

# Seeking the Lord First in the Area of Finances

*By Jenny Rose Curtis*



*“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you,”* (Matt 6:33). It’s amazing how this one verse reveals so much about the Father’s heart for us, His children. You can see His desire for us to seek Him and to pursue who He is and what He loves and how much He wants to bless us and take care of us. Unfortunately, many people, more than you would think, believe God is this Big “Meanie” who likes to see us hurting or only blesses us if we drag it out of Him. But we see here that that’s not His heart. His heart is to bless us and provide for us. It’s all just a matter of letting Him. How do we let the Lord provide for us? By seeking first His kingdom! It’s done by laying all things at His feet for Him to do with them as He sees fit. I started out my paper like this because it’s so important to understand God’s heart for us before we attempt to apply His standards to our lives. It’s fruitless to try and please God by doing all the right “things,” when what God really wants is our hearts first and actions to follow. The Lord’s heart is for us. That’s why He refers to Himself as a father, one who deeply cares for and loves on His kids. Knowing that God is for you and not against you is what gets you through life with peace and joy. Nothing can possibly take its place.

Now that we understand that Jesus is our Provider and our Shepherd and we know that He loves us and cares for us, how do we go about seeking

His kingdom and His righteousness? What does that even mean? Although it truly is a complex mystery to a degree, it really is, contrarily, a simple matter of the heart! It means making Jesus' kingdom and His righteousness our main focus in life. It means living our lives with God as the center point and our lives being built around Him, the cornerstone.



So how can we do this in the area of finances? Let's look at what the Word says. In Leviticus and Deuteronomy, it talks about the tithe, ten percent of everything you own, as being given to the Lord. The Levites would collect the tenth from all of Israel. This was done to cover the expenses of the tabernacle and, later on, the temple; for sacrifices; for the poor and needy; and to take care of the Levites, who had no other way of supporting themselves. Nowadays, we don't have a tabernacle or a temple. We don't need one! Jesus came to restore man to God so that God could live among us instead of in a separate room. Now, He lives in us, the Church, instead of in a building. Thus, we still give our tenth to the Lord, but now it's through giving to our local church. As true as it is that we're giving to cover expenses in the church, tithing is also an act of surrendering to the Lord your wealth. You're telling the Lord that He has full control, even over your finances and you're proving it by giving Him a part of it. This plays true especially in financial difficulties. I have known many people who have gone through really hard times and have still remained faithful to the Lord by tithing. Every one of them has been taken care of, in spite of their giving! I should really say that they were taken care of *because* of their giving! The Lord loves a cheerful giver as much as He loves loyalty and He rewards both.

I must let you know that a tenth of your money being given to your local church doesn't give you the okay from God to do with the rest of your money whatever you feel like. It all belongs to the Lord. It's His decision where it goes and what is done with it. The more you understand this and gladly ask Him what His plans are, the more you'll realize that you're making smart financial decisions. You'll find yourself spending less on junk and more on what's important, such as helping others out, paying off your debts, and saving. God's a pretty good financial advisor.

Seeking first God's kingdom in your finances is something that isn't mastered overnight. Yet it all starts in your heart and how you view your money. Jesus said very clearly that no one can serve two masters. They will either love one and hate the other or cling to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and your insatiable love of money and material things. It's impossible. This comes in very handy when you're pursuing righteousness in the way you handle your finances. Somehow, knowing that it's all God's, that He knows what's best for you, and that His will is what matters most gives you a peace when you're dealing with your money, or should I say, God's money, because that's what it really is.

