

Life in God's Family – Giving Together

Week Three – What about loans and saving?

Exodus 22:25, Deuteronomy 15: 1 – 11, Matthew 25:14 - 30

1. Exodus 22:25

- If you lend money – God's law recognised people would borrow money!
- No interest – for the person who is needy
- Social responsibility the guiding principle for God's people
- Acts 2: 45, Acts 4:34

2. Deuteronomy 15: 1 - 11

- 7 Year – Debts cancelled for God's people!
- 'There should be no poor amongst you' v4: 'There will always be poor people in the land' v11
- 'Do not be hard hearted or tight fisted towards your poor brother' v7
- 'Do not harbour the wicked thought, the seventh year is near' v9
- 'Be opened handed towards your brothers and towards the poor and needy in the land' v11

3. Matthew 25:14 -30 – A parable about responsible living

- Wealth is not evenly distributed!
- Whatever we have we are responsible – managers not owners
- Two went at once to put his money to work
- One hid his master's money
- Accountability – Well done! Share your master's happiness
- Throw the worthless servant outside

4. Pensions, Savings, Loans – living Christianly with money

- I am accountable for all I have been given
- I am called to a life of social responsibility and generosity
- I am called to work. Actively look towards being able to work
2Thessalonians 3:10
- I am called to come and share the master's happiness!

Digging Deeper

For personal reflection:

1. When it comes to money management and giving which of the three servants do you identify most with?
2. Are there practical steps that you need to be put in place as a response to our studies together on giving?
3. Do you feel you are a manager or owner of what God has entrusted you with?
4. Meditate on Matthew 6: 19 – 24 and if you feel comfortable share your thoughts with you small group this week.

Read the Exodus and Deuteronomy passages:

1. How do we live in the tension of the call that there be no needy people in the land and the reality that there will always be poor in the land.
2. How would you evaluate the effect of the welfare state over the past 80 years? How does God's provision of debt cancelling and social responsibility differ?
3. What has been your experience of borrowing? What effect did it have on you and the people around you? What is it like to live with debt?
4. Money Budgeting is to be honest boring and hard work! What are the benefits? (We are advised that it is best to have three months expenditure saved and put aside for the rainy day experience).

Read Matthew 25:14 – 30

1. Does the amount of money we have make a difference to our attitudes towards how we use it?
2. Is accountability a good thing? How does it make you feel?
3. What is it in the third servants thinking that motivates his actions to dig a hole and bury his talent?

Read Acts 2: 42 – 47 and Matthew 6: 19 - 24

1. Is there any dividing line between spiritual and practical living here?
2. What do you think lies at the heart of giving?