

REDISCOVER JESUS, PART 77: "THE WIDOW'S SACRIFICIAL GIFT"

LUKE 21:1-4

Ps. Jeff Susila

Personal Introduction

Hi everyone. If you don't know me, I'm Jeff - one of the pastors at HMCC of Jakarta. And it's my privilege to be preaching the Word of God for us today.

Sermon Series Introduction

We're currently in Part 77 of our sermon series called "Rediscover Jesus," where we're going through the Gospel of Luke together.

Before we get started, let me pray for us again...

Sermon Introduction

Years ago, when I was in middle school... Each year, my school would have a fundraiser to help raise money for the school and its programs.

- What we did was that each student was asked to sell cookie dough. It was quite simple. Sell cookie dough and the money would go to the school.

In order to motivate the students, there are prizes that you can earn depending on how much money you've raised.

- I think it ranged from a keychain to an iPod.
- AND the top 3 sellers would be recognized during a school assembly.
- AND the top seller's class would get a pizza party.

So you can imagine that my friends and I all had different motivations to raise money for the school.

- Maybe some of us actually just wanted to help the school.
- Some of us just wanted an iPod.
- Some of us wanted to be recognized in front of the other students.
- Some of us wanted to bring victory to our classroom by getting that pizza party.

So a month later... when we're all submitting the money that we've fundraised, we all had different reasons and motivations in our hearts for our giving.

- And I don't think that mattered to the school that much; they just needed the money and the funding.

But... that's not how God is like... In today's passage, Jesus teaches his disciples that our heart and motivation does matter, and that he actually values the heart and the motivation behind our giving MORE than the mere size of our gifts...

The One Thing

***Jesus values the heart behind our giving
MORE than the mere size of our gifts.***

Scripture Introduction

If you have your Bibles with you, please turn to Luke 21:1-4.

We're in the last week of Jesus' ministry on Earth before his crucifixion. And Jesus was teaching at the temple when he was confronted by the religious leaders who tried to discredit him. But what ended up happening instead was that they were left marveled by Jesus' response to them.

In the previous passage, Jesus had just warned his disciples to beware of the Scribes. Beware of their hypocrisy. Beware of their false devotion.

- The Scribes were Jewish religious leaders, masters of the Law, who were supposed to teach and lead God's people to greater devotion to God.
- But instead, they cared more about themselves. They loved being honored more than honoring God.
 - They loved walking in long robes, sitting at the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts (so that they may be honored by others).
 - All while they actually devoured widow's houses (taking advantage of such a vulnerable group of people for their own benefit).
- They're hypocrites! Jesus warned his disciples that such people will receive the greater condemnation.

Their actions do not show true devotion to God, they're actually devoted to themselves.

It's no coincidence that immediately after condemning them, Jesus now turns his attention to this poor widow who, unlike the Scribes, is showing true devotion to God... through her giving...

Scripture Reading

Let's read Luke 21:1-4.

¹ Jesus looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the offering box, ² and he saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. ³ And he said, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. ⁴ For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

This is God's Word.

Overview

- I. Jesus sees our giving (vv. 1-2)
- II. Jesus values the heart behind our giving (vv. 3-4)
 - a. What does our giving reveal about our hearts?
 - b. How should we give?

Just a heads-up, we'll spend more of our time today on the second point, where we'll also answer two important questions: What does our giving reveal about our hearts? And how should we give?

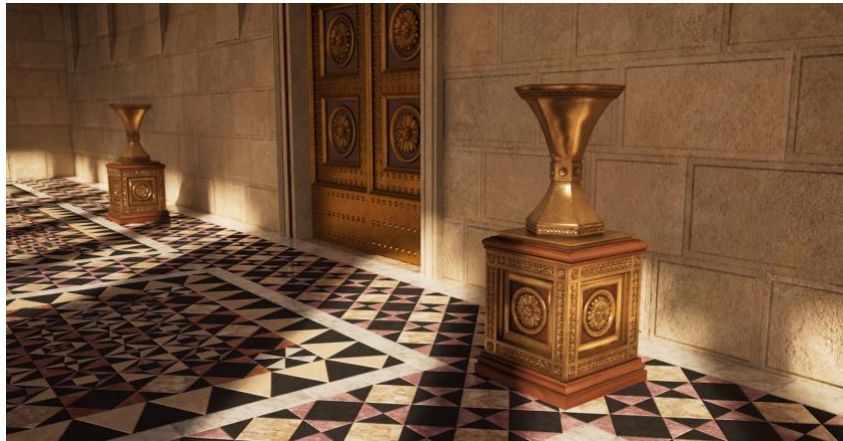
I. Jesus sees our giving (vv. 1-2)

As Jesus was still at the temple in Jerusalem, he looked and saw the people putting their gifts into the temple's offering box.

- And he observed two groups of people who were living at the extreme ends of the spectrum:
 - There were the rich, who were able to give a lot of money... and there was a poor widow who's only able to give a little...

Now, if we take a step back... during that time in history, paper money hasn't been invented yet. So what the people had were coins made of precious metal like gold, silver, bronze, and copper.

- And there's no such thing as digital bank transfer yet. So in order to give your offering, you'd have to physically bring your coins to the temple.



And how the temple was set up was that there were 13 offering boxes placed around the courtyard. And they're set up in this way so that the people could voluntarily give their offerings to various temple ministries (depending on which box you put your offering in... because the boxes would be labeled).

- And each box would be made of wood, except for the opening of the box, which was made of bronze and is shaped like a funnel (or a trumpet).
- So as people were putting their offerings into these offering boxes, you'd be able to hear the sound of metal hitting metal, as the coins went inside, "clink, clink, clink."

So the way it's set up, giving was kind of a public act during that time. And you could kind of know how much people were giving.

<pause>

Now, look at verse 1 - As Jesus observed the rich putting in their gifts (and we know from the parallel account in Mark that they're putting in large sums of money), you can imagine hearing all of their coins going into the box as they're unloading their purses, "CLINK, CLINK, CLINK, CLINK!"

On the other hand - look at verse 2 - Jesus saw a poor widow putting 2 small copper coins into the offering box. And you can imagine that it wouldn't make much noise, "clink... clink..."

These 2 small copper coins that the poor widow gave, which was 2 lepta, was the equivalent of about 1/64 of a day's wage for a worker.

- So if we consider that, in Jakarta/Tangerang, the minimum wage is about 5 million Rupiah per month, then that means that 1 day's wage would be about 250,000 Rupiah. So 1/64 would be about 4,000 Rupiah; it's not a lot of money.
 - Imagine that that's all you have...
- This was all the poor widow had. And she gave it all to the Lord.

And even though no one else might've seen her giving, and even though no one else might've given her much thought or recognition for the small amount that she gave... Jesus saw. Her Lord saw her giving...

And God also sees your giving. So no matter how big or small your giving is... even when it's done in secret (even when no one else sees or gives you recognition for your giving), God sees you. He sees the gifts and offerings that you've given to Him.

<pause>

Now, for some of us today, that reminder - that God sees our giving - may be reassuring and encouraging, as we're reminded that he values our giving. But perhaps for some of us, the thought makes us feel a bit uneasy... especially if we haven't been giving.

For the Jewish people during that time... they were expected to give a portion of their income as part of their worship to the Lord. And this practice is to be a reminder that ALL that they have (including their remaining resources) actually belonged to God. They were only stewards of God's money and resources. So as a reminder, a portion was given back to God to thank Him for His generous provision.

Now, how about us today? Are we showing our thankfulness to God with our giving?

- And do we see our money and possessions as something that fully belongs to God... or do we see them as something that fully belongs to us?
- Because how we view what we have will affect our willingness to give.
 - For some of us, maybe we feel like we don't have to give to God because we think that our money is our own... earned by our own skills and hard work. And so we can do with it as we please.
 - (But we forget that it's God who has generously provided us with our skills and talents, and it's God who has provided us with our money and all that we have in the first place).
 - Or maybe we do have the desire to give, but we'd like to wait until we have more resources before we start giving... because we currently need the money. So we may be saving up more and more money right now, waiting until just the right time to give.
 - (But if you won't give now, then you'll probably won't give later. Because there will always be a personal need that'll come up in the future).
 - (And so maybe we forget that even if we give what we have now, God will continue to generously provide us with what we truly need).
 - Or maybe, for some of us, we question whether or not our giving would even make an impact in the world (we question if our giving would even matter), and so what ends up happening is that we're just holding on to it.
 - (But we forget that nothing we do enthusiastically for the Lord will ever be in vain. Our giving can be used by God to do great things, even more than we can imagine. Just look at the impact of this poor widow's 2 small copper coins; it's so big that we're still talking about it today in 2024!).

From these first 2 verses, we see that everyone is giving something. Both the rich and the poor are at the temple giving to God. Nobody seems to be holding on to their money too tightly. The rich are giving large sums of money to God, and the poor widow is giving all she has to God.

- Based on this observation, "not giving" doesn't seem to be an option!
- We're all to give to God.

But as humans, our tendency is to not think about God and His purposes... but to think of ourselves. And that can lead to us justifying ourselves... justifying why we don't have to give, and why we should be able to keep all that we have.

And to be honest, it's not easy! It's difficult for us to give at times because, in general, we like money! Because of what money can do for us and what it represents. For some of us...

- Money represents value or worth. More money means that we're more worthy or more valuable or more desirable.
- Money represents power. More money means that we have the power to do whatever we want.
- Money represents security. More money means that our future is safe and secure.

- Money represents pleasure. More money means that we can enjoy more of the things that we like and gives us pleasure.
- Or perhaps it means something else to you...

But whatever it means to you, it can lead us to hold on to our money tightly. Which can lead to no giving.

But today, we're reminded that "not giving" doesn't seem to be an option here for followers of Christ... No matter how much we have, we're to give what we have to God.

So first, we're reminded that Jesus sees our giving.

- And next, Jesus reminds us that he not only sees what we give, but also the heart behind what we give...

II. Jesus values the heart of our giving (vv. 3-4)

After Jesus saw the rich giving large sums of money to the temple, and after he saw the poor widow giving her 2 small copper coins... we know from the parallel account in Mark that Jesus called over his disciples.

Look at verse 3 - Jesus tells his disciples that "this poor widow has put in more than all of them."

- MORE than ALL of them. More than what ALL the rich people gave combined!
- That must've been shocking for the disciples to hear! Even shocking for us to hear now. Because how can that be true?
 - Objectively speaking, the rich - combined - must've given hundreds or thousands of coins equalling to days and weeks - possibly even months - of a worker's wage!
 - While the widow only gave 2 copper coins worth only 1/64 of a day's wage (that's only about 1.5% of a day's wage).
 - So what did Jesus mean that she gave more?
 - Because in terms of quantity and monetary value, she clearly did not! Based on the world's view - our view - the rich gave more.

Look at verse 4 - Jesus then gave his view and reasoning... the poor widow gave MORE than all of the rich people because... "they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

Jesus values the heart behind our giving MORE than the mere size of our gifts.

- The rich might've given more money in terms of quantity and monetary value, but not in terms of sacrifice.
 - So even though they gave large sums of money, it was only a small portion of the total amount of money that they had.
 - And so even though it was large sums of money... their giving didn't really cost them anything.
- While, in comparison, the poor widow only had 2 small copper coins and gave a greater proportion than them because she sacrificially gave all that she had.
 - And as a widow, she had no husband to help support her financially. And she possibly had no children to support her financially either. Yet she still generously gave all (that she had to live on) to God's temple.
 - 2 small copper coins... 1.5% of a day's wage, but 100% of what she had. Isn't that amazing?

So this is Jesus' view on giving: Jesus values the heart behind the giving more than the mere size of the gift itself...

<pause>

This leads me to a question... Why is the heart behind our giving so important to Jesus?

And why was it so important for Jesus to tell his disciples - at this time - that the heart behind their giving is counted more than the size of their gifts?

Remember what just happened immediately before this... Jesus had just warned his disciples to beware of the Scribes who were hypocrites! Their actions do not show true devotion to God, they're actually devoted to themselves.

It's no coincidence that immediately after condemning them, Jesus now turns his attention to this poor widow who, unlike the Scribes, is showing true devotion to God... through her giving...

So this is why the heart behind the poor widow's gift is so important to Jesus: Because the heart behind her sacrificial giving reveals true devotion to God.

True devotion to God means to love God with all of our hearts (Luke 10:27). And our giving reveals what we're truly devoted to because our giving is like a window to our hearts.

<pause>

What does our giving reveal about our hearts?

- (1) What we truly love.
- (2) Who our faith is truly in.
- (3) Where our hope truly is.

I'll share 3 things that our giving reveals about what's in our hearts:

- (1) What we truly love.
- (2) Who our faith is truly in.
- (3) Where our hope truly is.

Let's take a look at each of these 3 things...

First, what does your giving reveal about what you truly love?

- For the poor widow... unlike the Scribes in the previous passage... she did not do what she did in order to be honored and praised.
 - She won't receive much honor and praise from the people through giving 2 small copper coins.
- But her... giving all that she had shows how serious her devotion to God is, and how much she loved her God.
 - This is what God desires. He desires her heart.
 - God desires YOUR heart...
 - God doesn't actually need your money. He already owns the entire world, the entire universe, the Heavens and the Earth! He doesn't need your money.
 - What He desires is your heart.
- And this poor widow gave God her entire heart. Now, she didn't have much. She's struggling financially and only has 2 small copper coins. But this poor widow gave it all to the Lord at a great cost to herself.
 - What does her sacrificial giving say to God? Her offering - is like a love letter to God, saying, "God, I love you. You mean so much to me. This is all that I have and it's yours."

- Just like a young child giving his parents a drawing that he made with all of his heart, time, and effort. It may not look like art that belongs in a museum. And his parents don't actually need that drawing. They probably have other things that are worth so much more than that piece of paper. But why is it treasured and valued? Because it's an act that says, "Mom... Dad... I love you. You're worth my time and effort"
 - And that's why God values our sacrificial giving and the heart behind our gifts. It's evidence of our love for Him.
- But imagine if the drawing is made in 5 seconds without much thought. Would it be just as valuable?
 - I'm sure his parents would still value and appreciate his drawing, but they would see that the previous drawing is MORE valuable because of what it costs their child to make it...

This is why Jesus values the heart and the sacrifice behind our giving...

- Because giving to God out of our abundance costs little.
- But giving to God sacrificially costs A LOT... and means a lot.

So what does your giving say about the love you have for God?

- What does the thought, motivation, and effort behind your giving say about your love for God?

Second, what does your giving reveal about who your faith is truly in?

- Notice how the poor widow did not wait till she had more until she started giving; she did not choose to keep 1 coin for herself, though she could have, but... she gave all that she had at that moment to the Lord.
 - Even though, perhaps she may not be sure where her next meal will come from.
- Now what does that say about her faith in the God whom she loves?
 - It shows that she truly believes and trusts that God will provide for her.
 - That He will provide her with her daily bread.
 - She may not know where it'll come from and what she'll eat, but she trusts that God will provide.
- And what does her giving and her faith say about her God?
 - That her God is big! That He's worthy of her trust; that He's indeed a faithful God. That He'll provide her with all her needs.
 - That He even provides clothes for the lilies of the field, and feeds the birds of the air... so how much more will He provide for her? (Matt. 6:26-30).
 - She believes that her God is so big and is capable of big things!
- So how about you? What does your giving reveal about the size of your faith and the size of your God?
 - If you have a small view of God, then you won't be inclined to give... because you'll question whether or not He will provide for you if you actually give him everything.
 - And if your view of God is small, then perhaps that also increases your view of yourself, and you'll think that you need to provide everything for yourself.
 - Or perhaps you do trust that God will provide, but you question if He'll provide you with enough.
 - And so you feel like you need to collect all the money and resources that you can get so that you can provide for yourself (and maybe even for your family).

But if you believe that God is big, that He is faithful, and that He will provide for you, then you would be more inclined to give.

- What does your giving reveal about your faith? What does it reveal about how big your God is?

Third, what does your giving reveal about where your hope truly is?

- Does our giving show that our hope is in the eternal life to come? Or are we holding on to our money and possessions as if this life on Earth is all there is to it?

Matthew 6:19-21 say this:

¹⁹ “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. And I think that it’s also true to say that where your treasure is, there your hope will be also...

- This poor widow held on to what she had very loosely.
- She gave all that she had, because she knows that there’s more to life than the 2 copper coins that she has.
 - I believe this shows that her hope is not in what she currently has, but in what she will have in the eternal life to come.
- So I wonder, what do you have? What are your 2 copper coins? And are you holding on to what you have tightly or loosely? And what does that reveal about where your hope lies? Is it placed in the temporary “now” or in the eternal future that’s promised?

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Again, Jesus is highlighting the poor widow’s sacrificial giving because of what it reveals about her true devotion to God.

And Jesus is challenging us (whether we’re rich or poor or somewhere in the middle)... Jesus is challenging us to sacrificially give what we have to God as an act of love and worship to Him.

- Because through our sacrificial giving, what becomes evident is what’s truly in our hearts: what we truly love, who our faith is truly in, and where our hope truly is.

And what’s amazing is that Jesus is not challenging us to do something that he hasn’t already done himself. Because no one has sacrificed more than Jesus has!

- The verses that we’re reading today actually take place the week before Jesus’ crucifixion, where he would die on the cross for the sins of man.

Last week, we learned that Jesus is not merely the son of David. He is not merely human, but he is fully human AND fully God!

2 Corinthians 8:9 say this:

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.

God the Son left his heavenly throne, and he sacrificed his riches for our sake.

- Jesus came from Heaven to Earth.
- And then he took on the punishment that we deserved on the cross.
- Without his sacrifice, as sinners (as those who only care about our lives, and our money, and our pleasure)... as sinners, we're all headed towards eternal punishment in Hell because of our sins.
- But because Jesus died on our behalf, as our substitute... our sins are forgiven and we're saved. And his richness and righteousness now fully covers us. So now when God sees us, he doesn't see our sins... but sees Jesus' righteousness covering us. And we're made right in the sight of God.

What does our Lord's sacrifice and the cost of his gift show us? It's like a love letter from God to us saying, "my sons and daughters, I love you. You mean so much to me."

Friends, this is the Gospel. This is the Good News! That God loves us so much that He gave us His one and only Son so that whoever believes in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior will not perish but will enjoy the richness of eternal life in Heaven (John 3:16).

- And this Gospel should completely transform how we view our lives and our money. Because if Jesus truly died for us, if he truly purchased us by his blood, then that means that we now belong to him.
- And we should acknowledge that all that we have - our money and resources and all of our lives - also belong to him (and are from him in the first place).

The Gospel provides us with our motivation to give (This is what makes our giving unique as Christians).

- Our motivation to give generously is because God has given to us first with such generosity; with abundant grace.
 - That even while we're still sinners, undeserving to be saved, Jesus still died for us; giving us his life so that we may have life. So that by his poverty, we may become rich.

And so now, we want to thank and honor God (and what's He's done for us) through our giving.

- This means that in order to give generously, we must first receive His generosity.
 - So if you have not yet received Jesus Christ yet, I'd encourage you to talk to the person you came here with, or anyone around you, or talk to me after the service. And we'd love to talk to you more about Jesus.

For those of us who've already placed our faith in Christ, as his people, bought by his blood... how can we now step up to meet Jesus' challenge to give sacrificially as an act of our love and worship to God?

How should we give?

- (1) Proportionately
- (2) Generously
- (3) Cheerfully

To help us in our next steps, here are 3 guiding principles to help us in our giving (please note that this is not all the Bible has to say about money and giving, and we do not have the time right now to talk about all the possible applications).

- But I hope that these 3 guiding principles can help us to start to intentionally think about, - and to challenge - our giving. And I do encourage us to talk to each other more about this, challenging one another in our giving.

First guiding principle: Our giving should be proportional.

It's not about giving a certain amount of money; it's not about giving a specific number. We're to give in proportion to what God has entrusted us with.

God has entrusted each of us with different amounts of money and resources (as we can see from the people whom Jesus observed... some had a lot of money and some had very little).

- For us, we may be able to relate with one of these groups or perhaps we're somewhere in the middle.

But Jesus' challenge for all of his disciples (those who have a lot, those who have little, and anyone else in the middle) is to give sacrificially in proportion to what God has entrusted us with.

But the question on our minds now may be this: "Are we supposed to sell all that we have and give all of our money to the church?"

Well, hold on, let's take a step back... because it's actually MORE than that! Let's remember that what Jesus desires is not merely our money, but our hearts.

- It's possible to sell all that you have and donate it to the church, yet still not turn to Christ, especially if it's done out of the wrong motivation or the wrong heart posture.
- For example, someone may do all that... when in actuality, they're only doing it to receive recognition from others, or in order to receive more and more blessings from God (in their attempt to buy off God)...
 - All that to say is that the motivation behind our giving (even if it's large sums of money) can be self-centered.

And Jesus values the heart behind our giving MORE than the mere size of our gifts.

What this poor widow did was actually more than just giving God all of her money, but she gave Him her entire life (her heart, her faith, and her hope are now surrendered to the Lord).

This poor widow obeyed the conviction that God has placed in her heart to fully give her life (to Him) through the giving of her copper coins.

- That's how it looks like for her to give her life to God, and to give in proportion to what's been entrusted to her.

Now based on what God has entrusted you, what would it look like for you to give your entire life to God?

- This will look different from person to person.
- For some of us, it will look like giving 4,000 Rupiah to the church each week because that's all that we have.
- For others, that number will be higher.
- For others it may look like selling most of what you have in order to relocate to another country to spread the Good News to those who've never heard about Jesus.
- Sacrifice can look differently to different people and in different seasons of life.

If you're not sure where to begin, a helpful place to start is to tithe (or to give a tenth of your income) to your local church.

- Tithing is a good reminder that all that we have (including the remaining 90% that we keep) belongs to God in the first place. And that even the remaining 90% should actually be spent and invested in God-honoring ways for His glory and His Kingdom.
- And so this practice is not meant to be seen as church tax, or a quick solution to giving that allows you to do whatever you want with the remaining 90%. But tithing is a good place to start.
- And let's be reminded that it's not merely about the amount. And so you won't be condemned if you give 9%, and you won't be buying more blessings if you give more than 10%.

As we now lean more toward the application of proportional giving, this implies that you're aware of how much God is actually entrusting to you... So if you're not really sure, a helpful thing that you can do is to keep track and budget your finances.

- And parents, this is something that you can also start teaching your children from a younger age.
- I know of a family who gives their kids an allowance (or a small income) for doing their chores.

- And each time their kids receive their payment, they would have to divide up their money into three envelopes:
 - One labeled “spending,” another labeled “saving,” and another labeled “giving.”
 - And they would have to divide up their money into all three envelopes each time.
 - And I think that’s a great tool to teach them about financial stewardship, and giving.
- Because even as adults, that’s what we can do; we can intentionally consider how much of the income (that God has provided us with) should go to: spending, saving, and giving.

So the first principle is to give proportionally.

Second principle: Our giving should be generous.

This second principle basically elevates the first principle. Because not only are we to give proportionally, but we’re to give generously (even sacrificially, like the poor widow).

This challenges us to not only give a certain percentage and then that’s it, but by highlighting the poor widow’s giving... Jesus is challenging us to give generously and even sacrificially.

This is what the author, C.S. Lewis, thought about giving:

“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. In other words, if our expenditures on luxuries, comforts, amusements, etc., is up to the standard common among those with the same income as our own, we are probably giving away too little. 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 charities expenditure excludes them.”

- C.S. Lewis

That makes me think... if we compare ourselves to non-Christians who make the same income as us, would people be able to see the difference in which we spend, save, and give?

- Because as those who have received from our God so generously, shouldn’t we also give generously?

Up to this point, we’ve mainly been talking about the giving of our money.

- But in reality, God has entrusted us with many other resources, like: our time, energy, skills, and talents (among other resources).

So then... how does it look like for us to give all that we have with generosity? It may look like:

- Paying for a meal for a friend.
- Giving family and friends some of our time amidst a busy schedule.
- Helping your child with his/her homework even though you’re already feeling tired.
- Using our skills and talents to serve the church in various ministries such as Band, Finance, and Building Blocks children’s ministry.
- It can look like a lot of things...

I encourage you to consider how you’ve been using your money, time, energy, skills, talents (and other resources) this past week, and ask: Have I been giving my resources to God? And what else can I give to God?

So that’s the second principle: to give generously.

Third principle: Our giving should be done cheerfully.

- As Christians, we can give, not only sacrificially, but doing so with cheerfulness in our hearts.
- We can give cheerfully when we remember:
 - That all that we have belongs to God in the first place.

- That all that we have received from God is already so much more than we can ever give back.
 - That God will continue to provide for us, even in ways that we cannot imagine.
 - And that He will use what we give Him... for His glory and His purposes.
- Looking forward to how God will use your giving can empower us to give, not only cheerfully, but enthusiastically!
 - And nothing we do enthusiastically for the Lord will ever be in vain (1 Cor. 15:58).
 - Our giving doesn't just leave our bank account and then disappears into nothing. Pray that your giving would make a Gospel impact!
 - If you're giving to our church, pray that God will guide our church to use what you've sacrificially given... to help spread the Gospel throughout Indonesia and throughout the world so that more and more people around the world may put their faith in Christ and be saved so that God may be glorified.
 - Next Sunday, during our Members' Meeting (for covenant-signing members), we'll share more about our church's budgeting for 2024. I'd encourage you to attend the Members' Meeting (as we share this budget) because our church's budget reflects our church's priorities, and we're excited to share how we plan to invest our church's resources to continue to build up healthy churches (and train church leaders) in Indonesia and Southeast Asia.
 - So when we give all of our resources to the Lord, we can do so cheerfully and with excitement because you just never know how God will use what you give (no matter how big or small).
 - Because God can use what we deem as small in big ways.
 - Think of this poor widow giving her 2 small copper coins, and think of the impact that it had... how it was used by Jesus to teach his disciples a valuable lesson... a lesson that continues to impact countless of disciples' lives centuries later! Even today! And beyond!
 - And think of the boy who gave his 5 loaves and 2 fish, in which Jesus miraculously multiplied to feed 5,000 people (John 6:1-15).
 - How will God multiply what you give Him?
 - You never know how God will use your money to help equip future pastors and Gospel workers who will spread the Good News of His Kingdom to unreached people groups in Indonesia.
 - Or how He'll use the time that you spent with your non-Christian friends to bring them to know Christ.
 - Or how he'll use your hospitality to make visitors feel welcomed at our church, so that they may experience the love of God... you just never know...

So we can give proportionally, generously, and cheerfully.

Conclusion

Now, I know we've been talking a lot about "give, give, and give."

But let's never forget that our motivation to give can be found in the Gospel.

- That it's God who's generously given to us first... far more than what we deserve!
- That even while we're sinners, even when we haven't given God anything... God still loved us and Jesus chose to die for us.

And our salvation and our status before God is secured through the atoning work of Jesus Christ.

- And nothing that we do (including our giving) can make God love us less or love us more. He already loves us perfectly.

But still... may we be inclined to give to God as an act of worship and devotion to Him.

And may our sacrificial giving be a love letter to God that says, "Lord, I love you and I give all of my life to you."

The One Thing

***Jesus values the heart behind our giving
MORE than the mere size of our gifts.***