

## The Gap Series “Give”

For the week beginning 1.23.12

We’ve all likely heard the scripture “*It’s better to give than to receive.*” (Acts 20:35). While most would agree with that piece of scripture, some can honestly say, “*Well, I don’t have much or anything at all to give.*” It’s not uncommon to hear people say that they live paycheck to paycheck. And even that’s an understatement. After paying the mortgage, the car payment, a plethora of monthly credit card bills, gas, food, and general utilities; there’s really not much to give at the end of the month. We find ourselves just like the guy who was cutting up the pie in the video, “*God’s Pie.*” We are hard pressed just to give God a sliver of that pie because we have to satisfy our own needs and wants first. Sadly, we act like God is not there and ignore Him, all the while knowing something just isn’t right.

The unfortunate and sad reality is some of us have simply fallen into a subtle form of slavery, and we just don’t realize it. We’ve become shackled at the ankles, wrists, and knees at a 9.5% interest rate. We don’t even know our names and what we actually own because other banks, lending

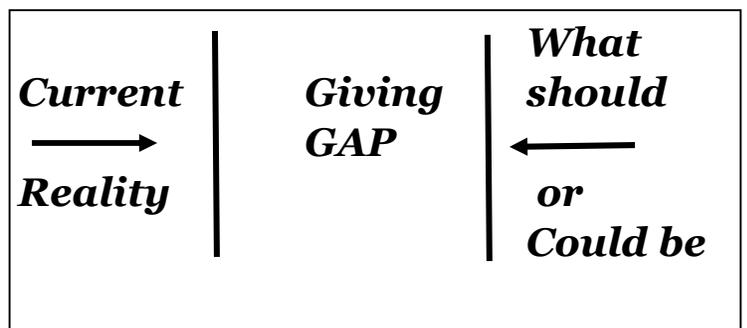
institutions, and major stores have their names dangling above the items that we thought we needed and deserved, for some reason or another, during that purchasing moment. We justify ourselves with the “*I work hard, I live in America, I deserve it, and I should have it **my way***” anthem. Unfortunately, that way of thinking is a dangerous trap.

Reality is, our brains are quite simply out of whack. Our thinking has conformed to the world’s mismanagement of finances. Think about it, when was the last time we’ve had a balanced budget? It’s time to begin the process of rewiring our brain to create new ways of thinking. It’s time to overhaul our entire view about money and how it should be used in our everyday life. Ask any well-trained psychologist, and they will tell you that to create a new pattern of thinking, you must form a new belief. The belief we must hold true is that *everything* we own or will ever receive now and in the future is God’s. If you even have a hint of doubt about that belief, you need to rewire your brain’s patterns.

Your first exercise is to learn as much as possible about how God wants us to view our finances by completing this study. Did you know that God asks us to put Him to the test—that if we bring our tithes to Him, He will pour out a blessing so big we won’t even have room to take it in (Malachi 3:10). Seriously? That’s better than playing the lottery. Oh, and that’s just the beginning. Keep reading.

Over time, as you build your knowledge, faith, and trust in God, you will know how much you should give and when you should give it. Your brain will trigger an automatic thought to give your first fruit of your labor to Him. Not your last.

If you’ve been following along with the Living It Out, this week you’ll complete the “Give” portion of the Missional Membership on pages 6-9. We encourage you to complete all portions of this study. Dig down deep and uproot any doubts you have—all we have is God’s! Honor Him with your giving.



**IN THIS WEEK’S STUDY WE’LL FILL IN THE GAP TO LIVE LIFE  
TO THE FULLEST BY LEARNING HOW TO GIVE TO GOD**

## MONDAY — Biblical Financial Literacy

**Big Point:** *In order to be financially literate in Christ, we must first believe that God is the legal owner of everything we have or will ever attain in the future!*

*In the book, “Rich Dad, Poor Dad,” Robert Kiyosaki references a 1923 meeting that took place at the Edgewater Beach hotel in Chicago between the richest business men at that time. Among them were Charles Schwab, head of the largest independent steel company; Samuel Insull, president of the world’s largest utility; Howard Hopson, head of the largest gas company; Ivar Krueger, president of the International Match Co., one of the world’s largest companies at the time; Leon Frazier, president of the Bank of International Settlements; Richard Whitney, president of the New York Stock Exchange; Arthur Cotton and Jesse Livermore, two of the biggest stock speculators; and Albert Fall, a member of President Harding’s cabinet. Twenty five years later, nine of them ended up as follows: Schwab died penniless after living for five years on borrowed money. Insull, Krueger and Cotton died broke. Hopson went insane. Whitney and Fall were released from prison and Frazier and Livermore committed suicide.*

*We don’t know what truly happened to these men—although the date indicates it preceded the 1929 market crash. What we do know is that these men, at some point, truly attained the world’s standard of financial literacy. But you wonder how many of them had biblical financial literacy—knowing that as much as they believed they **earned** their wealth, it all belonged to God ... that’s the first principle of biblical literacy. Could it have saved a suicide, a prison sentence, a penniless ending? Only one can ponder. Here’s a thought: take the road less traveled—learn biblical financial literacy so that if your world comes crashing down, you know who ultimately owns everything and where your hope lies!*

### READ and THINK ... Find the Answers in the Bible

1. The term ownership means the legal right of possession. In Psalm 24:1, we learn who has legal right of possession of all we have. Describe the actions you should take knowing that everything in the earth is God’s? If asked how you steward or take care of what God owns, how would you respond? Respond with how you take care of the earth and how you take care of yourself:

***Psalm 24:1 (New Living Translation)***

*The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him.*

**Answer:**

2. It’s pretty overwhelming to think that everything we have comes from God. It’s easy to believe that since we earned what we have, by our hard work, we own it. But, 1 Chronicles 29 puts an exclamation point behind Psalm 24:1 with an added twist. A substantial amount of honor and praise is given to God in 1 Chronicles 29:11-13. Write out all the praise that is given in the space below the scripture. Then, describe in your own words what verse 14 means when it says “we give you only what you first gave us.”

***1 Chronicles 29:11-14 (New Living Translation)***

*<sup>11</sup> Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty. Everything in the heavens and on earth is yours, O LORD, and this*

is your kingdom. We adore you as the one who is over all things. <sup>12</sup> Wealth and honor come from you alone, for you rule over everything. Power and might are in your hand, and at your discretion people are made great and given strength. <sup>13</sup> “O our God, we thank you and praise your glorious name! <sup>14</sup> But who am I, and who are my people, that we could give anything to you? Everything we have has come from you, and we give you only what you first gave us!”

**Answer:**

3. Proverbs 3:9 tells us how we are to honor God, write out how:

**Proverbs 3:9 (New Living Translation)**

*Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the best part of everything you produce.*

**Answer:**

### **LIVE...What will you do now?**

Let's be clear, there is nothing wrong with being financially literate according to the world's standard. That in and of itself is being a good steward of all that God owns. But what we should do is begin our financial literacy training with a biblical view.

1. List out all of your major worldly possessions, one by one. Those things that you believe are of a sentimental or physical value. Perhaps you have these items listed in your Will somewhere. Take the time to list them here or on a separate piece of paper:
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2. Write down the emotions and feelings that you would experience if you lost the items you listed, or if they were suddenly taken away from you:
3. How do you feel knowing that God owns all that you have listed?

### **PRAY...God, What do you want me to know & do?**

Ask God to help you obtain a biblical financial literacy viewpoint. Ask Him for the peace in knowing that if everything came crashing down, you have hope in Him.

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**A reminder:** if you are looking for the Daily Bible Reading Commentary, go to [www.livingitout.tv](http://www.livingitout.tv) and click on the Daily Bible commentary link that precedes the Daily Bible Reading for a particular day. We are limited in space with our printed version to truly delve into a commentary study.