



## Giving Well

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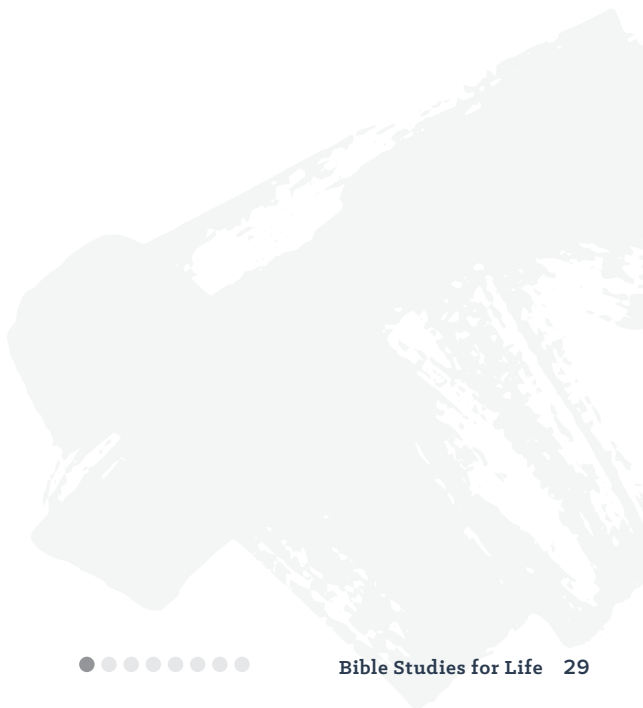
HOW CAN  
WE GIVE  
SACRIFICIALLY  
IN OUR LIVES?

## The POINT >

Sacrificial giving is an act of worship.

### > MARK 12:41-44

<sup>41</sup>And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. <sup>42</sup>And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. <sup>43</sup>And he called his disciples to him and said to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. <sup>44</sup>For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."





# THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

## **FACT:**

Speaking of tax, Peter the Great established a beard tax in Russia. Men were allowed to keep their facial hair if they paid a certain amount each year.<sup>1</sup>



## **LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // JESUS**

When it comes to giving, Jesus values the intent and heart of the giver while the world focuses on the amount and worth.

Giving—it seems like an easy word, but do we really understand what it means? Students may buy birthday presents for friends, an iced drink on the way home from school, and a gift for their moms on Mother’s Day. It seems that what determines “giving” compared to an “obligatory payment” (like paying sales tax on a gift) depends more on the motivation than the situation. When we’re motivated to give sacrificially because we want to bless someone else, that’s truly giving. Can this be in the smallest of details, such as giving a little bit extra for a tip? It’s possible.

In the passage today, we will explore the true meaning of giving and what Jesus expects and values. We’ll see that the way the world views giving is drastically different from what Jesus had in mind. Our world sends constant messages of more, more, and more. We are driven to think in these terms. More stuff, better clothes, and a nicer car are just some examples. Sometimes, according to Jesus, less is more.

## **MARK 12:41-42**

**1** How would a worldly perspective likely view the wealthy people and the widow in this passage?

**2** Why is it essential to examine our own perspective about the wealthy people and the widow to see if it aligns with that of the world?

## MARK 12:43

**3** How did Jesus view the poor widow's gift?

**4** As we see in this passage, what is the difference between a worldly perspective and a Christlike perspective?

**5** What can we learn about our own value and purpose from this passage?

*Our own value and worth are not decided by our worldly success but by the work of Christ and our surrender to Him.  
#BSFLStudentsHowtoLiveWell*



## MARK 12:44

**6** What can we assume about the true priorities of someone who gives to the Lord out of his or her abundance?

**7** What can we assume about the true priorities of someone who gives sacrificially?

**8** How can this passage shape our thoughts about giving?



# LIVE IT OUT

## LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // JESUS

*When it comes to giving, Jesus values the intent and heart of the giver while the world focuses on the amount and worth.*

We live in a society that often promotes the idea of “more and better.” Students are constantly exposed to messages encouraging them to get the latest phone, a nicer car, and more. It’s important to remind them that from a kingdom perspective, it is better to give than to receive. Additionally, our possessions do not guarantee happiness. Jesus offers something much greater—His peace and presence.

## >CHRIST

**9** What perspective of Christ was revealed in this passage (Mark 12:41-44)?

**10** How can adopting a perspective similar to Christ’s influence your own thoughts and actions?

GOD

**JESUS**

HOLY SPIRIT

BIBLE

SALVATION

CREATION

CHURCH

PEOPLE

FAMILY

COMMUNITY  
& WORLD

## > COMMUNITY

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**11** How can our giving affect those around us?



**12** What can we imply from this passage about our reason for giving?

## > CULTURE

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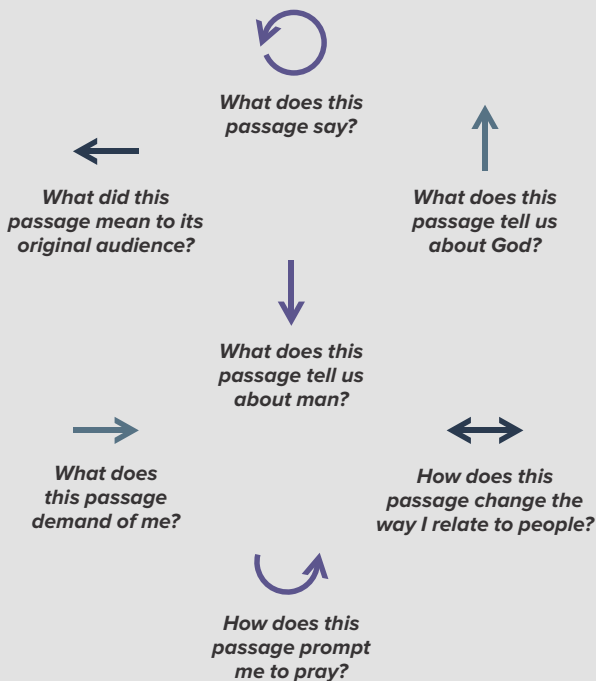
**13** How could someone's giving reflect a cultural or biblical perspective?

**14** How could a shift from a cultural to a biblical or Christlike perspective influence our beliefs and actions?

# DAILY DEVOTIONS



## The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



## Day One

### 2 CORINTHIANS 9:7

We know that giving is important, both as an offering at our local church and to others in need. According to this verse, the amount given is not nearly as important as the motive. The amount, Paul says, must be decided in the heart. God does not dictate a certain amount we should give, but through the Spirit, He molds and speaks to our hearts. Our hearts are being molded to think and prioritize in a Christlike way, which will cause us to give freely because of our love for Him.

God is concerned with our motives. We should give cheerfully, not reluctantly or under compulsion. If we view our money as God's money on loan to us and see our lives as not our own but surrendered to His lordship, we no longer need to tightly grasp "our" money to ensure we have all we want and desire. It all belongs to Him!

- **How does 2 Corinthians 9:7 challenge you to think differently about giving?**
- **What must happen before you can truly give cheerfully and not from feeling pressured to give?**

## Day Two

# PROVERBS 3:9-10

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Is this passage telling us that if we give our money to the Lord, He will make us wealthy? Well, if that's the case, we should give Him our money so that He makes us rich, right? There is truth to be discovered in this passage, but it does not encourage a self-centered motive for giving. The truth here is not that we should give so that He will give to us. We must look at this passage with a Christ-centered perspective to see the valuable truth in it.

We should give to honor the Lord. By honoring the Lord, we are professing our faith in Him and His goodness. We are to give the best we have because we love Him and believe He is worthy of our gifts and money. When we value and honor Him in this way, He will take care of us.

- **How could this passage potentially be misunderstood?**
- **When interpreted correctly, what truth and instruction do these verses provide?**

## Day Three

# MATTHEW 6:19-21

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What does it look like to “store up for yourselves treasures on earth” and “store up for yourselves treasures in heaven” (vv. 19-20, CSB)? These questions are essential to understand how to follow Jesus’ advice. When I imagine gathering treasures on earth, I picture a nice house, a fancy car, expensive jewelry, dream vacations, and a huge savings account. If these are our treasures, this is also where our heart is; we love and pursue what we treasure.

However, treasures in heaven are God centered and kingdom focused. This involves the pursuit of becoming more like Him and willingly sharing His gospel and love with those we encounter daily. If our treasure is heavenly and centered on God, then our heart is focused on loving and pursuing Christ. Jesus is telling us not to focus on gathering earthly treasures but to simply focus on Him.

- **Our treasure is what we truly love. How do your thoughts and actions reveal your true treasure?**
- **Why does Jesus instruct us not to be concerned with earthly treasures, and what does this imply about His perspective?**

## Day Four

# ACTS 20:35

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How can it be true that it's more blessed to give than receive? Consider the excitement before a birthday or Christmas when you anticipate receiving gifts. How could it possibly be more blessed, or better off, to give than to receive these gifts?

The word *blessed* may help us understand. If we begin to see things as God does, we will also begin to see that blessings are not so much physical or materialistic but spiritual. In the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, Jesus flips our understanding of being blessed by stating that those who are poor in spirit, who mourn, who are humble, and who are persecuted are blessed. In the same way, those who seek Christ and give sacrificially for His sake are spiritually blessed to have joy and life in Him.

- **How does our world view blessings differently than God does?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **How can you be more blessed to give than to receive?**

## Day Five

# 1 TIMOTHY 6:17-19

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In today's passage, Paul challenges us to hope or trust in the Lord and not our riches. If we hope in our riches, we can start to believe that we can gain enough money to live comfortably and care for ourselves. This hope in ourselves and our riches can ultimately lead to stress, worry, and fear. It can cause us to obtain, secure, and store up as much money as possible to keep for ourselves.

Instead, we are to put our hope and our confidence in the Lord and His provision. As we trust in Him, He richly provides all we need for our enjoyment. This enjoyment is found in and through Christ and not the fleshly desires we are tempted to view as bringing joy. Instead of focusing on securing riches, we should focus on being rich in good works and giving generously.

- **How might God's provision for our enjoyment look different than the world's pursuit of joy?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **How can you shift your pursuit of joy through material riches to joy in Christ?**