

Day 4: Your heart is in your drawer

Read it: Matthew 6:19-24

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Think about it:

Do you or someone you know have any shirts of favorite athletes or sports teams? To find your “heart” for sports, we could do a search of your clothes drawer (to find your sports “treasure”). What would we find? Carolina or Duke? Panthers or Steelers? Earnhardt or Johnson? Jesus’ words of wisdom from Matthew 6 are right on target—with our interest in sports and with our possessions (money).

If a drawer full of black, white and blue jerseys show your dedication to a football team, then does the way you manage your money show your dedication to Jesus? What do you think about verses 20 & 21? Is there really such a thing as storing up treasures in heaven? Jesus is clearly challenging us to live that way. And verse 21 gives us a strong challenge—see below for some questions that will cause you to think about how you are responding to his challenge.

Act on it: Here are some questions to think about—and if some of them cause you to squirm a little bit today, ask God to work in you and over time he will re-shape your heart to reflect your devotion to him.

- Do you give 10% of your earnings to the church?
- Do you look for opportunities beyond that to give to groups (like those listed in day 2) or other people in need?
- Have you designed a plan to get out of debt? God knows the bonds that debt puts us in and he desires for us to be free from those bonds.
- Do you try to be a good steward with all of your money, spending wisely rather than wasting it?



HAMMERTIME

Week 4
March 1, 2009

Purpose: To nail down this week’s Awaken topic (Godly finances).

How to use it: Individuals can do it on their own 4 times a week to cultivate this habit of spending time with God regularly. Families: adults are encouraged to do HammerTime on their own & then meet with their whole family to go through it together.

Example of time: Read verses (3 min), Discuss/think about (5 min), Pray (2 min)

For more tools: check out Bethlehembc.com or AwakenToolbox.com.

Day 1: God owns it all

Read it:

1 Chronicles 29:10-13 (David’s prayer) Extra: Matthew 22:15-22 (Taxes? Respect? God’s direction)

Think about it:

Notice & list the attributes of God (at least 6 of them) in verse 11. How much belongs to God?

Do you believe the 2 pairs of blessings in verse 12 really come from God? Have any of these ever slipped away from you, completely out of your control? Did that help you realize that they truly are out of our control?

Once we realize who God is and that he truly owns it all, what should our response be? (verse 13)

Solomon (David’s son) lived by these principles and what happened to him? (verse 25)

Act on it:

Read 1 Chronicles 29:11 every day this week and ask God to reinforce in you the fact that he truly owns everything. It will change your perspective on what we think is “ours”!

Day 2: Putting God to the test

Read it: Malachi 3:8-12

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Think about it:

Make sure you and your family know how much a tithe is: 10% or 1/10th. \$1 out of every \$10. \$100 out of every \$1000.

According to this principle, where does God say is the “storehouse” for you personally?

- (A) Compassion International (B) Joel Osteen Ministry
(C) Your local church/Bethlehem (D) Salvation Army

Answer: C

How much blessing is God talking about in verse 10? It is like opening a grain silo in Nebraska and it pouring out so fast you can't catch it all. Or like eating at a buffet on a cruise—more food than you can possibly eat. How does it feel when you think about receiving that much blessing?

Read verse 11 and think about how God not only increases the blessing, but he will also decrease the financial impact in other areas. The miracle of it is that it is literally unexplainable. Have you ever seen this happen?

According to verse 12, what will other people say when they see all of this happen? What a witness!

Act on it:

Respond to God's command and incredible promises and start being a percentage giver. Put God to the test for the next 30 days and give 10% to your local church, Bethlehem. Don't let your current financial condition prevent you from taking a step of faith. If necessary, start at 2% or 5% and watch and see as God builds your faith, up to a place where you can give 10% and even more.



Day 3: Attitude of the giver

Read it: Mark 12:41-44 & 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

Think about it:

In Mark 12, who sacrificed more with their giving—the rich people who gave thousands of dollars (or more) or the poor widow who gave just a couple coins? Was Jesus interested in the amount or was he interested in the sacrifice? Why do you think that was important to him?

If God is calling us to that type of sacrificial giving, how do the verses in Corinthians describe what our attitude (even in the sacrifice) should be? Which of the words from verses 6-7 describe the attitude that God wants us to have (circle them)?

reluctant generous cheerful grumbling

Compare the differences between these 2 people. They both come to your birthday party. One is forced to come by his parents and gives you a gift that he would rather keep for himself. The other person is so excited to be invited to your party and uses her own money to buy you a special gift that she can't wait to give you. It could be the same gift inside the box, but there are 2 totally different attitudes. With that example in mind, what is your attitude like when you give to God?

Act on it:

The next time you (and your family) give something to God, meet together to discuss how much it is, pray over it with thanksgiving and bring it to church with an attitude of cheerfulness and thankfulness. It will totally change your perspective about what you are giving to God!