**A New Christian needs to do *what* with money?**

**A New Christian**

Have you ever talked with someone that is new to church entirely? As in, they just don’t get how church works? Maybe they have attended a church service a few times in their life, but they don’t understand that financial donations are what fund EVERY nonprofit.

In their case discipleship is like building a house from the dirt up. Well, sort of. We know that every person begins discipleship with a worldview to be shaped and molded by an accurate understanding of God, self, and in this discussion, financial stewardship, but it’s not quite the same as discipling someone who is returning to a childhood faith.

If you took a moment to list the key financial stewardship truths or principles that a new Christian should know and do with the aim of developing their faith and dependence upon God, what would those principles be?

**Repentance**

Luke records a budding relationship between Jesus and Zacchaeus in chapter 19. Jesus was passing through Jericho and was hemmed in by a crowd. A seeker, out of curiosity, climbs a tree hoping to get a better glimpse of Jesus (Luke 19:1-4). Jesus spots him and invites himself over to Zacchaeus’ for an impromptu party.

At this party, in his own home, is where Zacchaeus repents of his sins. What gets mentioned are his financial sins. He’s been doing business and managing his financial resources in a way – so Zacchaeus interprets – that does not show love for God or love for people. But notice something peculiar about his repentance.

Luke chronicles Zacchaeus’ words, “if I have defrauded anyone of anything” (Luke 19:8). I suspect we would hear audible laughs when he said this. Like the crowd verbally jabbing him, *“if*, don’t you mean *when* you’ve defrauded others”.

His repentance is sloppy. His repentance language is imprecise and vague.

It’s of note that this appears to be a spontaneous response by Zacchaeus AND, unlike the so called Rich Young Ruler (Luke 18:22), Jesus refrains from telling Zacchaeus to give away ALL his resources. In comparison Zacchaeus does offer a 50% stake of his resources to help the poor…which the Rich Young Ruler was saddened by the thought of.

**Change of Actions**

When it comes to financial stewardship intentions are *usually* outweighed by actions. This is where Zacchaeus demonstrates a change of heart. I just said that his words of repentance were sloppy – but by Jesus’ judgment, Zacchaeus didn’t do it wrong.

The road of discipleship is often marked by fits and starts. Our own lives are proof of this. I would not make any accusations about Zacchaeus and his follow up on the promises he makes in front of friends and Jesus. However, we all know people who have said they are going to change financially and then don’t.

Consequently, Zacchaeus’ change of action is such a strong demonstration of faith that Jesus credits it to him as righteousness. Wouldn’t you agree? Jesus states, “today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham” (Luke 19:9).

Impossible mission accomplished. A rich man saved AND his financial life changed (Luke 18:27).

I know that it’s not possible to discuss every aspect of disciple making from the pulpit every week, but do you ever talk about the financial aspects of discipleship?

**Pastor Rob’s Financial Tip**

Consider, are your personal financial habits in line with what you believe about God and His provision for you? Consider, have you stated to your church (in the last 12 months or so) what you believe a disciple of Christ should be repenting of and changing?