

FIRST

SERMON NOTES

Week 2 October 31, 2021

“The Challenge”

2 Corinthians 9:6-12



I. Earn All You Can

- A. God provides all the _____, _____, and _____ that enable us to work.
- B. John Wesley said that when you work, do not _____ anyone, including yourself.
- C. We don't work for the purpose of income, but God's _____.

II. Save All You Can

- A. When we are in a time of economic _____, we always forget that there may be a downturn.
- B. John Wesley lived extremely _____, even when he was bringing in a large income.
- C. Saving does not mean _____.

III. Give All You Can

- A. Do not give if you feel _____ to give.
- B. When Jesus drew a crowd of 5,000 families to a remote area, the disciples were being “practical” about how to feed them, but they had a _____ mentality.
- C. Whoever sows sparingly will also reap _____, whoever sows generously, will also sow _____.

Things I Would Like to Remember About This Message



ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE *November 1-6, 2021*

INTRODUCTION

Earn money. *Check.* Save money. *Check.* Give money. *Wait, what?* Founder of Methodism, John Wesley, outlined three principles for how to prioritize our money—we are to earn all we can, save all we can, so we can give all we can. This call of God on our lives urges us toward healthy practices that extend our life-influence beyond what we ever thought possible.

Monday: 2 Chronicles 31:4-10

When King Hezekiah called for the Israelites to bring supplies for the Temple, we read, “As soon as the order went out, the Israelites generously gave the firstfruits of their grain, new wine, olive oil and honey and all that the fields produced. They brought a great amount, a tithe of everything.” Have you ever felt great joy in giving freely out of God’s love? Can you imagine the joy of the Israelites on this day? Pray that God will renew your spirit today.

Tuesday: Genesis 14:18-20, Genesis 28:10-22

The concept of tithing had very early roots. Abram (later Abraham) defeated raiders who had kidnapped his nephew Lot and his family, and when they were recovered Abram pledged ten percent back to God. When God meets with a frightened Jacob, Jacob too promised ten percent of all he had been given, back to God. Take a moment to reflect on your tithing, or if you are not tithing to the place that nurtures your relationship with God, what might be your income percentage goal? As you pray, ask God to nurture a heart of gratitude and provide guidance for your giving.

Wednesday: Matthew 23:23-24

While the scriptures support the concept of tithing (see Malachi 3:7-10), by giving a tenth of one’s earnings for the work of God, the Pharisees became legalistic about practicing tithing, while ignoring the need for justice and mercy. Imagine the energy required to count out dill seeds and mint flakes! How can you be sure that your giving has nothing to do with keeping up appearances? As you pray today, express gratitude for Jesus’ teaching and the reminder to value what God values in your giving.

Thursday: Mark 6:34-43

Jesus had attracted a very large crowd, but it was soon apparent that they would need something to eat. The disciples were being practical when they suggested that Jesus send the crowd away to the countryside to find food, but instead Jesus asked for what was available, and the disciples gathered only five loaves of bread and two fish. Jesus’ creative power took a lunch, barely enough for one, and used it to feed a large, hungry crowd. As you take time to pray today, think of a time when you couldn’t see how a need could be met, and yet God turned the situation into a blessing.

Friday: 2 Corinthians 9:8-11

The Apostle Paul writes, “you will have everything you need always and in everything.” The scholar Craig Keener explains, “the Greek term meant having enough, but also often applied to the virtue of contentment. Some sages insisted that one need have nothing to be content, but most recognized that having enough required meeting at least the fundamental needs of life” (Zondervan, *NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible*). As you pray today, ask God for what you really need to have a heart of contentment.

MOVING FORWARD: John 10:10

As you read the verse today, note that while Jesus says that he came that we may “have life and have it to the full,” he does not say that we will stroll down easy street all the way to heaven. As you finish this week, take a moment to write down five things that you are grateful for. Then write down five struggles you have gone through (or are going through). Now, thank God for the struggles as well! Consider how you have needed to draw close to God through the storms and struggles of life, and how they have made you more sensitive to the needs of others. Pray that you would be on a path free from financial worry, and ready to give generously as God calls on your heart.

Answers to the sermon notes: IA) Gifts, talents, and resources, B) harm, C) outcome.; IIA) prosperity, B) frugally, C) hoarding.; IIIA) compelled or pressured, B) scarcity, C) sparingly/generously.