

## A Model for Giving Money Away While Living

Written by Steve Marr

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Most people in the United States have a Will or Trust directing where assets will be placed after death. The Bible is clear on the concept of tithing, “Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.” (Malachi 30:10 ESV)

Most of us have a tendency to hang onto most of our assets until passed on at death. Charles Feeney recently provided an outstanding example, he give away \$ [8 billion](#) over the last several decades. His goal was to give away all of his funds prior to his death. A key advantage of giving money away while still alive affords the opportunity to be focused and ensure the funds went to the correct causes and organizations with effective management, producing consistent results.

John Wesley taught many years ago three key principles regarding financing giving:

1. Earn all you can
2. Save all you can
3. Give all you can

These principles are based on earning is much money as possible, while at the same time keeping your expenses to a minimum so you then able to give all that you can. For example, Charles Finney would fly coach even though we had over \$1 billion in his accounts of his big because he wanted to save money.

Proverbs (30:8-9 ESV) instructs:

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Remove far from me falsehood and lying;  
give me neither poverty nor riches;  
feed me with the food that is needful for me,  
lest I be full and deny you  
and say, "Who is the LORD?"  
or lest I be poor and steal  
and profane the name of my God.

A takeaway of this verse is finding balance of keeping money that we truly need and finding the freedom to give savings away to further the Lord's work. Charles and his wife retained \$2 million to fund their retirement and deal with unexpected medical bills and they plan to live the rest of their days in the simple apartment. Not many will have the resources to give away \$8 billion during a lifetime. As you spend time with the Lord, seek the Lord's guidance if He would want you to fund ministry while you are still alive, and able to help ensure effective use of your money.