

# What can I give Him....



new Café Church sermon series

Sun 17th Jan  
Sun 24th Jan  
Sun 31st Jan  
Sun 7th Feb  
at 7pm

1. my money  
2. my gifts  
3. my personality  
4. my life

This series seeks to enable each one of us respond to God's generous gift of Jesus at Christmas with the gift of our hearts.

Each session considers practical aspects of our lives that puts giving out hearts to Jesus into action.

## Session 1 What Can I give Him?... my money!

### Welcome:

**Quiz:** As people enter give them some paper and a pen having put the lyrics printed below of songs about money and separately the title of the song and artist/composer. They have to match the lyrics to a song title & artist.

The winner gets either a little bag of chocolate money coins you have bought or a hug from you! Which is more valuable?

*The best things in life are free  
But you can give them to the birds and bees  
I want money  
You love gives me such a thrill  
But your love won't pay my bills  
I want money  
Give me your money  
Just give me money*  
**Money – The Flying Lizards**

*Money makes the world go around  
...the world go around  
...the world go around.  
Money makes the world go around  
Of that we both are sure...  
\*raspberry sound\* on being poor!*  
**Money makes the world go around (Cabaret)  
Liza Minnelli and Joel Gray**

*I'll give you all I got to give if you say you love me too  
I may not have a lot to give but what I got I'll give to you  
I don't care too much for money, money can't buy me love*  
**Can't buy me love The Beatles**

*I work all night, I work all day, to pay the bills I have to pay  
Ain't it sad  
And still there never seems to be a single penny left for me  
That's too bad  
In my dreams I have a plan  
If I got me a wealthy man  
I wouldn't have to work at all, I'd fool around and have a ball*  
**Money, Money, Money Abba**

*Only boys who save their pennies  
Make my rainy day  
You know that we are living in a material world  
And I am a material girl*  
**Material Girl Madonna**

*Money, get away.  
Get a good job with good pay and youre okay.  
Money, its a gas.  
Grab that cash with both hands and make a stash.  
New car, caviar, four star daydream,  
Think Ill buy me a football team.*

**Money**

**Pink Floyd**

And if your train's on time  
You can get to work by nine  
And start your slaving job to get your pay  
If you ever get annoyed  
Look at me, I'm self-employed  
I love to work at nothing all day

**Takin' Care of Business**

**Bachman Turner Overdrive –**

There is nothing quite as wonderful as money  
There is nothing quite as beautiful as cash  
Some people say it's folly  
But I'd rather have the lolly  
With money you can make a splash

**The Money Song**

**Monty Python**

I been laid off, my rent is due  
My kids all need brand new shoes  
So I went to the bank to see what they could do  
They said "son looks like bad luck got a hold on you"

**Money's Too Tight to Mention**

**Simply Red –**

Now look at them yo-yos thats the way you do it  
You play the guitar on the mtv  
That aint workin thats the way you do it  
Money for nothin' and chicks for free

**Money for nothing**

**Dire Striates**

## Worship

Sing '*In the Bleak Mid Winter*'

1. In the bleak mid-winter  
Frosty wind made moan,  
Earth stood hard as iron,  
Water like a stone;  
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,  
Snow on snow,  
In the bleak mid-winter  
Long ago.

2. Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him  
Nor earth sustain;  
Heaven and earth shall flee away  
When He comes to reign:  
In the bleak mid-winter  
A stable-place sufficed  
The Lord God Almighty,  
Jesus Christ.

3. Enough for Him, whom cherubim  
Worship night and day,  
A breastful of milk  
And a mangerful of hay;  
Enough for Him, whom angels  
Fall down before,  
The ox and ass and camel  
Which adore.

4. Angels and archangels  
May have gathered there,  
Cherubim and seraphim  
Thronged the air,  
But only His mother<sup>1</sup>  
In her maiden bliss,  
Worshipped the Beloved  
With a kiss.

5. What can I give Him,  
Poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd  
I would bring a lamb,  
If I were a wise man  
I would do my part,  
Yet what I can I give Him,  
Give my heart.

Words : Christina Rossetti  
Music 'Cranham' Gustav Holst

# Word

## *Opening Discussion questions*

What are the major differences between the lyrics of the last verse of the carol *'In the Bleak Mid Winter'* (above) and Abba's *'Money, Money Money'*?

I work all night, I work all day, to pay the bills I have to pay  
Ain't it sad  
And still there never seems to be a single penny left for me  
That's too bad  
In my dreams I have a plan  
If I got me a wealthy man  
I wouldn't have to work at all, I'd fool around and have a ball

Money, money, money  
Must be funny  
In the rich man's world  
Money, money, money  
Always sunny  
In the rich man's world  
Aha-ahaaa  
All the things I could do  
If I had a little money  
It's a rich man's world

A man like that is hard to find but I can't get him off my mind  
Ain't it sad  
And if he happens to be free I bet he wouldn't fancy me  
That's too bad  
So I must leave, I'll have to go  
To Las Vegas or Monaco  
And win a fortune in a game, my life will never be the same

Money, money, money  
Must be funny  
In the rich man's world  
Money, money, money  
Always sunny  
In the rich man's world  
Aha-ahaaa  
All the things I could do  
If I had a little money  
It's a rich man's world

Money, money, money  
Must be funny  
In the rich man's world  
Money, money, money  
Always sunny  
In the rich man's world  
Aha-ahaaa  
All the things I could do  
If I had a little money  
It's a rich man's world

It's a rich man's world

Which do you think more accurately reflects the actions and attitudes of most people towards money?

In what ways are we as radical followers of Jesus living any differently in regards to our attitude towards money than the rest of the world?

*Presentation*

**1) Why do we give financially to the church?**

Because of **God's Generosity towards us.**

In the words of the materials supplied by the Church of England in 'Giving for Life' we give because he gave us everything.

- ***God gives us life***

*the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground  
and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life  
and the man became a living being*

*Gen 2 v7*

- ***God gives us eternal life***

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son  
that whoever believe in him shall not perish but have eternal life*

*John 3 v16*

- ***God gives us daily life***

*Give us today our daily bread*

*Matt 6 v11*

- ***God give us abundant life***

*I have come that they may have life  
and have it to the full*

*John 10 v10*

Luke makes it clear that our attitude towards money and possessions is one that that should be counter to the prevailing culture. People worry about possessions and money. Sometimes we store up for ourselves 'treasure' in the wrong places.

Question

Where do you store up your treasure and why?

Yet 'treasure' on earth will only be taken, 'wear out' or be destroyed.

Rather we should reflect the generosity of God by our generosity in seeking to give life to others as we have been given life.

Luke puts this into the perspective of ***God giving us the kingdom***

*Do not be afraid little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.  
Sell your possessions and give to the poor.*

*Luke 12 v33*

Question

In what ways have you expressed your thanks for that God has given to you?

One way of expressing our thanks is to practically give money to the Church.  
The question then arises...

## **2) How do we give financially as disciples of Jesus?**

- **From the heart**

As the carol states

*'Yet what I can I give him  
Give my heart'*

God speaking through Jeremiah identified that part of our problem is to do with our heart. The people of God could not be relied upon to fulfil the law and therefore be in the right relationship with God because of the corruption and deceit of our hearts. Soon after giving us life and dominion over everything to be stewards of God's creation and each other we read

*The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become,  
and that every inclination of the thoughts of his **heart** was only evil all the time.*

*Genesis 6 v5*

By the time of Jeremiah an imminent exile was about to befall God's people as they were removed from the land flowing with milk and honey and taken into captivity because

*The heart is **deceitful** above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?*

*Jer 17 v9*

What was needed was a new way of fulfilling the covenant relationship between God and mankind and this is what was promised in the words of Jeremiah.

*This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord*

*'I will put my law in their minds  
and write it on their hearts.*

*I will be their God and they will be my people'*

*Jer 31v33*

The law is no longer written on tablets of stone but on the 'tablets of our hearts' as Paul explains to the Christians in Corinth

*You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry,  
written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God,  
not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.*

*2 Cor 3 v3*

So Luke says

*provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out,  
a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted  
where no thief come near or no moth destroys.  
For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also*

*Luke 12 v34*

To give from the heart has to be expressed in practical action.

- **with generosity**

In the OT the people were expected to practice the **principle of giving a tenth** of what they had. Their 'income' and therefore their tithe included

- the seed of the land
- the fruit of the trees
- and their herds and flock.

Towards the end of the Old Testament one of the persistent problems was the people's lack of obedience to this practice as Malachi makes clear

*Will a man rob God! Yet you rob me.  
But you ask How do we rob you?  
In tithes and offerings*

*Mal 3 v8*

By the time of Jesus the practice of tithing appears to have lost the spirit of a generous response back to God for all that he had given his people. Instead it had been replaced with nit picking laws which subverted the very spirit of the practice as Jesus makes clear.

*Woe to you Pharisees  
because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs,  
but you neglect justice and the love of God.  
You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone.*

*Luke 11 v42*

Whilst it is not directly commanded by Jesus the impression given is that the spirit of generosity is the main issue rather than the letter of the law. However it may be worth reflecting on the disparity between the average giving in the CofE of about 2 to 3% of income compared to the 10 percent implicit in the principle of the tithe. Other denominations and churches such as *Hillsong* regularly remind the congregations of the principle of the tithe and virtually in every service an opportunity is given for regular members to financially give and an offering is physically taken.

Question

How would you react to such a practice being established in this church? Why do you react in that way?

The New Testament appears to go beyond the tithe as **collections are taken up as need arises** as indicated by the collection Paul organises for the Church in Jerusalem. (2 Cor 8 v1-15). The spirit is once more of generosity

*<sup>6</sup>Remember this:  
Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly,  
and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.  
<sup>7</sup>Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion,  
for God loves a cheerful giver.*

*2 Cor 9 v6-7*

It is interesting to note that the newer churches are asked to show generosity towards the more established 'mother' church where James was head of the church and seen with the apostles elders to be the main authority in the early church. (cf Acts 15 v1-29). Mutual support in times of need and in plenty is endorsed by Paul

*At the present time your plenty will supply what they need;  
so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need.*

*2 Cor 8 v14*

- *regularly and systematically*

When Paul was seeking to take up the collection from the Christians in Corinth for the church in Jerusalem he commends to them the practice of giving

*On the **first day** of every week,  
each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income,  
saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.*

*I Cor 16 v2*

The idea of planning is not in contradiction to living by the Spirit but is clearly a principle that Jesus commended elsewhere.

*Suppose one of you wants to build a tower.  
Will he not first sit down and estimate the **cost** to see if he has enough money to complete it?*

*Luke 14 v28*

We also can glean that Jesus himself and his disciples were supported by the practical and financial support of some women who followed him who appear to come from influential and potentially wealthy homes

*These women were helping to support them out of their own means.*

*Luke 8v3.*

A wandering Rabbi and his disciples would have been supported by those whom they ministered to, and this would have been seen as a privilege rather than a burden. Martha, Mary and Lazarus appear to offer their home on this basis. Paul offers a different model in his evangelistic mission work seeking not to be a financial burden to those whom he was reaching out to especially as there were those who 'peddled the gospel, whose primary focus was financial reward. At times he supported himself through his tent making business (Acts 18 v3) or was supported by other churches

*And when I was with you and needed something, I was not a **burden** to anyone,  
for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied what I needed.  
I have kept myself from being a **burden** to you in any way, and will continue to do so.*

*2 Cor 11 v9*

.Yet he also expects on occasions to be supported by the church.

*If we have sown spiritual seed among you,  
is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you?*

*1 Cor 9 v11.*

He also expects the same for those who are to be involved in leading and teaching as the new leaders of the Church.

*The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor,  
especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.  
For the scripture says 'Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain'  
and 'the worker deserves his wages'*

*1 Tim 5 v17-18.*

This diversity of practice might reflect the different ministries being undertaken and also reflect the beginnings of a more structured church.

# **Witness**

## **3) What should we give financially to the local church?**

Ultimately only you can decide!

But here is a suggested pattern to aid your decision.

- Read the letter I have written outlining the vision and consequent budget needs for 2010.
- Then prayerfully reflecting on this study & consider what your personal response will be. In St John's we encourage every member and regular attendee to contribute financially. I personally have sought to set 10% as a guide for my own giving but this is not meant to be a restriction.
- Commit to this by completing and returning the giving card provided. This can be done in complete confidence.
- However you may want to mutually confide with a trusted friend (sometimes called an accountability partner) what each other's financial commitment is as an act of mutual accountability. Once more this is meant to remain confidential to each of you as the Lord advises giving in secret rather than drawing attention to what we give.

## **Next Week**

The Series '*What can I give him?*' continues by considering how we might give not just our money but also our time.

The following three sessions in this series will consider how you may give your gifts, personality and life to God.

In preparation you may want to read Rick Warren '*The Purpose Driven Life*' p227-280.

This will help you build up an inventory of the SHAPE that God has uniquely given you and help you understand the area of ministry that God is calling you too This needs to be exercised in the life of the local church and can lead into a life time of ministry that affects the whole of your life.

*Dave Gardner January 2010*