

Worship

God

In

Spirit & Truth

Why Should One Give?

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Why Should One Give?

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only and unique Son, so that everyone who trusts in him may have eternal life, instead of being utterly destroyed” (John 3:16). There appears to be a direct correlation between love and giving.

In Christ we must learn to love and to communicate that love through giving - the sharing of what God has entrusted to us.

“And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. Out of the most severe trial, **their overflowing joy** [their hope for eternal life] **and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity.** For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints (2 Corinthians 8:1-7).

“If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (1 Timothy 5:8).

Attitude

One’s love of God is expressed in taking care of those in need. “Religion [*threeskeía* – *external activity*] that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after [provide for their needs] orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world” (James 1:27).

A greedy person loves himself more than God or others.

“No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. **You cannot serve both God and Money**” (Matthew 6:24).

“If I **give** all I possess to the poor and **surrender** my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.” [I have not offered my spiritual being to God for my gift was out of duty or command.] (1 Corinthians 13:3).

“Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God” (1 Tim 6:17-19). In Mark 10:17-21 we read of a wealthy man who kept the Law but was unwilling to share with the needy. One cannot earn eternal life by keeping the letter of the law. The desire that pleases God is to do good, live holy and trust God. The rich man stored his wealth on earth rather than in heaven. Compassionate giving to those in need are treasures stored up in heaven. Whether rich or poor those in Christ store up treasures in heaven by doing good in helping others materially and spiritually. The amount is not stored but attitude of one’s heart in the generous giving of self and material possessions he has at his disposal.

“Be careful not to do your ‘acts of righteousness’ before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven” (Matthew 6:1-4).

“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! **You give a tenth** of your spices — mint, dill and cumin. But you have **neglected** the more important matters of the law — **justice, mercy and faithfulness**. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former” (Matthew 23:23-24).

“Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. With his wife’s full knowledge he **kept back part of the money for himself**, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles’ feet” (Acts 5:1-2). It is not the fact they did not give all of the proceeds but their attitude in giving desiring praise of men.

Greed and Selfishness

Greed is the focusing on self – my possessions, my time, and my desires.

“**Put to death**, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and **greed**, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.” (Colossians 3:5-6)

○ And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry. But God said unto him, Thou foolish one, this night is thy soul required of thee; and the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?” (Luke 12:19-20)

- “Watch out! **Be on your guard against all kinds of greed**; a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions” (Luke 12:15).
- “But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. **People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap** and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the **love of money** is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs” (1 Timothy 6:6-10).
- “**Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth**, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But **store up for yourselves treasures in heaven**, [acts of service to others] where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:19-21).
- The parable often referred to as the rich man and Lazarus, (Luke 16:19-31) vividly depicts the plight of those who use God’s resources on themselves without regard for the plight of those with whom they come in regular contact. Unless one changes and begins employing his resources for the benefit of God, he will most certainly be cast out from God’s presence.

“Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, ‘**How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God**’” (Mark 10:23)! Riches is not the problem. It is relying on one’s wealth to earn salvation and eternal life rather than on God.

Generous in Material Things

“Remember this: [Paul writing to the Corinthians Christians] Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion (duty or grudgingly) for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever."

Paul writing to Christians states “He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must **work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need**” (Ephesians 4:28). **Generous in Our Intellect**

Do not blindly continue to accept what you have been taught. Personally examine the scriptures, discuss with other Christians, obtain a clearer understanding of His will. Prove all things yourself rather than relying on and accepting the belief or opinion of a trusted friend, teacher, preacher or pastor. Accept Christ’s commands and put your trust in Him by obedience. If one does not attempt to understand, how can he change?

Generous in Our Influence

Your influence is measured by what others think or say about you. Christian stewardship requires that one’s influence glorifies God and is used to **see that justice and mercy are administered to the poor.**

Generous with His Gospel

“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:15-16).

God has entrusted to those in Christ with His most treasured and important possession. He made no other plans for communicating His Gospel Reconciliation Message. He expects us to do His will, if we do not someone else will. They will receive His reward; we will not. The question is “are we doing His will or are we letting someone else do it for us?”

Generous with Our Time

The proper use of our time involves spending time on self, family, needy, study and in taking the gospel to the world to meet their spiritual needs. In addition to assisting financially to defray cost, one can participate in:

- a. Individual one on one Bible studies
- b. Bringing people to a teacher
- c. Distributing and evaluating Bible correspondence courses
- d. Developing written lessons

- e. Encouraging others in their ministry **Personal Responsibility in Giving**

Am I responsible for doing His will? Of course, the answer is obvious – a resounding YES I am personally responsible!

It is not only the faithful followers of Christ but everyone will be called into giving an account. “ ‘As surely as I live,’ says the Lord, ‘every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God.’ So then, **each of us will give an account of himself to God**” (Romans 14:11-12).

Giving is a response of the heart in accordance to how one has been prospered. It is not some “legal requirement” like the tithe.

A Christian must be aware of things that influence his giving either for good or bad. One’s actions and speech are to glorify God; otherwise, it glorifies the Devil and his cause. One is personally responsible for their giving and stewardship!

Unacceptable Giving

- Not using the resources God has provided to do His will.
- Giving because it is a command rather than from the heart ○ Jesus referred to those who gave because of a command as hypocrites. They focused on performing the command and neglected the more important things of life – justice, mercy and faithfulness
- Giving to be recognized by man
- Sin-stained meaningless giving ○ Many years before in Isaiah 1:10-17 God stated: “Do not bring any more meaningless offerings; ... I cannot tolerate sin-stained celebrations! ... Wash! Cleanse yourselves! Remove your sinful deeds from my sight. Stop sinning! Learn to do what is right! Promote justice! Give the oppressed reason to celebrate! Take up the cause of the orphan! Defend the rights of the widow!

Questions

1. Why should a Christian give?
 - It is a command to be obeyed
 - Because of love of God and fellowman

2. How much should a Christian give?
 - The tithe - ten percent
 - Until it hurts
 - As one has been prospered

3. Greed is focusing on self and satisfying one’s desires rather than focusing on satisfying those in physical and spiritual need.
 - True
 -

False

4. Who are those who will give an accounting for things done or failed to do while here on earth?

- There will be no accounting
- All mankind

5. What is unacceptable giving?

- Giving because it is commanded
- Giving to receive recognition
- Giving with unrepentant and unforgiven sin
- All the above

Answers to Questions

1. Because of love of God and fellowman
2. As one has been prospered
3. True
4. All mankind
5. All the Above

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