

IT'S A STRUGGLE TO *PUT GOD FIRST*

Matthew 6:33, Proverbs 3:9-10

- **Most Christians understand that God must be the first priority in every area of our lives, including our finances.**
- Jesus - *"Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and He will give you everything you need."* (Matthew 6:33)
- **God wants us to understand that He is our provider and will always take care of the people who have prioritized His Kingdom and His church with their finances.**
- *"Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the best part of everything you produce. Then He will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with good wine."* (Proverbs 3:9-10)
- **We honor the Lord by giving the first and best part of everything we produce to support His Kingdom work and His Church.**
- **The principle of putting God first in our finances is called "tithing", which means one tenth, which is where the Church gets the concept of giving 10 percent of our income to the work of the Lord.**

When We Put God First:

WE SHOW WE <u>HONOR</u> THE LORD

- **Christians show they honor the Lord with their wealth and productivity by generously and sacrificially giving tithes and offerings to their Church.**
- *"Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the best part of everything you produce. Then he will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with good wine."* (Proverbs 3:9-10)

- **Many Christians can testify of supernaturally experiencing God's faithfulness and blessing in their finances after they began to honor the Lord in their finances.**
- **God deserves and wants the first and best we have to give.**
- *"As you harvest your crops, bring the very best of the first harvest to the house of the Lord your God."* (Exodus 23:19)
- **It is always a struggle to give to God's kingdom when we plan to give Him our leftovers.**

When We Put God First:

WE SHOW WE ARE <u>SUBMITTED</u> TO THE LORD

- **If we are unwilling to sacrifice something to the Lord it reveals the thing we cannot sacrifice has not been submitted to the authority of the Lord.**
- *"God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made Him head over all things for the benefit of the Church. And the Church is His body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with Himself."* (Ephesians 1:22-23)
- **Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son Isaac because he had submitted his son to the Lord and he trusted that God was his provider.**
- *"Abraham named the place Jehovah-Jireh (which means "the Lord will provide"). To this day, people still use that name as a proverb: 'On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided.'"* (Genesis 22:14)

When We Put God First:

WE SHOW OUR <u>FAITHFULNESS</u> TO THE LORD

- **Our faithfulness to the Lord is revealed in the consistency of our gratitude and generosity on behalf of the Kingdom of God.**
- *"Whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father*." (Colossians 3:17)
- **Faithfulness in our finances follows the planning, portioning, and prioritizing of Kingdom focused generosity.**
- *"On the first day of each week, you should each put aside a portion of the money you have earned. Don't wait until I get there and then try to collect it all at once."* (1 Corinthians 16:2)
- ***What is your current plan for generosity and support of God's Kingdom and His Church?***

When We Put God First:

WE SHOW WE <u>TRUST</u> THE LORD

- **Most people want to believe in God, but many people struggle when it comes to trusting God.**
- Jesus - *"The Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure that a man discovered hidden in a field. In his excitement, he hid it again and sold everything he owned to get enough money to buy the field."* (Matthew 13:44)
- **We can go ALL IN in our relationship with God because He is trustworthy.**

When We Put God First:

WE SHOW THAT WE <u>WORSHIP</u> THE LORD

- **The first commandment in the 10 commandments makes it clear there is no room for competition when it comes to the Lord.**
- The Lord - *"You must not have any other god but Me."* (Exodus 20:3)
- **The most likely threat for first place in our life will be the love of money which is manifested in our lack of generosity and sacrificial offerings.**
- Jesus - *"No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money."* (Matthew 6:24)

When We Put God First:

WE SHOW WE ARE <u>BLESSED</u> BY THE LORD

- **The Bible makes it clear that those who are generous and support God's Kingdom with their finances should expect to be provided for and blessed by God in supernatural ways.**
- *"Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the best part of everything you produce. <u>Then he will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with good wine.</u>"* (Proverbs 3:9-10)
- Jesus - *"Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and <u>He will give you everything you need.</u>"* (Matthew 6:33)
- **Many Christians miss out on God's blessing because they are not generous and don't support God's Kingdom and church with their finances.**

When We Put God First:

WE SHOW WE ARE WILLING TO <u>SACRIFICE</u> FOR THE LORD

- **Jesus' life was a sacrifice, and we cannot be His follower if we are unwilling to live sacrificially.**
- Jesus - *"If you refuse to take up your cross and follow Me, you are not worthy of being Mine. If you cling to your life, you will lose it; but if you give up your life for Me, you will find it."* (Matthew 10:38-39)
- **Giving tithes and offerings to the Lord, His Kingdom, and His Church requires personal sacrifices.**

- **We cannot live righteously without making God's kingdom the first priority of every area of our life.**
- Jesus - *"Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and He will give you everything you need."* (Matthew 6:33)
- **Many of God's blessings remain unclaimed for those who have not been willing to be sacrificially generous to the ministry of the Lord in our world.**
- ***What is the Lord saying to me through this message, and what steps am I going to take to respond to it?***