Summary

In this sermon, Pastor Darrell addresses one of the most frequently discussed topics in Jesus's teachings: money and giving. He challenges the common assumption embedded in the question "Why give God MY money?" by pointing out that the word "my" reveals a flawed premise. According to Psalm 24, everything on earth belongs to God, and what we earn is made possible through the skills, opportunities, and life He has provided. Giving, therefore, is not about finances but about faith and obedience to God's word.

The pastor walks through several key biblical principles: God desires cheerful and generous giving (2 Corinthians 9), giving should be done in secret rather than for public recognition (Matthew 6), and the tithe (10% of one's income) is a direct command from God. Drawing from Malachi 3, he highlights God's unique invitation to "test Him" in this area, promising to open the floodgates of heaven for those who are faithful. He closes with a personal story about how God provided the exact amount needed to send His son to a Christian school, illustrating that faithfulness in giving leads to God's tangible and abundant blessing.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You today with open hearts and willing minds. We thank You for gathering us together and for the truth found in Your Word. As we discuss what it means to honor You with our finances, we ask that You soften any areas of resistance within us and replace fear or doubt with faith. Holy Spirit, guide our conversation today. Help each of us to hear not just what we want to hear, but what You want us to receive. May this time together draw us closer to You and to one another. In Jesus's name we pray. Amen.

Ice Breaker

What is one of your earliest memories involving money, whether it was earning your first paycheck, saving up for something special, or learning to share as a kid?

Key Verses

1. Psalm 24:1-2
2. 2 Corinthians 9:6-7
3. 2 Corinthians 9:10
4. Matthew 6:1-4
5. Proverbs 3:9-10
6. Malachi 3:6-10
7. Matthew 23:23

Questions

1. The pastor pointed out that the problem with asking 'Why give God MY money?' lies in the word 'my.' Do you find it easy or difficult to view your income and possessions as ultimately belonging to God? What makes that perspective challenging in everyday life?
2. Psalm 24:1-2 declares that the earth and everything in it belongs to the Lord. How does truly believing that change the way you think about budgeting, spending, and giving?
3. God says in 2 Corinthians 9:7 that He loves a cheerful giver. On a scale of honest reflection, would you describe your current attitude toward giving as cheerful, reluctant, or somewhere in between? What do you think shapes that attitude?
4. In Matthew 6, Jesus warns against giving in order to be seen or recognized by others. Have you ever witnessed, or perhaps experienced yourself, the temptation to want acknowledgment for what you give? How can a small group or church community guard against that tendency?
5. The pastor described the tithe as a statement of faith and obedience rather than a financial calculation. What fears or practical concerns most often get in the way of people stepping out in faith with their giving?
6. Malachi 3:10 contains one of the rare moments in Scripture where God invites us to test Him. What does it mean to you personally that God would make such a bold promise specifically around the area of finances?
7. The pastor shared a personal story about how God provided the exact amount needed for His son's Christian school tuition through an unexpected pension check. Have you ever experienced a moment where God's provision was so specific that it could not be explained as coincidence? How did that experience affect your faith?
8. Martin Luther reportedly said people go through three conversions: of the head, the heart, and the pocketbook. Which of those three do you think is hardest for most people, and why? Where do you personally feel you are in that journey?

Life Application

This week, take an honest look at your finances. Pull up your bank statements or review your giving records and calculate whether your giving reflects 10% of your income. If you are already tithing, take time to thank God and ask Him how He might be calling you to give even more generously or cheerfully. If you are not yet tithing, consider taking one practical step toward that goal, whether it is setting up a recurring gift, adjusting your budget, or simply praying and asking God to grow your faith in this area. Remember, tithing is not about the amount. It is about trusting that God can and will provide for every need when you honor Him first.

Key Takeaways

1. Everything we have belongs to God. The premise that our money is 'ours' is flawed from the start, because God is the source of every skill, opportunity, and resource we possess.

2. God desires cheerful and generous giving, not reluctant or compulsory giving. Our attitude in giving reflects our trust in His character and provision.
3. Giving should be done in secret, not for public recognition. The reward God promises comes to those who give with a pure heart, not to those who seek the applause of others.
4. The tithe (10% of income) is a biblical command, and Malachi 3 contains God's unique invitation to test Him in this area, with a promise of abundant blessing for those who are faithful.
5. Tithing is a statement of faith and obedience, not a financial strategy. When we give God the first fruits of what we earn, we are declaring that we trust Him to provide for all our needs.

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, we thank You for the time we have shared together today and for the truth of Your Word that challenges and encourages us. We confess that trusting You with our finances is not always easy, and we ask for the courage and faith to take the next step in honoring You with what You have already given us. Help us to give cheerfully, generously, and in secret, with our eyes fixed on You rather than on the approval of others. We trust Your promise in Malachi that when we are faithful, You will open the floodgates of heaven over our lives. May our giving be an act of worship that reflects our love for You and our confidence in Your provision. Bless each person in this group, their families, and their finances, and may You receive all the glory. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.