
IHOP Lifestyle 4: Extravagant Giving

A. INTRODUCTION

1. The “O” in I-H-O-P stands for OFFERING, defined as Giving Extravagantly to God in terms of money, service and time, to advance the kingdom of God and to spread the fame of Jesus.
2. The focus of this teaching is on giving extravagantly to God in terms of our finances / money.

B. OFFERING IS A BIBLICAL CORE VALUE

1. We should be contented with a simple lifestyle in terms of money. The values we should have:
 - a. Live Simply for ourselves (1 Tim. 6:6)
 - b. Give Extravagantly to God (2 Cor. 8:7)
2. Giving extravagantly is one of the marks of true spirituality in our faith. We need to set a vision and a focus, asking God for grace in developing this core value. The challenge is to engage God in our giving and see how God responds.
3. David is a powerful model for us. He was one who gave extravagantly to God (2 Sam. 24:24). He refused to give the “leftover” or “extra” to God. He will not give any offering that cost him nothing.
4. David gave over US\$100 billion (converted to modern currency) to build the Temple of God. Giving sacrificially is different from giving extravagantly. It is a different attitude and posture of heart.

C. EXTRAVAGANT GIVING

1. Extravagant Giving is one of the major benchmarks of true spirituality in our faith. We talk a lot about prosperity, but very little about giving.
2. Giving is a virtue, a privilege, an honor, such that the word of God exhorts us to cultivate and grow and excel in it. Money is important but money cannot be the determining factor of how much we pursue God and serve God.
3. We need to have a history with God regarding the giving and receiving of money. When we understand the Kingdom Principle of Finance and the Purpose of God blessing us with prosperity, we can truly enjoy a life of freedom.
4. Our ultimate paymaster is God. We are not called to work to earn a living but because we are created to work (Gen. 1). Working will be eternal, whether in the

millennium kingdom or in eternity, and it will be fun because we will be working with God.

5. The context of 2 Cor. 8 and 9 is about Extravagant Giving. Paul was exhorting the people of God in Corinth to give extravagantly to God and he taught them about the Biblical principle of Finance and Giving (2 Cor. 8:7).
6. Paul was not just talking about tithing but about extravagant giving. The church of Macedonia gave out of their need, beyond their means, of their own accord. They gave out of joy, without holding back and they were not forced to do it.
7. Those who sowed sparingly will reap sparingly. Those who sowed generously will reap generously. The Corinthian church excelled in everything, but needed to grow in the area of extravagant giving.

D. PRINCIPLE OF TITHING

1. Malachi 3:10 is the main passage in Scripture concerning tithing, which is the giving of 10% of our money to God. It is not because we owe God 10% of our money since all 100% belongs to God (James 1:17).
2. Tithing is the minimum requirement where we begin as a new believer. Tithing is not the ceiling but the beginning. Extravagant giving to God is more than tithing (Matt. 6:1-4; 2 Cor. 8-9).
3. Tithing is the demonstration of our gratitude and love towards God. What we do with money is a measurement of our heart towards God. It is a matter of our priority and value and it is how we acknowledge God's provision and goodness.
4. The remaining 90% of our money God allows us to keep as a test of our stewardship on earth. God will judge us on how we use it, whether we use it for ourselves, for God or for blessing others.
5. Tithing is a declaration that:
 - a. God is the Source and Provider of all our money and
 - b. We are the stewards of His money on earth

E. WHY EXTRAVAGANT GIVING?

1. It is not that God needs or wants our money. God wants our heart and our partnership with Him through giving. There is a dynamic encounter, when we give, and then God blesses us back with the same measure and even abundantly.
2. This woos our heart and builds our faith. He wants our heart to be “wowed” because there is a realm in the giving of money that dynamically affects our spirituality (Luke 6:38). This is called the JOY of Financial Power Encounter.

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3. Giving extravagantly to God and experiencing His blessing in return stirs and motivates our heart and affects the vibrancy of our inner man, because there is a powerful cause-and-effect dynamic in giving and receiving from God.
 4. When we know that He sees and He cares (Matt. 6:4) and He provides, it sets us free. This creates a history with God and builds confidence in God.
 5. It's more than just giving to God. It is about encountering the reality of God through the realm of giving. Money is a real issue and many people do not venture out because of it.
 6. We should encounter and develop a history with God in the area of money. Then we will have much freedom in pursuing God and serving God.

F. THE BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE OF KINGDOM FINANCE

This is the kingdom principle of finance or money:

1. Poverty is a CURSE – The people of God should not be living in poverty (Ps. 23:1; Matt. 6:33; Phil. 4:19). There may be a season of financial struggle, but it should not be prolonged.
2. Money is a TOOL – Having money or not having money is not a measure of spirituality. God blesses us with wealth for His purposes. We will have no lack in God's kingdom. Knowing that God will meet our needs, sets us free to give (Ps. 23:1; Matt. 6:33).
3. Giving is a VIRTUE – When we give, we grow that virtue. Paul told the Corinthian church to excel in the grace of giving (2 Cor. 8:7).

G. BIBLICAL PROSPERITY

1. The Bible teaches that God empowers us to get wealth (Deut. 8:18), so that He may establish His covenant.
2. God blesses us with wealth
 - a. for the preaching of the gospel
 - b. for the advancing of His kingdom
 - c. for the building of the House of Prayer
 - d. to increase our love for God
3. If God blesses us with wealth, it is not primarily for us to have a luxurious lifestyle and acquire more material possessions like a big car or a big house. That should not be the goal of our life.

H. TWO-FOLD PARADIGM OF KINGDOM FINANCE

1. In Deut. 8:18, Moses gave us a powerful Biblical paradigm of Kingdom Finance, which is also called the Covenant Paradigm of Finance.

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- a. God *desires* to supernaturally bless us with wealth. “It is He who gives you power to get wealth...”
 - b. Moses gave us the *reason* why God wants to bless us with prosperity: “that He may *establish His covenant...*”
2. God desires to bring people into a *covenantal relationship* with Him, basically through the preaching of the gospel, doing the works of the kingdom or the Great Commission (e.g. the feeding of the poor, the justice movement, etc) and the building of the House of Prayer.
 3. The *Covenant Paradigm of Finance* is that when we see money, we *see souls* and we *see the funding of the works of God*.

I. TWO PRINCIPLES OF HOW WE SEE MONEY

1. *The 2 Cor. 9:10 Principle of SEED and BREAD*
 - a. We can either see money as *seed* to sow and invest in the kingdom of God or as *bread* for ourselves, to meet our own needs.
 - b. God supplies all the money but we have to *decide* to use it as *seed or bread*.
 - c. If we *sow it as seed*, it will *multiply and return to us* and it will increase the fruits of our righteousness. This is about internal and external rewards.
 - d. If we *use it as bread*, there will not be a harvest or return because we have *eaten the seed*.
 - e. Sometimes we are afraid to give more because of the *fear of lack*. We do not trust God and we have a strong desire for self-preservation. We should be *wise in how we use money*. When we give, we grow in virtue, character and faith.
 2. *The 2 Cor. 8:14 Principle of NO LACK*
 - a. There will be *no lack* in the kingdom of God, *if we choose not to keep the money, but to give it away*.
 - b. The problem is that many keep all or most of the money that God gives them for themselves, *instead of giving as a seed* to the Kingdom and to those in need. In the early church, no one has lack because they shared and helped one another (Acts 2:44-45; Acts 4:32-34).
 - c. When we have the money, we should give. Then the other side will have no lack. When we are in need, God will *remember that we gave* and *bless us back* through someone else.
 - d. We must learn to give more. We should not cut back on our giving so as to maintain or increase our lifestyle.
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J. THE BIBLICAL PHILOSOPHY IN FINANCE, MONEY AND PROSPERITY

1. It is to live simply for ourselves and to give extravagantly to God, because contentment is part of godliness (1 Tim. 6:6) and giving is a virtue (2 Cor. 8:7).
2. Godliness is learning to be contented with earthly things, but seeking to grow in the things of God (1Tim. 6:6-8). Life is about knowing God, advancing His kingdom and growing righteousness within us (Matt. 6:25).
3. Giving is a virtue and a mark of spirituality (2 Cor. 8:7).
4. There is a relational aspect of giving. It is an expression of our love, our trust in God and our commitment to His cause.
 - a. When we seek to love God with all our strength, “strength” refers to our resources of time and money (Matt. 22:37; Mark 12:30).
 - b. Jesus linked money with the pursuit of God (Matt. 6:24).
 - c. What we do with our money is one of the most practical measurements of our love for Jesus, our trust in His leadership and our commitment to the advancement of His kingdom.
5. We need to cultivate a history of Giving Extravagantly (Matt. 6:1-4; Luke 6:38; Mal. 3:10).
 - a. Giving extravagantly to God is often one of the realms that dynamically affect our spirituality and faith in God.
 - b. The giving of money and the resulting response from God builds confidence and affects the vibrancy of our heart and the trust in His leadership and provision.
 - c. A significant part of our spiritual life would be diminished if we never learn to give extravagantly. We should venture out in this realm while we are young and let it be a lifestyle.

K. CONCLUSION

1. There is going to be a major shaking and shift in the financial realm in the world (Haggai 2:7-8).
2. God is releasing and transferring the wealth of the world to His people, not for our own pleasure or luxurious living or comfort, but for preaching the gospel, financing the works of the Great Commission, the building of the House of Prayer and bringing in of the end time harvest.
3. God is looking for people to release His gold and silver. He is looking for those who had set their heart to give extravagantly.