

**Supplementary Questions for a Bible Study on Giving.
For Home Groups in the week commencing 29th November 2009.**

Text: Matthew 6:1-4

As always, there are loads of questions here. The leader needs to think through which are the best ones for their group, which are the most pastorally appropriate and which will help your group appreciate God's love the most.

Welcome.

Q: Ask people 'what they would do if they discovered that a long-lost relative had left them 3 million pounds'? or ask people 'what their favourite Charity is and why?'

Body.

We preach about giving about once a year. In Matthew, Mark, and Luke 1 out of every 6 verses deals with money and of the 29 parables that Jesus told, 16 of them are about a person and their finances.

Q: Do you think we teach about financial giving too much or too little?

Q: Do you think Southover gives the impression "we are always after your money"?

Q: How do you feel when the Rector preaches about a Christian's attitude towards money?

Note for Home Group leaders: I am not sure how we as a church could possible speak about money *less* and still be true to God's call on us. However, I would be very interested to hear people's views on this and I would value you "saving up the answers" until we meet next after church.

Please read – 2Cor 9:6-11 and Matthew 6:1-4

Q: In what ways is the love of money the root of all evil in our world and in people's personal life?

Q: What is the world's attitude to money?

Q: Do you think it is true that our bank balance reveals where our priorities, hopes and dreams are?

Giving as an act of Worship.

Jesus says in v1 of Chapter 6: "Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them; and v4, give in secret for your Father sees it"

Q: What does God as Creator/Provider and God as Redeemer mean?

Q: How does knowing that God is both our Creator/Provider and Redeemer impact our motivations for giving?

Q: How does a Christian's view of personal wealth contrast with our society's view of personal wealth?

Q: How does what we see around us undermine a Christian view of personal wealth?

Giving as Natural as Breathing.

Jesus says v3, “but when you give do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing”.

Q: What does Jesus mean when he says the above (v3)?

Q: Why is this important (v2, 4)?

I have interpreted the above to include the meaning that “our giving becomes a natural part of our life-style” so that giving is a natural reflex to an ever present awareness of God’s love.

Q: What is the relationship between a discipline and a habit and how does giving become a habit?

Q: The call to tithe our income, from the first not the last, for many seems crazy. How come Bronze aged, materially primitive people could do it and yet we still find it so difficult?

Q: Why does God not mention a specific sum, or a specific proportion of our income in the New Testament to be given to God?

Q: Why is the amount we give and the specific proportion that we give not so much the key question as to the motives in which we give? (see 2Cor 9v7)

Giving for sake of the Gospel

Jesus said: v2 "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do to be honoured by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full”.

Q: In verse 1 Jesus commands us "not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them." Yet in 5:16 he said, "Let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good deeds." Is there a contradiction here? Explain

Q: How do you think the reward the Father will give us (v. 6) differs from the reward we receive from others (v. 5)?

Q: In what other areas are we tempted to seek the approval of people rather than of God?

Q: 'If I give I will be worse off', is this true? Is this perception compatible with God's promises: See 2 Cor 9:8, 2 Cor 9:11, 2 Cor 9:6?

Q: What sort of reward do you think God will give us? Matthew 6v4? Is it worth it?

Q: List the ministries of our church that meet people's spiritual, psychological and physical needs.

Q: Is there a link between the extent of the church's ministry, its effectiveness in meeting people's needs and the amount that people give? Is it the amount that people give or the motivation behind the amount that makes the difference?

Q: Personal and private meditation (which is not for discussion), Is there anything you can do to respond to God's word?