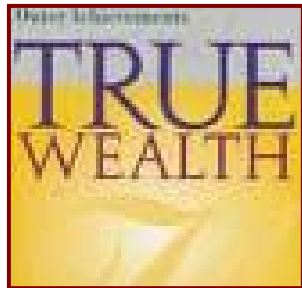


Melva's Corner



Living to Give! (Financial Freedom) Part IV

October 8, 2007

Central Truth: Imagine how individuals and churches could impact the world if they committed substantial portions of their resources where they are needed most!

As I have studied God's Word for the past twenty-five years I am convinced that every individual or church experiencing God's maximum blessing is directly involved in helping to fulfill the Great Commission (John 14:21-24).

I am deeply concerned that so little of the financial blessing which God has given to Christians is used to help reach the billions of men, women and children who have never heard the name of Jesus.

In Matthew 28:19, 20 Jesus gives us a specific command, "Go and make disciples in all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and then teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you; and be sure of this - that I am with you always, even to the end of the world" (TLB). The nations that have the greatest resources to help build God's kingdom have not obeyed this command fully.

Oswald Smith said, "If you see ten men carrying a heavy log, nine of them on one end and one man struggling to carry the other, which end would most need your help? The end with only one man." This illustrates how inequitably the evangelized nations have been using their resources to help fulfill the Great Commission.

For example, the United States has a gross national income of four trillion dollars. Of this, three trillion is personal income

and one trillion corporate income. How much of this vast wealth do Americans give to missions? Only 0.5 percent. Think of it! That's just 50 cents for every one hundred dollars.

According to the latest figures, the Christian world spent 140 billion dollars on its own church budgets and home missions while sending only 7.5 billion overseas. An estimated 95 percent of all money raised for church budgets in North America goes to domestic use, 4.5 percent goes to established missions, while only 0.5 percent is sent to frontier missions.

This grieves our Lord, and we cannot expect His greatest blessing as individuals or as a church until we fully obey His command to help fulfill the Great Commission throughout the world.

I believe it is an insult to God for a church to give less than 10 percent of a tithe of its budget to foreign missions. More than that, my personal conviction is that from 25 to 50 percent of every church budget should go overseas.

Imagine how individuals and churches could impact the world if they committed substantial portions of their resources where they are needed most! Generous gifts to foreign missions could help provide God's holy Word, good Christian books and training materials to introduce people who have never heard the name of Jesus to our Savior. Increased media time could be devoted to broadcasting the gospel into areas that have little or no Christian witness and into countries that are not open to mission groups.

Check you church mission's budget to see where an increase to foreign missions could be made. Look for special projects overseas in which you could have an impact in introducing unreached people for Jesus Christ. Then expect God to honor this expression of your faith and obedience to Him to help reach the multitudes of earth with the "most joyful news ever announced."

Scriptural References:

**"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."
(Matthew 6:21)**