

# "How to Live Rich Now...and Be Rich Later"

Bob Shank

October 14, 2018

# connect groups

## PATH

Bob Shank is the founder of The Master's Program, a leadership mentoring program that helps believers understand how to lead by living an irresistible lifestyle. He and his wife, Cheri, live in Southern California. In this teaching, Pastor Shank unpacks the benefits of generous giving.

## POINTS

### The Pursuit for Life

- To be righteous is to be like God; God always does the right thing. We're all invited to be conformed to His image—that of a giving God. A righteous person is always generous.
- Generosity defines God; the Father gave His Son (see John 3:16). In His love and generosity, God gave the world something it didn't deserve: Jesus.
- Generosity also defines Jesus. Jesus said, "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:28). We don't earn salvation; it's a free gift.
- In our pursuit for life, God wants us to live spiritually rich, so we can live a rich, generous life.
- The Christian life is not just knowing but being conformed to and transformed by the Spirit.
- We can't serve both God and money (see Matthew 6:24). Something will transform us—either the Spirit of Christ, or the spirit of cash/mammon (money elevated to the position of God). You don't have to have money to worship it. Some pursue profit in place of God.
- We talk about money in church because we are a family, and we should always talk about things that are important to the family. Jesus often discussed money.
- So, how do we live rich? Break from the pattern of the world and become essentially different—like Jesus.
- We have the choice to be good or great. Using our gifts to their fullest includes generous giving.

### The Process for Life

- God made His expectations of giving known in Malachi 3:6-12.
- A tithe is 10 percent of all that is entrusted to us. We are not *generous* with a tithe, we are *faithful* with it. Giving a tithe is the beginning of obedience.
- An offering is over and above a tithe. This honors God's generosity.
- The text challenges us to test Him in this truth and He will overflow the floodgates of heaven with a blessing.
- So, our process for life begins with faithfulness and generosity.
- The process is:
  1. Be informed. Know what Scripture says.
  2. Be faithful. Begin with a tithe.
  3. Be grateful. Thank God for what He will do through your faithful giving.
- Paul outlined various gifts, one of which is generous giving (see Romans 12:6-8). We are called to use these gifts as needs arise.
- We must see beyond the immediate needs to include the broader body of Christ and reaching the world for Christ. That is an offering. God has gifted some believers to give more—a gift given to the body of Christ for the benefit of others.
- When we entrust our lives and our giving to God, He will multiply them.

### The Projection for Life

- Money is part of life. Earning it occupies much of what we do.
- What we do with money matters. We must not store it up on earth, but in heaven. When we

think about giving, we must have an eternal perspective to see how God will use it for His kingdom.

- God promises to bless our giving.
- Jesus commanded a particular use of money in Luke 16:9-11. We should not use wealth to get friends, but to assist in populating heaven by bringing the gospel to the world.
- The currency of heaven isn't dollars, it's redeemed people. We can turn earthly dollars into eternal dollars by entrusting our finances to God.
- What we do with our money today influences the future. True riches help transform lives.
- Our money is the Lord's property. God owns it all. We need to use our resources as they were meant to be used—for God's purposes.
- Paul asked believers what they would do with the foundation he had laid (see 1 Corinthians 3:5-17). How will you use your finances to build a great foundation based on eternal values?
- When your faith in Christ becomes a reality, your works will either be regretted or rewarded.
- In the end, Jesus will reward everyone according to what they have done (see Revelation 22:12).
- We have salvation because of God's generosity. What we do in response to God's generosity matters. May we use God's truths to transform lives.

## PRACTICE

**Connect Up:** How is the Trinity involved in generous giving? Discuss the following and find Scriptures to support your answers:

- How is God the Father generous?
- How is God the Son generous?
- How is God the Spirit generous?

**Connect In:** The church is called to be a generous body. In 2 Corinthians 9:7, Paul characterizes a generous giver as one who gives cheerfully. *Cheerful* can be translated *hilarious*, one who finds elation in giving. At its heart, the ministry of giving is centered

on grace: giving back to God what is undeserved. Use 2 Corinthians 9:7 as a basis to discuss the following:

- What does it mean to give as you have decided in your heart?
- What does it mean not to give reluctantly or under compulsion?
- Why does God value a cheerful giver?

**Connect Out:** In a day and age where many people have deep financial problems, what practical encouragement would you give someone to help

straighten out their finances? Dave Ramsey suggests these seven baby steps:<sup>1</sup>

- Save to start an emergency fund.
- Pay off all debt.
- Save three-to-six months of expenses for emergencies.
- Invest 15 percent of your household income into Roth IRAs and pre-tax retirement funds.
- Save for your children's college fund.
- Pay off your home early.

<sup>1</sup> Dave Ramsey, "Dave Ramsey's 7 Baby Steps," [www.daveramsey.com/baby-steps](http://www.daveramsey.com/baby-steps), accessed 10/15/18.