

## APPENDIX

### FORTY QUESTIONS TO ASK GOD ABOUT YOUR GIVING

The forty questions listed below are taken from *Money, Possessions and Eternity*, by Randy Alcorn (Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Wheaton, Illinois, 2003), pages 218-222. Mr. Alcorn's web site may be accessed at [www.epm.org](http://www.epm.org). I recommend this book to all who want to study the subject of biblical stewardship in depth.

1. Father, with the financial assets and opportunities you've entrusted to me, have you raised me up for just a time such as this? (Esther 4:14). Have you called me to join a great team of your children in freeing up money and possessions to reach out to the needy and fulfill the great commission?
2. Is the fact that you have entrusted me with so many resources an indication that you have given me the gift of giving and want me to exercise it more frequently and skillfully?
3. What am I holding on to that is robbing me of present joy and future reward? What am I keeping that is preventing me from having to depend on you? What am I clinging to that makes me feel like I don't have to depend on you to provide, like I used to before I had this much? What do you want me to release that would restore me to a walk of faith?
4. In light of 2 Corinthians 8:14 and 9:11, do you want me to assume that each financial blessing you entrust to me is not intended to raise my standard of living but to raise my standard of giving?
5. Am I being held in orbit around the mass of treasures I have stored up? Have I overaccumulated? Have you multiplied "my" assets not so I would stockpile them, but so I would distribute them to the needy?

6. Where in the world (and in my community) do you want me to go, to see, and participate in Christ-centered ministries meeting physical and spiritual needs?

7. Am I treating you as owner and CEO/CFO of “my” assets, or am I treating you merely as my financial consultant, to whom I pay a fee (of 10% or greater)?

8. When I make a list of all the assets you’ve entrusted to me and ask you what you want me to give away, is there anything I’m leaving off the list? Is there anything I’m treating as if it were untouchable, as if it were mine and not yours? Do my retirement funds belong to you too? What doesn’t?

9. Do you want me to set a basic level of income and assets to live on, then give away whatever you provide beyond that (regardless of whether that’s 50%, 90%, or 99%, or more)?

10. How can I be sure that the assets you’ve entrusted to me will serve you after my death? How do I know that those to whom I leave them, or those to whom *they* leave them, will use them for your glory? If I want money to go to your kingdom later and it’s more than I presently need, why wouldn’t I give it to your kingdom now?

11. If the world and everything in it will burn at your second coming (2 Peter 3:10-13), will my assets, accounts, and the holdings I’ve stored up on earth be wasted if you return in my lifetime? Once my present opportunity to give is lost, will I get a second chance? Do you want me to adopt a “use it or lose it” approach to my current opportunities for eternal investment?

12. Once they’ve finished college or are working on their own, would inheriting wealth (beyond items of special sentimental and heritage value) help my children’s eternal perspective and walk with God? Or would it have a corrupting influence on their character, lifestyle, work ethic, or marriage?

13. If my children would resent my giving money to your kingdom instead of leaving it for them, does that indicate they’re

not qualified to receive it? If so, why would I give them your money? If my investment manager died, what would I think if he left my money to his children? Does the fact that you entrusted your money to me, not others, indicate that you want me, during my lifetime, to invest it in eternity? Will you, in turn, provide my children with the money you expect them to manage?

14. What's the eternal downside to giving now? What's the eternal downside of delaying giving until later? Am I really in danger of giving too much too soon? Or is the only real danger giving too little too late? If I give away most of my assets now, what will I have available to give later?

15. If I don't give something now, is it possible I may no longer have it to give later?

16. If I don't give something now, is it possible I may die before I get a chance to give it later? If my desire is to give it away before I die and I can't know when I'll die, should I give it now?

17. If I don't give it now, am I in danger of my heart getting further wrapped up in earthly treasure? (Matthew 6:21). Will the same heart that's prompting me to give today later persuade me to keep something because I ignored your prompting to give?

18. Because I have no choice but to leave money behind when I die, is it really "giving" to designate money to ministries in my will? (Although these may be the wisest places to leave my assets – and all of us will have some assets remaining at our death – it involves no sacrifice or need for faith.) Will I rob myself of joy and rob you of my trust by holding on to significant assets until death that I could have given while I was still alive?

19. In James 4:13-17, you tell me I can't know how much money I can make (or lose) tomorrow, or even whether I'll be here. Is it presumptuous of me to accumulate a large amount of "confederate money" that may not be used for you in the future, when it could definitely be used for you in the present?

20. When I stand before your judgment seat, would you ever say to me, “You blew it – you sold those shares and gave them to feed the hungry and evangelize the lost, and then two years later the market peaked”? Or would you say, “Well done, my good and faithful servant”?

21. Can you produce higher eternal returns from money I give you today than Wall Street can? Can anything match your promise of a hundredfold return (10,000 percent)?

22. Is it ever wrong to give to you now rather than wait until later? If Christ commended the poor widow in Mark 12 for giving to you everything she had – considering her faithful, not irresponsible – how much would I have to give away before you would consider me irresponsible?

23. Do you want me to set up a foundation or give money away as you bring it in? If I have a foundation, do you want me to give assets away now, or implement a phase-out plan so the principal doesn’t end up wasted at your return?

24. Because you called the rich young ruler in Matthew 19:16-30 to give away all that he had and follow you in faith, is it possible you might call me to do the same? Do you want me to ask you?

25. Why do I want to hold on to my wealth? Am I trying to prove something? What am I trying to prove – and to whom? Is it pride? power? prestige? selfishness? insecurity? fear? Am I a control freak? Or is it just because possessiveness is normal in our society, and I’m merely going with the flow? Do you want me to go with the flow or do something different – maybe radically different?

26. Am I living to hear others say of me, “He [or she] is a great success” or to have you say to me, “Well done, my good and faithful servant”?

27. Instead of asking “Why should I give this away?” do you want me to ask “Why shouldn’t I give this away?” Should I put the burden of proof on *keeping* rather than *giving*? When money

comes in, which should be the rule and not the exception: *giving* or *keeping*? Unless there's a compelling reason to keep, should I normally give?

28. Am I hanging on to money as a backup plan in case you fail me? Is my fear of dire health catastrophes and old age scenarios creating an inertia in my giving, because I imagine I must provide everything for myself if something goes wrong? Considering that the vast majority of people in history and most in the world today have nothing stored up for retirement, am I preoccupied with putting too many treasures in retirement funds? Are you calling me to work without a net – trusting you'll catch me in case of a fall?

29. Has Money become my idol? Are material assets competing with you for lordship over my life? Is generous giving your lifeline to rescue me from bondage, your leverage to allow me to tear down the idols? If materialism is the disease, is giving the only cure?

30. I want to submit everything to your review and ask you to guide me as to what I should do with your money and possessions. What specifically am I hanging on to that you want me to give away?

31. Am I giving your money to people of weak character and materialistic values? Although they may be good causes, are the Humane Society or opera as close to your heart as evangelism, church planting and helping the poor? Do the ministries I am supporting financially help the poor in Christ's name, not just in the name of humanitarianism? Is the gospel offered to dying people once they've been fed?

32. How can I better communicate with and pray with my spouse so we can walk together down this exhilarating road of giving, leading each other and not leaving the other behind?

33. What am I doing to train my children to be generous givers – not just donors, but disciples?

34. What handful of people in my unique sphere of influence do you want me to pray for and talk with about generous giving? Have you called me to mentor others in giving, that they may end up giving more than I do? In helping someone become a great giver, will I be like the man who led D. L. Moody to Christ?

35. What giving-oriented, mission-oriented, and eternity-oriented books and magazines can I pass on to those in my sphere of influence? What tapes or videos can we listen to and watch together?

36. What simple reminder of God's call to stewardship and giving can I make for myself, then pass on to others? Maybe I can give them something to put in their Day-Timer or on their PalmPilot, in their wallet or Bible, on their dashboard or refrigerator or exercise machine, such as a business card or a bookmark with central verses such as Deuteronomy 8:17-18 or Matthew 6:19-21.

37. What can I set up to provide a discussion forum concerning stewardship and giving? A dinner? A weekly breakfast? A weekend retreat? A weekly study using *Money, Possessions and Eternity*, *The Treasure Principle*, or materials from Crown Ministries?

38. What conferences can I invite others to attend? What ministries can I introduce others to? What vision and ministry trips can we go on together?

39. How can I help my pastor(s) encourage biblical training in stewardship and giving and assist them in creating an open church dialogue regarding lifestyle choices and kingdom investments?

40. Five minutes after I die, what will I wish I would have given away while I still had the chance? Would you help me spend the rest of my life closing the gap between what I'll wish I had given then and what I'm actually giving now?