

Scripture Text: Romans 12:13

Refocus is defined as *to change the emphasis or direction of*.

Means can be defined as our possessions.

Before we discuss how to refocus our means, let us first talk about three individuals and how they used their means.

1. Rich Young Ruler – Matthew 19:16-22

A. Context

1. Jesus is questioned about receiving eternal life. From comparing all accounts (Matt. 19:16-30, Mark 10:17-31, Luke 18:18-30), we learn he is a rich young ruler.
2. The rich young ruler was instructed on what he must do.
3. He leaves because he liked his possessions too much.

B. Lesson

1. The attitude of the ruler caused him to be lost.
2. The instructions from Jesus weren't impossible – **none of His commandments are.** 1 John 5:3
3. Are we willing to let anything keep us from Heaven? Doing so will cost us eternally!

2. The Poor Widow – Mark 12:41-44; Luke 21:1-4

A. Context

1. 1st century way of giving
2. Coinage of the Roman Empire: according to Mark, two mites are equal to a quadrans, the smallest Roman coin. The mites, lepton, were the smallest and least valuable coin in Judea. Historians say they were worth about six minutes of work.

B. Lesson

1. She is praised for her attitude
2. The rich are rebuked for their attitude
3. 2 Corinthians 9:7 – God loveth a cheerful giver

3. Barnabas – Acts 4:32-37

A. Context

1. The early church, Acts 4: *Determined Disciples*, Peter and John were arrested in Ch. 3, and they preach in Ch. 4.
2. All the believers were united and sold their possessions. The early church was funded by their contributions.
3. Although many Christians gave, Luke, the inspired historian, records Barnabas' name.

B. Lesson

1. These early Christians saw their fellow Christians in need, so they gave.
2. Notice again, it is the attitude of these individuals.
3. Compare this to the deceitful attitude of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5:1-11!

Now, how do I refocus my means? Remember, it is the **attitude** behind what and how I use my means!

1. Give God more of my time.

- A. Everyone is given the same amount of time in a day: 24 hours/1440 min./86400 sec.
- B. Not watch as many videos or spend so much time just scrolling! Seen online: "One of the devil's primary goals is to keep you from reading your Bible so he can keep you ignorant of the truth. How is he doing?"
- C. Example: reading 9 chapters a day gets the NT read in a month! 35 minutes a day!

2. Give God more of my money.

- A. We are commanded to give on the first day of the week – 1 Corinthians 16:1-2
- B. Right now, at your age, you can give more to God.
- C. Examples: not buying coffee/snack/etc. at \$5 a day, 5 days a week (260 days), is \$1300. Saving \$13 a day, every day a year, is \$4745!

3. Give God more of my energy.

- A. Refocus my activities – good to have hobbies or play sports, but if all you spend your time working on or thinking of, then it becomes an idol to you! (And idol is anything placed before God.)
- B. While spending time on your hobbies or while working on the team, talk to them about Jesus! Invite them to church!

- C. Example from George W. DeHoff: if you are the only Christian in a town of 10,000, and you convert one person today, there are two of you. If the two of you each convert one person the next day, the number is four. Repeat. At the end of a month, all are converted.

Long story short, God is always concerned with the attitude of the giver, and we can always rearrange things to have more for God.

Refocus – we all can do it!

January 15, 2023 PM Arlington Church of Christ