

GENEROSITY TODAY

Helping Christians experience greater Kingdom impact through effective, purpose-filled generosity.

2021, ISSUE 3

Money vs. Wisdom? It's No Contest

Okay, time for a pop quiz. Who said this:
"Money is a shelter."

If you think it's Bernie Madoff or an infamous hedge fund manager, guess again, because it's Solomon! (Ecclesiastes 7:12)

Shelters protect us from the howling wind and the blazing sun. When money is a shelter, it can be used to shield us from homelessness and starvation. That's a good thing!

But money's shelter has obvious limits.

If money is a person's only shelter, then what significance is left once the money dries up or when we're called into eternity? Solomon asked this same question when he took inventory of everything he had. His answer: "Everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind." (Ecclesiastes 2:11, NIV)

So, what's a better shelter than money? Try wisdom. Solomon pitted his money against wisdom and learned it wasn't even a contest. "The advantage of knowledge is this," he said. "Wisdom preserves those who have it." (Ecclesiastes 7:12, NIV)

Wisdom's shelter extends beyond the grave, bridging the span between now and eternity. There's no difference between what's meaningful now because of wisdom and what will be meaningful in glory. Whatever gap used to exist between life and death gets erased.

If you're thinking this sounds like Jesus, you're on the right track. Who can undo dying and death's effects better than the resurrected Christ? Who else has a life that reaches from heaven to earth, and then back again?

The Apostle Paul puts it plainly: "Jesus has become for us wisdom from God." (1 Corinthians 1:30, NIV) In His name, whatever is meaningless and hopeless about your living, find cover in Him.

Even if your money runs out, Jesus' shelter never will.

HOW MUCH TO KEEP

The Growing Generosity of Jack and Mary Ann Byeman

"It's not about how much should we give, but how much should we keep."

This is how Jack and Mary Ann Byeman explain why generosity has never been determined by how much or how little they have. From the very beginning – regardless of their circumstances – they've been guided by their Scripture-based belief that it all belongs to God.

"Everything we have is a gift from God, 100 percent," he explains. "You don't have to have a boatload of money to give any of it away."

That philosophy drove them as newlyweds to give what they could to their church and other ministries, even as they were starting new careers and raising a young family.

"We had a will not too long after we were married," he says, then adds with a chuckle, "which is pretty simple when you don't have anything."

Nearly 50 years later, with three grown children and after a successful career as the chief financial officer of a Boeing Company segment, Jack and Mary Ann are delighted to direct even more time and resources to charity. Together, they are as quick to volunteer at their church as they are to pull out the checkbook.

"For quite a few years, we have been thinking our giving ought to be well over the typical 10 percent," says Jack. "It's certainly easy to do that at our stage in life, and we think it is appropriate."

"Everything we have is a gift from God, 100 percent."

The Byemans turned to Barnabas Foundation to help them create a comprehensive charitable plan that will continue to honor God and care for the needs of their family, well beyond their lifetime.



Jack and Mary Ann Byeman

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HOW MUCH TO KEEP

Continued

As the Byemans continue to pay attention to God's Word and their changing circumstances, they are prayerfully evaluating what the Lord would have them to do next.

"I don't think it's proper to decide how much we're willing to give," concludes Jack. "Instead, we're looking at how much we need to keep of what God has given us."

Ask a Planner



Answered by
Steve Baker, J.D.,
Director of Planning

Q: What are my options for an executor of my will or a trustee of my trust?

A: You have a variety of options when it comes to making this important decision:

- Family member
- Trusted friend
- Trusted advisor
- Trust company or trust department at a bank
- In some states, a professional fiduciary

Each of these have advantages and disadvantages, but in any case, you should make sure your selected executor or trustee has the required expertise, integrity and time available. Additionally, consider whether there are family dynamics that would make the job more difficult. Using a non-relative can relieve a family of a lot of unnecessary stress and relational conflict.

Have Questions?

Barnabas Foundation will answer your questions and help you make tax-wise gifts, in support of your church and other favorite ministries. Call at 888.448.3040 or email planning@BarnabasFoundation.com.

THE FINAL WORD

"When money goes on mission two things are critical: our trust in God to provide and our willingness to serve in excellence, with the best we have in us."

—*"When Money Goes on Mission" by Rob Martin*

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During this FREE, five-part online training series, Barnabas Foundation's planning team will provide you with practical tips for giving in ways that increase your impact while reducing your costs and headaches.

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Giving Cryptocurrency, October 20

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Giving From an IRA, November 30

Giving Stock and Marketable Securities, November 10

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