

## Christmas Is Coming: How Do I Act?

### A Life Of Giving Thanks

Thanksgiving is about giving thanks.

- It's about a thankful heart.
- It's about a giving attitude.

1. Thanks-giving is about gratitude and the opposite is greed.

Here is my premise → giving to others exposes their hearts.

#### **Luke 12:13-18**

#### **Luke 12:19**

#### **Luke 12:20-21**

2. He is saying your focus is totally on you and it is not on God. His focus is not on helping others.
  - This man was a consumer, not a steward.
3. God says, I am going to bless you and give you abundance so you would steward them for the kingdom, not just to consume for your own needs or wants.

Church: God doesn't mind if you have abundance of things, He wants you to have stuff,

- \* We must develop a culture in our personal lives that produces spiritual **maturity**.

God is not concerned with how much stuff you have – He concerned with **you**.

My first point:

A. Stuff is **stuff**

See when you live a lifestyle of giving, stuff will **accumulate**.

4. God doesn't care how much stuff you **have**, but He is concerned how much stuff has **you**.

- \* There was nothing wrong; the man had a **large** crop and he needed to build **bigger** barns.

- The word says, God will bless us and our storehouses if our heart is not into our **storehouse**.

**Proverbs 3:9-10**

5. In the story, Joseph was not building the barns for himself, but for others to help **others**.
- It's okay again to have a lot of stuff if your heart is **right**.

**Luke 12:15b**

<sup>15</sup> ... a man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."

- \* I am not **more** of a man, or **less** of a man by the stuff I possess.

What does that mean?

Answer: My possessions have nothing to do with what type of man I am.

- How I follow the Lord
  - How I treat my wife
  - How I treat my family
- 
- This measures what type of man I am.

6. God wants us to be generous and a good steward.

Remember – God owns everything.

## 2 Chronicles 16:9

God is looking through the whole earth for people that will be good stewards.

- You are so gifted – He is looking for you to steward them well.

The 90% you have left from tithing, be a good steward.

- When you steward well:
  - God will pour money into your life.
  - God will bless your marriage (greater purpose)
  - He will give greater vision for life.

7. If you are generous and are a good steward, God is going to bless you.

Last series we talked about a life that gives, gives, gives.

Now: because of generosity and stewardship, God will give you more and more and more.

Now, what I am not saying is everybody that has stuff is **spiritual** or generous with **stewardship**.

But, when you do it God's way:

- **Generosity**
- **Stewardship**
- Treat your family **well**
- Faithful to your **call**, **Church**
- **Tithe**
- **Give**
- Love **people**

Living in the character and the culture of the kingdom that's **within** you: the kingdom of God.

Covetousness: looking at **other people's** stuff and **wanting** it.

Don't ever feel guilty when you put your heart in **position** for God to bless you.

There is a spirit of **poverty** and spirit of **greed**.

- They will chase you the rest of your life and are on two extremes:
  - The spirit of greed says stuff comes from **hard** work only.
  - The spirit of poverty says stuff comes from the **Devil** only.
  - The spirit of greed says you should be **proud** of your stuff.
  - The spirit of poverty says you should be **ashamed** of your stuff.
- Both are wrong because they put the emphasis on **stuff**.

Here is the second thing:

B. Stuff is the **stewardship** test.

- God wants to know how we **think** about stuff.

8. God not only tests our hearts with **our** stuff, He tests our hearts with **other people's** stuff.

### **Deuteronomy 5:21**

Coveting – is where you set your heart on anything **other** than God.

9. God wants us to go after **Him**.

The deception is this: Greed causes us to expect to receive from **people** other than God.

Here is the third point:

C. What is the spirit of **pride** and **poverty**.

This is what works through **greed**.

### **Deuteronomy 8:1**

#### **Deuteronomy 8:2**

<sup>2</sup> And you shall **remember** that the Lord your God **led you** all the way these forty years in the **wilderness**, to **humble you** and **test you**, **to know what was in your heart**, whether you would keep His commandments or not.

#### **Deuteronomy 8:3-9**

#### **Deuteronomy 8:10**

## Deuteronomy 8:11-14

## Deuteronomy 8:15-17

## Deuteronomy 8:18

What is the principle for being grateful?

Answer: Remember always it is God who gave you power to get wealth.

Pride says: I earned it and I deserve more.

Poverty says: I shouldn't have it and should feel guilty for what I have.

Gratitude says: Thank you

10. Gratitude always acknowledges the provision of God.

## Proverbs 10:22

No sorrow – always be thankful