

How to Have Money to Give Away

This is the second article in a series suggesting how Christians can have the means to be generous givers.

Consider Replacement Cost

When buying something that will be used up, such as food, toiletries, etc., buy as cheaply as possible, but when buying something that should last and be used for many years, such as furniture and major appliances, spend the money to buy quality. Replacing such things is more expensive than buying something that lasts.

Don't replace something that still works. Mechanics agree that the cheapest car you can get is the one you already have (until repairs become more than its value after repair). Don't upgrade a computer, camera, etc., if what you have still works for you.

Don't buy new clothing as long as what you have still fits.

Keep everything you have in good repair. Sew up clothing and have shoes repaired. Learn to do home and car maintenance and minor repairs. Things that are broken or torn are more easily fixed soon before the problem gets worse.

Watch What You Eat

As a rule of thumb, don't pay to consume anything that doesn't at least have vitamins – No tobacco! No alcohol, no soft drinks, no bottled water, no coffee, no chips, no candy. This also is better for your health, which will save you even more in the long run.

Eat only a small amount of meat. The average American eats much more than needed for a healthy diet. Reducing the amount of meat consumed has been found to have as much of an effect on the environment as switching to a hybrid car.

Don't buy donuts or snacks, especially from vending machines. Take along something healthy instead.

Don't eat out in restaurants, with rare exceptions. If you need to eat away from home, there are a lot of things in grocery stores that can be eaten right of the shelf (after you pay for it, of course). For hot food, some groceries have a deli – no waiting, no tips.

Don't buy preprocessed, precooked, or highly packaged foods. Home cooked food is often healthier as well.

If you are able, grow your own garden vegetables. They may well taste better too!

Don't throw away leftover food that can be eaten later and taken along for lunch. Don't throw away left over supplies or materials that may be useful later. Small quantities will be expensive to buy.

Get What You Pay For

Don't pay for advertising of brand name products. Many generic products are made by the same manufacturers. If you can't feel, taste or see the difference, don't pay the difference. Don't buy brand name clothes to wear the logos. You are paying the company to do their advertising for them.

Don't buy sugared cereal. Avoid buying any food where one of the main ingredients is a sweetener. Don't buy

something to get the "free" prize or toy that comes with it.

Don't burn money

Only have one vehicle per income. If you have another car, you will drive it; if you don't, you will find another way. Even when you have a car, use public transportation or carpool whenever possible.

If you (or your child) are going less than a mile or two, don't drive. Walk or ride a bike. Mow with a push mower instead of a riding mower. It is better for your health and the environment.

Don't Throw Money Away

Never, ever, gamble in any way. Don't support an industry that feeds this destructive addiction. Sweepstakes also are a way to totally waste money. If you want to support a good cause, just give the money.

Don't buy anything just so you can throw it away (except toilet paper). Use cloth napkins and wash them instead of using paper. Use cloth diapers. This has the added benefit of keeping landfills from filling so fast.

Use resealable containers for food instead of disposable baggies. The bags inside cereal boxes also make good sandwich bags. Use rechargeable batteries and avoid battery operated devices in the first place by using hand operated or plug-in equipment instead.

Don't buy things that will keep costing you even more, such as clothes that need to be dry cleaned. Don't fertilize and water the yard so that it needs to be mowed more often. Both are also better for the environment. *More next month. Share your own ideas with the church office.*