



With the economy in trouble, many of us are reflecting on our financial well being. As Christians, it makes sense to consider our spending habits from a perspective of faith and stewardship. While many of us recognize monetary giving

at church as an act of faith, not all of us think of our habits of consumption the same way.

Several years ago, I was at a Christian concert, manning a table for Compassion International, a nonprofit Christian child advocacy ministry, when a group of kids gathered around me. They read about the children needing sponsors, looking at their pictures and getting excited when they saw a child who shared their birthday or favorite pastime.

When one young girl's mother approached, the girl asked excitedly, "Mom, can we do this?"

The woman glanced at the table and said, "Well, honey, we need to pray about it first."

They then moved to the next table and purchased a CD by the music group that had just performed. If they prayed about that purchase first, it wasn't outwardly noticeable.

I still remember the sense of disheartenment I felt. I don't think it was wrong for the mother to want to pray before making a financial commitment to a child in need, but the ease with which she made her personal purchase proved a startling contrast.

Working on this issue about consumerism for the *Viewpoint*, I realized that I am often no different. When I go to a restaurant, I may thank God for my meal before consuming it, but I don't usually think about whether making something at home might allow me to give more back to God and others. Until recently, I didn't question many of my purchases because I didn't think of them as spiritual decisions. That's why I have found this issue both fascinating and challenging. I hope you do, too. Please share your reflections with me at editor@pointloma.edu.

Sincerely,

Christine Spicer

