Creative prayer ideas

Creative prayer for dedicating your finances and for economic justice

We first created this creative framework for prayer at the start of the 2012-2013 financial year and have found it a helpful, practical format for rededicating (and in some cases redirecting) our individual personal finances, and inspiring prayer for a wider transformation of economic systems, and the hearts that govern them.

Our intention is to use it as a regular “MOT” health check on specifics, and as a regular measure on our general journeys towards living simply and generously, as well as a prompt (alongside other resources such as our Intercessions focusing on economic justice for the global poor and our Intercessions for the UK in the financial crisis and recession) to pray for justice and generosity in national and global financial systems.

We hope that others will find it helpful too, so we have made it available as a resource. Please feel free to modify or adapt it to suit you.

1. Begin with a prayer

- Still your heart and invite the Holy Spirit to help you recognise Jesus as the King of every area of your life – your body, time, occupation, relationships and resources – thank him for his blessings and offer your whole life as a living sacrifice again.
- Make a note of any areas where you feel you have tried to put yourself back on the throne... and ask the Lord to help you surrender these again to his perfect rule and will.
- Thank your Father that he welcomes all who come to him with a broken and contrite heart.
- And ask him to lead you as you consider his perfect will for the resources he has blessed you with.

2. Open your heart to listen to Jesus’ words from Luke 11:41(The Message):

“Turn both your pockets and your hearts inside out and give generously to the poor; then your lives will be clean, not just your dishes and your hands.”

3. And then empty out your pockets, wallet or handbag, as a symbol of your heart – for where your treasure is, there is your heart (Matthew 6:21)...

Lay out each item in front of you and take a moment to look at everything before you, and then one by one take each one and pray into what it represents... (below are some ideas of different things you might find yourself looking at, and some ideas about areas of your heart and resources that you might want to pray into as a result).

a) Hold any notes and coins you have lightly... and consider where they have come from, and how you think they will be spent.

   i. Thank God for the money you are holding, and all the money that you have.
   ii. Pray that the notes you are holding, and everything in your bank account/s will be used as he leads, and for his glory.

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iii. If you are struggling to make ends meet, and do not have enough to pay your bills, or are worried that you will be in this situation next week, month, or soon, pour out your heart to God and ask him to provide you, and lead you forward.

b) Take a bank card...and think through what you generally spend your money on, what you save, and what you give.

i. Ask God to search and know your heart, and your bank account/s... are there any transactions that you feel you want to say sorry for?

ii. Thank God that he knows the perfect balance for your life between using what he has given you to meet your needs, live responsibly, and bless others. Again, ask him to search and know your heart and your bank account/s and to lead them closer to his perfect balance for your books.

c) And now a credit card if you have one...and think through larger purchases you are still paying off, or ones that you are considering making (whether with cash or credit).

i. Ask God to help you honour any debts you have, and to manage them wisely, and confess any areas in which you feel you have not followed his leading or principles. Ask him to be Lord of your future decision making in this area.

ii. Thank God for the many blessings in his world, and for those you have the means to enjoy. Surrender any upcoming plans to make bigger purchases to him and ask that your heart would be willing to modify its desires, and use of resources if he leads you to do so.

d) Write down your national insurance number... and think through the employment you have had in the past; are engaged with presently and/or where your income comes from at the moment.

i. Thank God for it, recognising that all good things come from him, and whether you feel hugely blessed or you are struggling, give thanks for specific blessings you are receiving. Offer the whole of it back to God as his, and ask that he would lead you in how to spend, save and give it to his glory.

ii. Ask that whether you are self-employed, an employer, an employee, unemployed, retired, or a parent or homemaker, the Holy Spirit would lead and empower you to act righteously so that you might be blessed to bless others and build his kingdom.

iii. Thank God for the taxes you are able to pay, or have previously been able to pay in the past, and for the public services that they fund. Let go of any resentment that has crept in over this, or any anger you have over benefits that have been unjustly withheld from you. Ask God to lead you to any action you need to take.

iv. Offer to your Father any worries you have about present or future provision and thank him that he can be trusted. Surrender everything to him and ask that he would bless you with a heart of thankfulness and wisdom to manage what he gives you well and to his glory – whether seemingly little or large, and to use your talents and time in the way he is leading you.

e) Take out your receipts... or look through your online transactions...and think about the chain of people and processes involved in goods and services reaching you.

i. Thank God for all who have worked hard, creatively and with integrity in the supply chain of the products and services you have purchased.

ii. Consider what you have bought or paid for in the last few weeks, and offer special thanks for anything that has been of particular blessing to you or others.
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iii. Ask God to bring to mind any companies, individuals or brands that you might need to revisit your custom with – are there any whose practices you know are unjust? Or some you need to find out more about? Are there any choices you need to make differently, or any people you need to write to in order to express concern? (Make a note of what you need to do so you can act on it later.)

4. One by one read each of these words and consider whether what was in your wallet has helped you cover your attitude to all of these areas... think and pray further into anything that has not been sufficiently covered by this exercise:
   a) Spending
   b) Saving
   c) Stewarding
   d) Giving
   e) Earning
   f) Accounting
   g) Paying taxes
   h) Making consumer choices
   i) Speaking up for righteousness and equity.

5. Reflect on where this exercise has challenged you.
   • Where does your heart need to change? Ask for the Holy Spirit’s help to soften, correct and challenge
   • Thank him for his love and grace towards you, commitment to finish the work he has begun in you, and the fact that he works step by step to mould and shape you.

6. Now look at the world beyond your wallet...
   • What economic injustices and unrighteous financial practices in our nation and world anger you? (These might include trade practices, tax evasion, inequality, unfair cuts, bankers’ bonuses, unfair dismissals, greed...)
   • Pray that the hearts of individuals, companies and leaders would be softened, corrected and challenged in the way yours has been.
   • Pray that your heart would remain merciful towards the people involved, persistently prayerful for practices to change, and ready to act and speak out for change as God leads.