

Jesus' Teaching on Giving

Acts 20:35

Some preachers have an apologetic attitude when it comes to preaching on giving. Jesus spoke more about giving than He did heaven or hell combined and never apologized for it. Neither did Paul—He referred to giving in more than half of his epistles.

In our text, Paul admonishes us to “*remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, **It is more blessed to give than to receive.***” Paul lived by these words.

Why is giving to be preferred to receiving?

- Giving is Christ-like. No one ever gave as much as Jesus gave—“*For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich*” (2 Cor. 8:9). Think of what Jesus gave to save you and I (Phil. 2:5-8)!
- Giving subdues a self-centered or selfish disposition.
- Giving supplies the needs of others.
- Giving keeps us from becoming too attached to material possessions.
- Giving provides a good example for others to follow (2 Cor 9:2).
- Giving is living. When you stop giving you are dying. Why is the Dead Sea dead? Because it receives but never gives.

Six Things Jesus Taught About Giving

I. Giving is a BLESSING (text).

➡JOY in giving. “Blessed” means “happy.” Cheerful.

- A. The blessing of **eternal rewards**. God will reward your giving.
- B. The blessing of **knowing God is pleased**. (Being able to lay my head on my pillow at night and hearing God say in my heart, “Al, I like what you did today. You did good.”)
- C. The blessing of **seeing God supply** your needs.

I car-pooled to Bible college with another student from our church named Tim Halstead. It was 60 miles round trip. One day

when it was Tim's turn to drive, we were about half way to the school and Tim realized he was almost out of gas. There was not enough to make it round trip. He asked if I had any money, and I didn't. Tim said he put his last dollar in the church offering Sunday. So, we prayed God would somehow get us home after school. After classes were over, we headed to the parking lot to Tim's car. On the door of Tim's car was a \$10 bill folded in the door handle. Tim asked me, "Did you tell anyone we didn't have money for gas to get home?" I told him no. "Well, who put this money on my car door?" I said, "I guess God did!"

➡ We must put ourselves in a position where God CAN supply our needs. God can only supply a need when we have a need.

II. **Giving REGULATES your level of blessing** (Luke 6:38).

- A. 2 Corinthians 9:6 restates the principle of sowing and reaping.
- B. The grass is not greener on the other side of the fence. And the grass is not greener on this side of the fence... The grass is greener **where you water it!**
- C. Reciprocal action (Prov. 11:24-25):
 1. God gives us everything that is good (mercy, forgiveness, love, kindness, money, talents, etc.) James 1:17
 2. You have liberty to use what God provides any way you want.
 3. You can choose to give it back to God.
 4. God then gives it back to you with more. God gives back to you in kind what you give (bitterness; jealousy; strife; etc.)
 5. The process continues as long as you keep giving back to God. When you stop giving to God, the process stops (John 12:24-25).

In the latter part of the 17th century, German preacher August H. Francke founded an orphanage to care for the homeless children of Halle. One day when Francke desperately needed funds to carry on his work, a destitute Christian widow came to his door begging for a ducat—a gold coin. Francke politely but regretfully told her he

couldn't help her. Disheartened, the woman began to weep. Moved by her tears, Francke went to his room to pray. After seeking God's guidance, he felt the Holy Spirit wanted him to change his mind. Trusting the Lord to meet his own needs, he gave her the money.

Two mornings later, he received a letter of thanks from the widow. She explained that because of his generosity she had asked the Lord to shower the orphanage with gifts. That same day Francke received twelve ducats from a wealthy lady and two more from a friend in Sweden. He thought he had been amply rewarded for helping the widow, but he was soon informed that the orphanage was to receive 500 gold pieces from the estate of Prince Lodewyk Van Wurtenburg. God gave abundance back to Francke for his giving! God will be no man's debtor!

III. Giving reveals your PRIORITIES in life (Mt. 19:16-22).

➡ The rich young ruler prioritized his possessions over the will of God.

IV. Giving is to done FREELY (Mt. 10:8). God gives you salvation for free—We should give the same way God has given to us.

A. Generously.

B. Unhindered. Unobstructed. Unattached.

C. Without compulsion.

V. Giving is measured not by what you GIVE, but what you KEEP for yourself (Mk. 12:41-44).

➡ When the rich gave, they still had an abundance left over. When the widow gave, she had nothing left.

A. Just because someone gives a large amount doesn't mean God is pleased.

B. Giving small or giving large - God knows your heart.

VI. Giving includes the TITHE (Mt. 23:23). Three things Jesus said:

A. The PORTION of the tithe. The word tithe simply means a tenth. Tithing is the giving of one tenth of your income to God.

- B. The PAYING of the tithe. A tithe is to be PAID in recognition of God's ownership and Lordship.
- Leviticus 27:30— "*And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S: it is holy unto the LORD.*"
- ➡ Jesus said tithing is something that should be done. The Pharisees were very precise in paying their tithe. "*Mint, anise, and cummin*" were all spices and the most trivial and insignificant products of the earth. Yet they were given in tithing.
- C. The PERCEPTION of the tithe. Tithing is NOT as important as matters of the heart.
1. Judgment was INWARD—Directed towards self.
 2. Mercy was OUTWARD—Directed in treatment of others.
 3. Faith was UPWARD—Directed toward God. Without faith it is impossible to please God. The Pharisees were tithing, but not doing it in faith. They were doing it for outward show.

SUMMATION: After teaching on stewardship for several weeks a Sunday School teacher asked her class to explain stewardship in their own words. One boy put it this way: "Stewardship means that life is a great ship, loaded with cargo to be delivered to all over the world. God owns the ship and the cargo, but He has made me the ship's captain and commissioned me to make sure the cargo gets to the place He wants." Amen!

How blessed are you?

God doesn't need my money! But I need His blessing.