grace

Jesus never instructs disciples to tithe. He only mentions the tithe when cursing religious leaders for taking pride in tithing while failing to show justice, mercy, and faith. Conversely, He says to give to God what is God's (which is everything) so the only giving He celebrates is sacrificial giving motivated by love for God and care for our neighbor and the poor (see Matthew 23:23; Mark 12:13–17, 41–44).

I do not believe one can settle on how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. (C. S. Lewis)

4. The Report of the first Christ Followers

Materialism, greed, and covetousness hinder people from bearing fruit. The life Jesus offers is one hundred times better than the false security that money can buy. No wonder His followers give freely to underwrite fruitful mission (see Mark 4:1–20; 10:13–31; Luke 8:1–3).

5. The Paradox of Generosity

The teachings of Jesus are paradoxical: in letting go, we receive, and in grasping, we lose. Jesus says that faithful stewards put God's resources to work and are rich toward God, rather than holding them in fear as slaves to mammon (see Matthew 25:14–30; Luke 12:13–21; 16:1–13).

Our hearts have room for only one all-embracing devotion, and we can only cleave to one Lord. Every competitor to that devotion must be hated. As Jesus says, there is no alternative—either we love God or we hate him. We are confronted by an “either-or”; either we love God, or we love earthly goods. (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

6. The Assessment Paradigm of Jesus

Jesus instructs disciples to handle money differently from the world and to care for those that society deems not worthy of care. In so doing, disciples live out the gospel, show their true faith, and gain heavenly reward (see Matthew 25:31–46; Luke 12:32–34).

7. The Promise of the Holy Spirit

Jesus promised His disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit—the greatest treasure. This gift is for all who believe (see John 14:15–17).