

## FROM THE DIRECTOR



Can you relate to the joy of having the right tool at the right time?

The story is told of a very wealthy man eating fish one

Friday night in his favorite restaurant. He began to choke on a bone in his throat. Gasping for air, he could neither dislodge nor swallow it, and his life was suddenly in great danger. A doctor hurried across the room, took out a small pliers, and quickly removed the bone. The wealthy man was overwhelmed with joy and asked the doctor, "How can I ever repay you?" The doctor calmly replied, "Just give me half of what you would have given when the bone was stuck in your throat."

That's a humorous ending to a serious story about the importance of having the right tools at the right time. In this issue of *Stewardship Spotlight*, we explore how money, too, is a tool that can be used to honor God, teach life lessons, and impact others for eternity. Join us as we learn together how to experience greater joy managing God's money with an eternal perspective.

Serving the Lord with you,



Henry Doorn, Jr. – Executive Director

## A Tool for Teaching

What's the first word that comes to mind when you hear the word tithe? How about tool?

Few stewardship issues create more debate than the matter of the tithe. We know from the Bible that the tithe was the 10 percent the Israelites returned to God. God's Word in Malachi 3:10 is quite clear: "bring the whole tithe into the storehouse." What it means for us today is more confusing. Does God expect 10 percent today? Is the tithe a law for New Testament believers? If it is, why isn't the tithe clearly restated in the New Testament as a law for the church?

Galatians 4 gives us some guidance on this issue. There Paul tells us that Old Testament believers were like immature children for whom the law served as a guardian. New Testament believers, in comparison, have entered into spiritual maturity in Christ.

Understood from Paul's perspective, then, the tithe was something of a teaching tool. It's not surprising, then, that many parents still use the tithe as an appropriate way to introduce the idea of healthy giving to their children. But as we grow in Christ, Paul's words suggest that the tithe no longer is a strict rule for us to follow today.

Does that mean we can ignore the tithe? Hardly! Like much Old Testament legislation, the tithe contains important principles to guide our living today. First, the tithe teaches proportional giving. In ancient Israel, giving rose with income. So must ours. The more we make, the more we give. The tithe principle is violated when we expect every family in church to contribute the same amount.

Second, the tithe teaches substantial giving. Ten percent is a significant amount, especially in a poor culture like that of Palestine. The ancient

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## Special Gift Opportunity Reminder!

The IRA Charitable Rollover extension makes it possible to provide tax-free gifts from your IRA to ministries that are important to you. This opportunity may be right for you or someone you know who is age 70 ½ or older.

Gifts of up to \$100,000 may be given by December 31, 2011 and will qualify for all or part of your required minimum distribution. Gifts must be an outright gift to a charitable organization and may only be made from traditional IRAs and Roth IRAs.

For information on this gifting opportunity, please call us toll-free at 1.888.448.3040.

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Israelites were expected to make a significant contribution of their wealth to the kingdom. And if that was God's expectation of spiritual children, would God expect any less of spiritual grownups?

Third, the tithe teaches God's blessing on giving. In the Old Testament, where God's kingdom was rooted to a specific plot of land, the blessings promised were tied to the land. But today, God's blessings still accompany our giving. I've never talked to a generous giver in the church who has not told me that God's many-sided grace has far outpaced dollars put in the plate! You see, no one out-gives God. Nobody!

*Source: "The Joy of Generosity" devotional series developed by Barnabas Foundation and available at [www.barnabasfoundation.com](http://www.barnabasfoundation.com); adapted from the HomeLink series written by Pastor Bob Heerspink and released by Faith Alive Christian Resources ([www.faithaliveresources.com](http://www.faithaliveresources.com)).*

## Recommended Resource

### MANAGING GOD'S MONEY: A BIBLICAL GUIDE

By Randy Alcorn

"When we see money as a toy to play with instead of a tool to impact eternity, our vision becomes short-sighted and unfocused," says best-selling author Randy Alcorn.

In his new book, *Managing God's Money*, Alcorn uses an easy-to-read "Question & Answer" format to break down what the Bible says about money management, organizing those questions into 6 categories:

- Bible 101 - Money and Possessions
- Perspectives that Impede Faithful Money Management
- Our Stewardship in Eternity's Light
- Giving and Sharing God's Money and Possessions
- Wisely Handling God's Money and Possessions
- Passing the Baton of Wise Stewardship

You may be aware that Randy Alcorn has written two other stewardship classics: *Money, Possessions & Eternity* as well as *The Treasure Principle*. So why a third? *Managing God's Money* is the "Reader's Digest version" of what Randy considers to be the most important topics from his comprehensive 400 page book *Money, Possessions & Eternity*. While the much shorter *Treasure Principle* focuses on giving, *Managing God's Money* is a very useful tool to give you biblical wisdom on a range of topics such as giving, debt, spending, saving, insurance, retirement, children, and more.

*Want your own copy of Managing God's Money? Send an email to [ldyks@barnabasfoundation.com](mailto:ldyks@barnabasfoundation.com) to enter our drawing for a free copy, or order a copy online at [www.christianbook.com](http://www.christianbook.com)*



## ASK BARNABAS FOUNDATION

**Q. Our youngest child is off to college and so my husband and I are now officially "empty nesters." What are the stewardship questions we should be asking at this stage in our lives?**

A. Every step in the journey of your walk with Christ provides new challenges and opportunities. Asking the right questions can help point you in the right direction. Here are some questions and related tools you could prayerfully consider:

- Is your Estate Plan up to date? When your kids become adults and most of the costs of raising them are behind you, that is an excellent time to review your estate planning documents.
- What are your life insurance needs now? You may find that you have a policy that is no longer needed. You can also name your favorite charity as the beneficiary of a Life Insurance policy, or you can make a current gift of the policy by naming the charity as the owner of the policy.
- What are the beneficiary designations of your retirement accounts? Retirement Assets are the most tax-efficient way to give from your estate at your death. No income taxes or estate taxes are due on assets that go to charity.
- How can you best use your time now? You may find you have more ability to volunteer now that kids are gone. Or you may feel God calling you to invest more time at work, and as a result may be in a better position to experience the freedom and joy of being able to give more to kingdom causes.

*For more information on these and other gift planning tools and resources, go to [www.barnabasfoundation.com](http://www.barnabasfoundation.com) and click the "Individuals" tab.*

## BOOK GIVEAWAY!

Send an email to [ldyks@barnabasfoundation.com](mailto:ldyks@barnabasfoundation.com) and enter our drawing to receive a free copy of our featured resource (above) *Managing God's Money: A Biblical Guide*. And *everyone* who enters will receive a free copy of our recent one-page summary review of this outstanding new book by Randy Alcorn.



18601 North Creek Drive, Suite B  
Tinley Park, IL 60477-6238  
[www.barnabasfoundation.com](http://www.barnabasfoundation.com)  
(888) 448-3040