

31 Radical, Liberating Questions To Ask God About Your Giving (excerpts)

By Randy Alcorn

Questions to Ask God

1. ... Has the degree of my giving suggested that I have recognized and embraced the full extent of Your grace in my life? Or does it suggest I need to recognize and respond to Your grace in deeper and more heartfelt ways?

See that you also excel in this grace of giving... For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. (2 Corinthians 8:7, 9)

2. Father, could it be that You have raised me up...for just such a time as this? Is it more than a coincidence that You have entrusted me with such resources just at that point in history when an unparalleled number of people have such great needs and there are unprecedented means and opportunities to help them?

“And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” (Esther 4:14, ESV)

3. Is my life revolving around You? ... What am I holding onto that’s robbing me of present joy and future reward? What am I guarding and keeping for myself that’s preventing me from having to depend wholeheartedly on You? Since money and things have mass, and mass exerts gravity, and gravity holds us in orbit, what can I give away that will bring me greater freedom? Which of “my” assets can I give to You, so that You will be my center of gravity?

“No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.” (Luke 16:13)

4. Lord, am I honoring You as owner and CEO/CFO of the assets You’ve entrusted to my care? Or am I treating You as a mere financial consultant, to whom I pay a fee? (2

percent, 10 percent, or ...). Have I been acting as if I own the store, and You work for me, rather than recognizing that You own it and I work for You?

“The land is mine and you are but aliens and my tenants.” (Leviticus 25:23)

5. Where in my community—or in the whole world—do You want me to go, to see and participate in meeting physical and spiritual needs through Christ-centered ministries?

“[Josiah] defended the cause of the poor and needy, and so all went well. Is that not what it means to know me?” (Jeremiah 22:16)

6. ... Why have You entrusted me with greater financial blessings than I once had? I guess I’ve assumed You’ve done it to raise my standard of *living*. But now I’m asking, “Is it, instead, to raise my standard of *giving*?” Do I really see myself as Your delivery person? Or do I assume that because You’ve put something in my hands, I’m supposed to keep it for myself? ...

“You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion and...your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.” (2 Corinthians 9:10-11)

7. Lord Jesus, have I over-accumulated? Have I allowed unwise spending and accumulating debt to inhibit my giving to You? Have I said, “There’s not enough left to give,” while maintaining spending habits that make *sure* there’s not enough to give? ...

“Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.” (Proverbs 3:9–10)

8. Lord, I’ve sometimes wondered why You’re not blessing me more financially. Could it be that I’ve been spending money on myself first, rather than giving You the firstfruits of what You’ve provided?

9. Lord, You commended the poor widow for giving everything she had to You, leaving nothing for herself. So is it ever irresponsible for me to give to You now—no matter what my situation—rather than wait until later? ...

“Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, ‘I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on.’” (Mark 12:43-44)

10. ... Would it honor You if I determined a basic level of income and assets sufficient to live on, then simply gave away whatever You provide beyond that? In the process, would You teach me to be more grateful and more content?

"Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless. As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owner except to feast his eyes on them? The sleep of a laborer is sweet, whether he eats little or much, but the abundance of a rich man permits him no sleep." (Ecclesiastes 5:10–12)

11. Father, what's the eternal downside in giving as much as I can give to You now? In contrast, what's the eternal downside of minimizing my giving or delaying giving until later? Is there really a danger in giving too much too soon? Or is the true danger giving too little too late?

“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?” (Luke 16:10–12)

12. If I don't release my resources now for Your kingdom causes, will I be in danger of becoming more wrapped up in earthly, rather than heavenly, treasure? By postponing giving, will my heart become hardened to Your promptings to give? Will I then leave myself unprepared for eternity?

"Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life." (1 Timothy 6:17-19)

13. Father, Wall Street or real estate can't touch the eternal returns of investing in Your kingdom. Who could match Your promise of ten thousand percent (a hundred-fold)? So why are my eyes so often focused on temporary, earthly investments with such pitifully small returns? ...

"Peter answered him, 'We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?' Jesus said to them, 'I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.'" (Matthew 19:27–29)

14. Since You called the rich young ruler to give away all that He had and follow You in faith, is it possible—could it ever happen—that You might actually call me to do the same? ...

"But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, 'Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.' Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.'" (Luke 19:8–10)

15. If I were to make a list of all the assets You've entrusted to me, Lord, and ask what You want me to give away, is there *anything*—house, car, real estate, retirement funds, bank accounts—that I'm leaving off the list or treating as untouchable? Am I acting as if not *everything* belongs to You, but only the leftovers, that part I haven't already committed to something else? ...

"The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it." (Psalm 24:1)

16. ... Why do I hang on to my possessions with a white-knuckle grip? Am I trying to prove something? Is it about pride? Power? Prestige? Selfishness? Insecurity? Fear? Without realizing it, am I making money my God-substitute? In material pleasure-seeking, am I failing to experience the pleasures that can be found only in You? ...

"My soul thirsts for Thee, my flesh yearns for Thee, in a dry and weary land where there is no water." (Psalm 63:1, NASB)

17. Am I living to hear others say of me, "He's a great success!"—or to have *You* say to me, "Well done, My good and faithful servant"? ...

"Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." (Luke 12:15)

18. Father, are material assets competing with *You* for lordship over my life? Has my spiritual life—and my family's—been harmed by our wealth and our infatuation with wealth? Is it true that giving is the only antidote to materialism? ...

"For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness..." (1 Timothy 6:7–11).

19. What am I doing—and what *should* I be doing—to train my children to be regular, joyful, and generous givers?

"Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." (Proverbs 22:6)

20....Have *You* put so much into my hands because *You* have blessed me with the gift of giving and want me to learn to use that gift for *Your* glory? Have I been missing out on blessing and joy by not exercising this gift?

"In Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously." (Romans 12:5–8)

21. If I am a giver, who have I been teaching and *mentoring* in giving? ...

"And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity... For I know your eagerness to help, and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians, telling them that since last year you in Achaia were ready to give; and your enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action." (2 Corinthians 8:1–2; 9:2–3)

22. Five minutes after I die, what will I wish I would have given away while I still had the chance? ...

"For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done." (Matthew 16:27)