

Let's review last week's question?

If you got \$ 1000 you didn't expect, how would you divide it?

Folks with a tithing mind-set would give God 10% or less, and then use the rest as they decide. But folks practicing grace giving that I will talk about today, **would do the following:**

Grace giving

1. **Ignore** their current circumstances.
2. **Accept** Jesus owns this \$ 1000.
3. **Ask Him how much** He will "keep" in His Kingdom.
4. **Obey** Him.

The mechanical tithing approach, doesn't allow us to hear God because after giving Him 10% or less we believe we have satisfied our duty. Yet, 100% is His, and He may ask us to give it all to His work. Did you get that? God may want 100% of this extra \$ 1000. After all, He gave you, and He may be testing you! Let's stop practicing the selfish North American-style Christianity that gives to get, focuses on "me", and "my circumstances", and is deaf when God talks about the "remaining" 90%!

Let's ask Jesus to break our hearts for the lost so we may see and hear Him as He tells us where to direct His funds. As well, let's ask Him to help us live Chris-centered lives.

The three tithes totaling 23.3% of agricultural produce and livestock we discussed last time do not apply under the New Covenant.

Under the New Covenant, giving to God flows from each person's relationship with Christ. We see examples of this practice of grace giving in the early church in Acts 2:41-47 and Acts 4:35 to Acts 5:24.

I call this grace giving, "keeping", because it accepts God's ownership of everything and the need for me to seek His permission before spending. I describe keeping as follows:

"Keeping"

"Keeping" aims to maximize funds Jesus keeps for His work and minimize amounts we use. We achieve it by:

1. **Surrendering every area of our lives to Jesus.**
2. **Applying His ownership and our stewardship to our possessions.**
3. **Praying continually to seek Jesus' allocation of funds.**
4. **Obeying His direction**

**Presentation to 100 Huntley Street
March 16: "Keeping": A life Surrendered To Jesus**

Jesus' comments to the Rich Young Ruler in Matthew 19:16-30 to give everything away to follow Him, describes "keeping" perfectly. We can summarize the essence of Jesus' message as follows:

Loosen your grip on possessions, open your palms, and present everything to Jesus, so He decides what He should "keep" in His Kingdom, and what you should use.

Develop the mind-set all funds you get go to God's bank account. Pray continually; ask Jesus how to divide His possessions you manage. Don't wait until Sunday or when some organization asks for funds. Invest time with God to learn His way to share His funds.

In 2 Corinthians 8:1-7, we see the Macedonian church practicing "keeping" as follows:

Excerpts from 2 Corinthians 8:1-7

1. They gave themselves first to the Lord - 2 Cor 8:5
2. They saw this as a privilege - 2 Cor 8:4
3. They gave on their own, beyond their ability - 2 Cor 8:3
4. They gave joyfully, out of their poverty - 2 Cor 8:2

Then again, 2 Corinthians 9:7 shows the hilarious giver's portrait.

2 Corinthians 9:7

Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

Elsewhere in the New Testament, we see "keeping" practiced by Zaccheus after His conversion in Luke 19:1-10, and the widow who gave all in Luke 19: 41-44. Search God's Word this week; ask Him to show you how to practice keeping.

Next time we look at funding the Great Commission.
God bless and remember Jesus loves you.