

Union Offering - Mamarapha College

Survivor Guilt

Every tragedy has victims—and survivors.

Maybe your taxi was late, causing you to miss the plane that crashed and killed everyone on board.

Maybe you live on a hill, safe from the flooding that destroyed all the homes that you can see, day after day, from your front yard.

Maybe, a week after the storm, you fall to your knees in tears as you mow the lawn of your perfectly presented home while viewing the rubble where your neighbour's house once stood.

Maybe you moved your family to another country just before the war broke out.

Surviving a tragedy or a traumatic event can cause us to believe that we've done something wrong because we were unharmed when others were hurt or killed. Survivor's guilt is real. In a world where violence is common and natural and man-made disasters are so prevalent, what should the Christian survivor's response be?

If you feel blessed, even unfairly blessed, I encourage you to praise God for your blessings and then pass them on. Feed, clothe, visit, shelter ... love ... the victims and their families. As Jesus said in Acts 20:35, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

You survived for a purpose. Go out in God's strength and fulfil that purpose.

Appeal: As you gratefully return God's 10% tithe and give your Promise offerings and thank offerings today, consider ways to minister to people who may not feel as blessed as you are. Find someone who has suffered from a great loss and give them the comfort that God gave you in your times of loss. Thank you for your generosity.

Local Church Budget

Giving While You're Living

Have you ever heard the wise saying, "Do your giving while you're living, so you're knowing where it's going"?

It's good to leave money and investments to your family and God's work when you die, but God also calls us to give generously while we're alive.

Perhaps you have heard about contested wills, where greedy beneficiaries disregard the deceased's wishes. Or stories of mission-minded Christians who die and their estates are squandered by beneficiaries who just wanted another luxury holiday, another rental property, or some other self-focused acquisition.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we must seriously consider what He would have us do with His assets that He has entrusted us to manage in both life and death. Should we leave them to our children, the church, or another entity? Is there a 'right' split for dividing God's assets?

And related to this, should we even hold tightly to our assets *until* we die when they're completely useless to us anyway? What would Jesus do?

In the book *Counsels on Stewardship*, Ellen G. White wrote, "Dying legacies are a miserable substitute for living benevolence. The servants of God should be making their wills every day, in good works and liberal offerings to God" (page 326).

So, let's hear that wise saying again, "Do your giving while you're living, so you're knowing where it's going."

Appeal: As we now return God's tithe and give our Promise offerings, let's remember that God is the Owner of everything and that, while we are living every day, He invites us to be faithful stewards of all His gifts. Let's "Do our giving while we're living, so we're knowing where it's going." Thank you for your faithfulness.