Intro: March 31st 2020 I was stuck In Cuba...Afraid I wasn't going to be able to get back into the US! Because of COVID and what was taking place world wide the US had closed our borders. I was in Cuba with only the money in my pocket. OK...except in Cuba, Credit Cards don't work. I was facing the possibility that it would be months before the US allowed anyone in from an international destination. I was bitting outside on the balcony praying... "God you said you would take care of me... but I'm not feeling very safe! As I was praying, a sparrow came Immediately I remembered this passage of Scripture. Mt 6, Where Jesus is teaching and He said (READ) **Remember Our Biblical Overview Of Giving.**

3 Parts: Before The Law: OT Levitical Law Jesus/NT Today We want to Look At What Jesus Teaches Us About Giving: Mt 6:19-34 Notice the first thing says

- 1. Put God First And Everything Else Falls Into Place!
 - Store up treasure in heaven...not on Earth:
 - Use your money to train your heart!
 - Put God First:

Vs 21 We always have it backwards! Heart follows money Vs 24 Can't serve both...one will always be first: Choose

Vs 19-20 Focus on spiritual not material things! 401Heaven

Vs 15: lit: Stand Guard! DANGER!!! Warning against danger!

I am at hospital beds all time NEVER: What about my money!

(Get focused on RIGHT things!)

Vs 25-34 Your Father KNOWS: Need vs Want!

God knows what you need...and provides Illus: As I was sitting in Cuba counting my money God said: Why are you here? I sent you...I will provide! The bird came...I was so upset...because I didn't get a picture...I wanted to tell everyone: CAME BACK!

2. True Wealth Is About a Lot More Than Money!

- Be on Your Guard:
- Life is More than things and money:
- Life is about OTHERS, NOT SELF!

Look how many times he says ME and MINE! Illus: Jn 10:10 MSG "A thief is only there to steal and kill and destroy. I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and *better life than they ever dreamed of!*" (You can have a GREAT life without money...and miserable with!) **Bumper sticker is wrong:** *"The one who dies with the most toys wins" NO: The one who dies greatest impact!*

3. Remember You Are A Steward Of What You Hold, Not An Owner! Luke 16:10-13

- Steward Vs Owner: Steward manages something for another's benefit: Owner for his own benefit!
- Q: Are you being trustworthy with what God has given you NOW?
- We say: God if you gave me more...I would use it for you! He says: "What are you doing with what you have?" You see, If we aren't being trustworthy with what we currently have...God will not give us more! Waste it! Illus: I have a plan for what to do with the 1.5 billion dollar powerball prize! Made it years ago bought ticket! Maybe not a good steward, huh?
- > Illus: I do know what a good steward looks like though. Check for 100,000.00 "Pastor, that's not my job, it's yours. I have a gift for making money, I make it and give it: You and the Elders decide where God wants it to be used!" Then he said, I have been doing this for years...this isn't first church...I'm just being faithful!

4. Be Intentional: Plan Your Giving. Use Your Money, Don't Let Your Money Use You!

Many of us are casual and off the cuff with our giving. We show up and think, need to do something...what do I have? Both Jesus and Paul tell us something entirely different. They both say: Be Intentional. Be intention with God, be intentional with others, be intentional with yourself.

- Be Intentional with your giving to God: QUOTE: "Don't worship your wealth, worship with your wealth"
- No one sits down to build a tower w/o first counting the cost...do I have enough to finish LK 14:28-30 On the first day of the week each of us should put aside a sum of money in keeping w/income 1 Cor 16:2: I believe what Paul is referencing is a tithe...but some would disagree...
- Be Intentional With Your Giving To Others:

Luke 14:12 -14 Do not invite friends, family, instead invite poor crippled, lame blind! USE YOUR MONEY! Illus: Remember the Rich Fool: He NEVER ONCE CONSIDERD HELPING OTHERS!!!

1 Jn 3:17-18 Whoever has worlds goods and doesn't help those in need...How can love of God dwell in them! Illus: We don't publicize it, don't want to embarrass anyone: Paid mortgage single parent; meds; repair car

Lk 12:13-21 **Rich Fool**

5. God Looks At the Attitude Behind Your Giving, Not The Amount Of Your Giving!

We get captured with all of the wrong things! Some of you didn't hear a word I said after 100,000 dollar check. Don't be impressed...He dropped off two others much larger...and Inspired others to do the same! It was all about the attitude! He didn't ever want to be known...just doing what God called him to do!

- > Jesus knows we get impressed with big numbers...so He taught us to look be yond that!
 - Mark 12:41-44 Widows Mites: She gave more than all the rest!
- > <u>2 Cor 8:12</u> If the heart is willing the gift is acceptable! According to what you have...

Illus: It always starts with the heart!

6. Jesus Teaches Us We Reap What We Sow!

This is a biblical principle that we see in the OT, Proverbs, The NT...Everywhere in the bible!

- > Gal 6:7-8 Do not be deceived
- Luke 6:8 Give and it will be given to you! Pressed down, Shaken Together, Running over! Illus: This is from the grain market!

Illus: I saw this at Trunk R Treat with the Popcorn!

Applic: When you make the intentional choice to give to God...and your heart is right...you simply CANNOT outgive God! I'm not saying you putting your gifts into a big slot machine in the sky. I am saying that God blesses those who trust in Him! Whose heart is right...who choose to put Him first!

I want to close today with something I read this week...not original to me...I polished it a bit...but 7. Money Is The Least Important Thing You Give God!

- Saw this while I was researching this weekLove it!Don't Pray:Rob God of Relationship He DesiresDon't Worship:Rob God of Praise He Deserves
- Don't Give: Rob God of offering He Delights In: God Loves A Cheerful Giver! 2 Cor 9:7

<u>Illus: Here is what I want you to remember.... WHEN YOU HONOR GOD WITH YOUR GIVING...HE HONORS HIS WORD!</u> Here is my challenge to you...if you have never given intentionally, consistently, cheerfully...PUT GOD TO THE TEST! Try Him and see if He is true to His word!

There is an old saying you have probably heard:

"Give til it hurts." Sorry...that's not biblical at ALL "Give til it feels GOOD! That's biblical!

If you gave to this place of worship in the past year...Here are some of what you have done....

- Food Pantry: Hundreds of people fed
- Single Mom mortgage
- Medicine purchased
- Car repairs for people so they can get to work
- Every ministry from Kidz, to Students, to Movie Night to Small Groups, Mortgage so we have a place to worship

Every one of those and MORE...You have a part in!

I was given an opportunity yesterday to see this happen again. Sandy to Cuba, Her traveling partner hurt can go Contacted a dear friend... Can you be there Of course...I asked him...can I send something for you and your family?

BackpackRechargable LightsShampoo and ConditionerSunglassesDisposable RazorsPhone chargerSandals Girls (8 and 10)Size 10 walking shoes for him