

Readings & *Stewpot* posted on: [www.imsda.org/resources](http://www.imsda.org/resources)

## April 6, 2019 – Local Church Budget

**Tax time!** Through the years, the government has discussed whether to continue the deduction for charitable gifts. The day may come when this is no longer allowed. Questions in the minds of churches and other non-profits are, “How much would this affect their revenue?” and, “How much is this tax break an incentive in people’s giving?”

We are used to the idea of the charitable deduction because of the countries in which we live, but many other countries don’t have this benefit. Yet our people in these places are nevertheless faithful in their tithes and offerings.

A question to ask ourselves might be, “How does this affect my giving?”

Jesus tells us: “Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly” (Matt. 6:2-4, NKJV).

So, let us enjoy the deduction while we have it, but continue to be faithful regardless of what governments do or don’t do. Today’s offerings is for Local Church Budget.

## April 13, 2019 – Christian Record Services

Let’s take a trip in our imaginations. Think ahead to what heaven and the New Earth might be like. Who from the Bible would you like to talk to first? Everyone will, of course, want to talk with Jesus, face-to-face. What’s the first question you’d like to ask Jesus when you sit at His feet? Who is the first family member you hope to see?

All of us, I’m certain, will have questions to ask when we get to heaven. However, there’s one question that many of us don’t think too much about: “What will I see *when* I can see?”

Until that day comes, you and I have an opportunity to introduce our friends who are blind to Jesus through the programs and materials provided through Christian Record Services, Inc. You and I, through our World Budget offering gifts today, can put the Sabbath School lesson, Bible studies, magazines, and Christian library books into the hands of people who are blind. You can provide time in nature through National Camps for Blind Children, a Christian Record program for youth and adults. Your gift can start or nurture the spiritual journey of an individual who is blind.

Imagine it: Heaven, the New Earth, and time with our Savior, seeing and experiencing a new life with perfect eyesight and bodies that are healed and restored. What a day that will be! Thank you for your gifts today that plant seeds for the kingdom in the hearts of people who are blind.—Jeri Lyn Rogge, Communication Director, Christian Record Services, Inc.

## **April 20, 2019 – Local Church Budget**

### ***Easter.***

Jesus and Alexander died at thirty-three;  
One lived and died for self; one died for you and me.  
The Greek died on a throne; the Jew died on a cross.  
One's life a triumph seemed; the other but a loss.  
One led vast armies forth; the other walked alone;  
One shed a whole world's blood; the other gave His own.  
One won the world in life and lost it all in death;  
The other lost His life to win the whole world's faith.

Jesus and Alexander died at thirty-three;  
One died in Babylon; and one on Calvary.  
One gained all for self; and one Himself He gave;  
One conquered every throne; the other every grave.  
The one made himself god; the God made Himself less;  
The one lived but to blast; the other but to bless.  
When died the Greek, forever fell his throne of swords;  
But Jesus died to live forever Lord of lords.

Jesus and Alexander died at thirty-three;  
The Greek made all men slaves; the Jew made all men free.  
One built a throne on blood; the other built on love;  
The one was born of earth; the other from above.  
One won all this earth, to lose all earth and heaven;  
The other gave up all, that all to Him be given.  
The Greek forever died; the Jew forever lives;  
He loses all who gets, and wins all things who gives.

—Charles Ross Weede

## April 27, 2019 – Combined Youth Ministries (Conference Advance)

***The biggest little word.*** The 40 years of wandering in the wilderness were about to come to an end. Moses, because of his own disobedience, was prohibited from crossing the Jordan into the Promised Land. Before transferring the leadership to Joshua, however, he wanted to admonish this new generation of Israelites regarding the two possible futures that awaited them. As you read his words in Deuteronomy 28, you will be struck by the fact that everything hinged on the biggest little word in the English language, “if.”

“If” you obey, great blessings will follow, and the world will flock to your doorstep, because they will sit up and take notice, and wonder how they can receive the same benefits. “If,” however, you rebel and become disobedient, the other nations will scorn and abuse you.

Despite this important sermon, not only spoken but written down for posterity, the Israelites spent hundreds of years of spiritual ups and downs. Over and over they succumbed to the cultural pressures around them, and soon became just like the other nations in so many ways. Following their exile in Babylon, some returned under Ezra and Nehemiah to rebuild the nation and entered a period of great zeal for the Law, which by the time of Christ resulted in legalism. We’re not much different from them.

Today, Christ calls us to faithful obedience based on the Gospel. The choice is ours, “if.”

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