

PARTNERS WITH GOD

Tony Luciano

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GOD HAS A SPECIAL PARTNERSHIP WITH US UNDER WHICH:

1. **God is the owner of all things.**
Psalm 24:1-2 *The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him. For he laid the earth's foundation on the seas and built it on the ocean depths. (NLT)*
1 Corinthians 6:19-20
2. **We are God's steward of all things that we possess.**
Genesis 1:26 *Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground." (NLT)*
3. **We are accountable to God for how we use our possessions.**
1 Corinthians 4:2 *Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful. (NKJV)*

IN THIS SPECIAL PARTNERSHIP,

1. **God is the source of:**
 - a. **LIFE (Time, Talent, Health) --- Acts 17:25** *He himself gives life and breath to everything, and he satisfies every need. (NLT)*
 - b. **MONEY --- Deuteronomy 8:18** *But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today. (NIV)*
 - c. **CREATION --- Genesis 1:28-30** *Then God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground." Then God said, "Look! I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food. And I have given every green plant as food for all the wild animals, the birds in the sky, and the small animals that scurry along the ground—everything that has life." And that is what happened. (NLT)*
 - d. **SALVATION --- John 3:16** *For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. (NLT)*
2. **God is the sustainer of all life.**
Psalm 104:27-28 *They all depend on you to give them food as they need it. When you supply it, they gather it. You open your hand to feed them, and they are richly satisfied. (NLT)*

IN THIS PARTNERSHIP, WE LEARN ABOUT:

1. **Self-control --- 2 Peter 1:3-8 ;**
2 Corinthians 8:7 *But just as you excel in everything in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us see that you also excel in this grace of giving. (NIV)*
2. **Self-distrust --- 1 Timothy 6:17-19** *Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others. By doing this they will*

be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may experience true life. (NLT)

2 Corinthians 12:9

3. **Selflessness --- Luke 6:38** *Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full—pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back. (NLT)*
Proverbs 11:25

IN THIS PARTNERSHIP, WE HAVE THE DUTY TO SUPPORT GOD'S WORK BY CARING FOR:

1. **The Gospel Workers --- 1 Corinthians 9:14** *In the same way, the Lord ordered that those who preach the Good News should be supported by those who benefit from it. (NLT)*
2. **The Needy --- James 1:27** *Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you. (NLT)*
Acts 4:34-35 *There were no needy people among them, because those who owned land or houses would sell them and bring the money to the apostles to give to those in need. (NLT)*

WE SUPPORT GOD'S WORK BY GIVING PROPORTIONATELY:

1. **Allocating a portion of our income:**
 - a. **One-tenth ("Tithe" – Old Testament)**
Deuteronomy 16:17 *Each of you must bring a gift in proportion to the way the LORD your God has blessed you. (NIV)*
Leviticus 27:30 *One tenth of the produce of the land, whether grain from the fields or fruit from the trees, belongs to the Lord and must be set apart to him as holy. (NLT)*
 - b. **Equal contribution (New Testament)**
2 Corinthians 8:12-13 *Whatever you give is acceptable if you give it eagerly. And give according to what you have, not what you don't have. Of course, I don't mean your giving should make life easy for others and hard for yourselves. I only mean that there should be some equality. (NLT)*
2. **Giving sacrificially --- 2 Corinthians 8:1-5** *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 testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will. (NIV)*

GENEROSITY PUTS US IN A POSITION TO RECEIVE MORE OF GOD'S BLESSINGS SO WE CAN BLESS GOD'S WORK AND OTHERS IN NEED

Malachi 3:6-12 *"I am the LORD, and I do not change. That is why you descendants of Jacob are not already destroyed. Ever since the days of your ancestors, you have scorned my decrees and failed to obey them. Now return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. "But you ask, 'How can we return when we have never gone away?' 'Should people cheat God? Yet you have cheated me! 'But you ask, 'What do you mean? When did we ever cheat you?' 'You have cheated me of the tithes and offerings due to me. You are under a curse, for your whole nation has been cheating me. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies, "I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! Try it! Put me to the test! Your crops will be abundant, for I will guard them from insects and disease! Your grapes will not fall from the vine before they are ripe," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. "Then all nations will call you blessed, for your land will be such a delight," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. (NLT)*