

What Does the Bible Teach About Giving?

Sunday, June 7th, 1987

Luke 6:38

“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.”

I’m reading a passage of Scripture today from the book of Luke Chapter 6:38 in which our Lord says; *“Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure pressed down and shaken together, and running over, shall men give unto your bosom. For whatsoever measure you deal out to others it shall be dealt to you in return.”*

Here is the title of my message: “WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT GIVING.” I want you to carefully listen to what I have to say on this subject today on what the Bible says about giving. I’m not talking about a denomination, a preacher, or what an organization teaches about giving. What does God say about giving?

There is so much false teaching and poor preaching on the subject of giving. We need to take time out to find what God says on the subject of giving. What does the Bible say about giving?

Most preaching on the subject of giving puts people under one of these false, sinful, conditions or states. Here is the first one: Give because it is your duty to give. The average preacher preaches that every believer is under a law to tithe, that every believer is under a law to give 10 % off all that they have to the church. Where do they find this?

They go back to the old Levitical Law. They require men and women to tithe as the Law required them to tithe. Yet, they do not require them to be circumcised as the Law required.

They do not require them to keep the Seventh Day Sabbath as the Law required. They do not require them to keep the Passover Feast or the Feast of the First Fruits or the Feast of the Tabernacles, as the Old Testament Levitical Law required. They do not require them to go through certain purifications and sacrifices and other dietary laws. They do require them to tithe that the church budget might be met.

I have written commentaries on every one of these epistles verse by verse and none of the apostles in the 21 epistles of the New Testament insisted on tithing or taught tithing to the early churches.

Another motive to get people to give other than your duty and responsibility is reward. We use this thing of rewards. In other words, if you will give to a television preacher, if you will give to the church then God will reward you. If you will plant a seed of faith by giving to a particular organization then God will give you a better job or God will give you a bigger home or God will prosper you materially.

My friends; giving in order to get something in return is selfish and it is contrary to grace. Our Lord Jesus Christ taught us to give and to lend, *“hoping for nothing in return, but to give, motivated by love.”* To give and to lend to others is for love’s sake.

I see the preacher always telling people to give and to send and offering. The preacher will send them a certificate to put on the wall or they will send them a pin to wear on their lapel. They will send them a badge or send them this or send them that.

God’s people do not give to get. They do not give in order to obtain a reward. They do not give in order to obtain a bigger house, a bigger car or a better job. That is not the Scriptural motive for giving. That is contrary to the grace of God. We give because we love.

Another motive that is used today to inspire people to give is fear; they use duty. Will a man rob God? *“You’ve robbed me in tithes and offerings.”* That is the Levitical Law and they use it today to inspire people to give.

They use reward and then they use fear. They will say, “If you don’t pay your tithe, God will punish you. If you don’t pay your tithe God will collect it through some tragedy or financial failure. If you pay your tithes, some bad things won’t happen that would have happened, (somebody said). If you don’t pay your tithes some bad things will happen that would not have happened. If you don’t give your tithe, God will take it out the door in a coffin.”

That is awfully poor reasoning to give. That is an awful and poor reason to give, to put people under a state of fear. They only give to God to support the Gospel and to help others because they are scared not to. That is contrary to grace. That is contrary to faith. That is contrary to love.

Here is another motive that is used today in order for people to give and that is praise. We know that all people like to be praised. They like to see their name in print. They like to let others know that they are generous. They want their names in the bulletin or on a board. They want their names announced over the radio or have their names called

over the television and then they will be glad to give. They want some credit. They want their picture in the paper or credit in some way.

Do you know what the Master says? He condemns that kind of giving. He says that giving is to be seen of men. He said, *“When you pray, don’t stand on the street corner and pray to be seen of men. If you do this, you have your reward.”* When men see you and when men brag on you that is your reward.

“When you fast, wash your face and comb your hair that you appear not to fast unto men. God knows your heart. Fast in secret. When you give, don’t sound a trumpet before you.” Don’t blow your horn and say, “Here I come with my gift, I am going to give this, I raise my hand. Put me on record, put my name on the bulletin board, put my name on a plaque, put my name on a pew and put my name on a window; I’m going to give to God.” That is sinful! Christ said, *“Don’t sound a trumpet before you when you do your alms.”*

Don’t give in order to get praise of men. When men praise you that is all the reward you can expect. Giving out of duty because you will get a reward or because of fear or to be seen of men is sinful giving and it is contrary to the Word of God and it is a denial of the very principles of grace.

My friends; our prayer ought to be; *“Lord, teach me to pray.”* We need to learn from the Spirit of God how to pray, the things in which we should pray for. We need to learn to pray unselfishly and for the glory of God.

Not only that, but we need to cry out; Lord, teach me to believe; deliver me from unbelief, help mine unbelief. Teach me to believe. *“All things are possible to them that believe.”*

We need to cry Lord, teach me to love. *“By this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you love one another.”*

I will tell you another thing that we need to pray for, Lord, teach me to give, how to give, what to give and when to give, to give for His glory and His praise. I am going to deal with this subject a little bit now. If you are interested, pull your chair up a little closer and listen to what I have to say from the Word of God.

In the New Testament, two whole Chapters are given to the subject of giving. They are 2 Corinthians 8 and 2 Corinthians 9. Giving is also mentioned in 1 Corinthians 16, this thing of giving and how to give. This is how God would have us to give.

There is no reason for us to be in ignorance on the subject of giving. I'm going to give you this morning, eight words, eight New Testament Bible words that define scriptural giving. The kind of giving that is well pleasing to God. I'm talking about the kind of giving that is honoring to God and the kind of giving that is opposite from what is going on today. This is displeasing to God and not well pleasing at all in His sight.

Here is the first word and if you want, take these Scriptures I am giving and write them down. You will see the words in the Scriptures. 2 Corinthians 8:7 says this; "*Grace*, (giving is a grace). Paul calls Spiritual giving a "*grace*."

Here, in 2 Corinthians 8:7, Paul, writing to the church at Corinth about giving and about helping others says this; "*You are a church noted for your faith; you believe the Word of God and you believe Christ. You believe God and you are noted and known all over the world for your faith.*"

He said, "*You are a church noted for your utterance, the preaching of the Word of God and your missionary work. You are a church noted for your knowledge, your knowledge of the doctrines, your knowledge of the Truth and your knowledge of Christ. You are a church that is noted for your diligence, your love for the apostles and for your love for God's preachers.*"

Watch this next verse; "*See that you abound in this grace also.*" What grace, the grace of giving? That is what he is talking about, giving. He calls it a "*grace*." He says, "*You abound in faith; you abound in love; you abound in utterance; you abound in diligence and you abound in knowledge. You abound in all of these acts and works of grace.*"

Giving is a grace too. Giving, like faith is a grace. Giving, like love is a grace; it is the mark and evidence of the grace of God in a man's heart. There is no such thing as a truly, born again, redeemed person, who is not a giver. Men who have tasted the grace of God are gracious. Men with whom God has been merciful, they too are merciful.

So, the first word that defines giving in the New Testament is this; it is a grace; giving is a grace that we learn from the Spirit of God.

Second: The word "*love*" is used in 2 Corinthians 8:8. He says, "*I speak not by commandment.*" In verse 7, He says; "*See that you abound in this grace of giving. As you abound in faith, in love, utterance and knowledge; see that you abound in this grace of giving.*"

He says, *“I’m not speaking by commandment, but He says; “Prove the sincerity of your love.”* You practice the grace of giving to prove the sincerity of your love. Paul says, *“I’m not ordering you to give; that would be contrary to grace. I’m not setting amounts for you to give; that would be commandment. I’m not setting times for you to give; giving must be born of love or it is a sin.”*

In the next verse, he says; *“For you know the love of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who though He was rich, yet for your sakes became poor that you through His poverty might be rich.”* In other words, love led the Father to give Christ. The Scripture says, *“For God so loved the world that He gave.”*

It was love that caused the Son to give Himself, to empty Himself. Though He was rich, He became poor. What made Him do that? The answer is His love for you and me. It was love that motivated Him to give. This is the very thing; if you give Scripturally, Biblically and honor God, and in a way that God is pleased, then you will do it motivated by love.

Also, Paul said in 1 Corinthians 13:3; *“Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor.”* That is not tithing; that is all I have. *“If I have not love, (I’m wasting my time) and it profiteth me nothing.”*

Here is the third word: This word is found in 2 Corinthians 8:12. This is still on the same subject. You can read verses 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12. The word is *“willing.”* Paul said, *“For if there be first, a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man hath and not according to what a man hath not.”*

“God loves a cheerful giver.” That which is given willingly and cheerfully is not required. It is not giving of necessity, not grudgingly, nor out of responsibility or not because it is a duty, but it is given willingly; I am willing to give. I cheerfully give. That is the only kind of gift that God will bless, that God will receive.

The amount is unimportant, totally unimportant. A man is not required to give what he doesn’t have.

Listen carefully; here is another error in which it is prevalent in our country and in our churches. I’m talking about the pledging business and the signing of the pledge cards. I want you to listen to me; I know that I’m crossing the grain, but I will never sign a pledge card by the grace of God and I will never require any one to sign one.

I have been a pastor for 35 years. You listen to the Scripture; *“There first must be a willing mind. It is accepted according to what a man has,”* (not what he is going to have). It is not what he expects to have or what he wants to have; it is what he has and it is not according to what he has not.

I am not to promise what I don't have. I am not to pledge what I don't have. I am to give in proportion what God has blessed me with right now. I'm not to give something that I don't have nor am I to promise it.

I don't know what a day will bring forth. I don't even go into town and can't say that I am even going into town tomorrow without saying, “the Lord willing I'm going to town.” I'm certainly not going to sign a card saying that I will be there. That is taking a lot for granted isn't it?

The words duty, tithe, debt, and responsibility are not the words used here. The word used is “willingly.” *“There first must be a willing mind motivated by love and grace.”* These are New Testament words. I challenge you to read the Word of God on this subject.

The fourth word is proportion. In 1 Corinthians 16:2, the Scripture says; *“Upon the first day of the week, let everyone of you lay by in store, as God has prospered you.”* Now, *“Every good gift and perfect gift comes from God.”*

What I have, God has given me. *“Who maketh thee to differ? What do you have that you didn't receive? A man can receive nothing except it were given him from heaven.”* The Lord has blessed His people according to His will, according to God's own will you have what you have and it is by the will of God.

Now, my gift to the church and to the Gospel and to others is given in proportion or according as God has blessed me, according as God has enabled me to give. Those who have more want to give more; they have more to give. Those who have less, give less.

We are not taxpayers; we are sons; we are *“stewards of the grace of God.”* Listen to 2 Corinthians 8:14, *“Some are not to be burdened while some are eased, but our giving is to be by equality as God has blessed us.”* In other words, some people do not have as much to give. People who have a great deal are to give more. We are to give in proportion as God has blessed us. *“We are stewards of God.”*

You see, the things that I have, God has given me; He is entrusted it into His care. I am His son; I am His steward. I want to be a good son and I want to be a good steward. I

want to use the things that God has given me, with which He has blessed me, to bless someone else. It is God that gave it to me; it is not mine; it is His.

Someone will always say, “Well, 10% belongs to the Lord and 90% belongs to us.” I beg your pardon; it all belongs to the Lord. None of it belongs to me; it is all His. We are stewards of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the Lord’s vineyard and it is the Lord’s building. We are just servants.

I like that story about the salesman who got on an airplane and sat down beside a believer, (a man who knew the Lord). The salesman struck up a conversation; he turned to the believer and said, “I am in business with my father.” The believer said, “I am too.” The salesman said, “My father and I are in the jewelry business.” The believer told him that he was too. The Scripture talks about “*making up His jewels.*”

The salesman said, “That they only dealt in the best jewels” and the believer said, “That he did also.” The salesman said, “My father trusts me with a lot of His business.” The believer’s Father trusts him with a lot of his business.

The salesman was on his way to a meeting with his father and so was the believer. The salesman was hoping that he could give a good account and that he had conducted his father’s business well. The believer said, “I hope so too.” Have you given a good account of that which God has entrusted you? It is His. We give in proportion as He has blessed us.

Here is the fifth word, “*everyone.*” Did you see that when I was reading 1 Corinthians 16:2? The Scripture says, “*On the first day of the week, let everyone.*” I’m not talking about just the rich man but the poor man. I’m not talking just about the men, but the women. It is just not the older folks but the children. I am talking about every believer being a giver.

Every believer has something to share. It doesn’t matter who it is. The amount is unimportant. Our Lord stood and watched people giving at the Treasury. People came by and gave their gifts. Finally, a widow lady came by and put in two coins. The Lord said, “*She has given more than all of them because she gave all that she had.*”

So, you see; God owns all things. The amount of the gift is not important. Giving is born of love and recognizes God’s sovereignty over all things. My gratitude is to Him and my love for others and my concern for others are for their well-being.

Here is sixth word, liberally. 2 Corinthians 9:6 says, *“He that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly.”* What Paul has in mind here is the farmer. *“He that soweth sows seed.”* If he soweth sparingly and has seed in his hand, it will never ripen in his hand. The seed will never produce anything in his hand; it has to be sown in the ground.

If he just sows a little bit he will reap a little bit. If he sows abundantly, he will reap abundantly. He has to sow with an open hand. He has to turn it loose. He has to commit it to the ground. He has to trust God. He can't have the seed and sow it at the same time. If he doesn't turn it loose and sow it he is not going to reap.

So, he sows it in faith. He is willing to cast it on the ground knowing that his Father is the Lord of the harvest. That is what he is saying here, *“He that soweth sparingly, he will reap the same way, sparingly. He that soweth bountifully, he will reap bountifully. Every man as he purposed in his heart, so let him give.”* *Don't give grudgingly, (holding on to it), or not of necessity because he has to. “God loves a cheerful giver.”*

That last verse of Scripture that I just read, did you notice a word that I mentioned in 2 Corinthians 9:6? Let's look at it again and listen; it says, *“So, let him give, not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver. Let everyone give as he purposes in his heart.”*

Now, listen to me; if tithing is required, then why should I purpose in my heart; it is already written down?” I don't have anything to purpose. I don't have anything to say about it. I don't have anything to conclude. If it says 10 %, there it is! I don't have any purpose of heart to do it.

This is the why our Lord says in 2 Corinthians 9:7, *“Let every man give as he purposes in his heart,”* (as he is led by the Holy Spirit). When Ananias and his wife brought that money to the apostle Peter, and laid it down at his feet, Peter said; *“Ananias, what in the world entered your heart to cause you to lie to the Holy Spirit to keep back part of the price of the land?”*

He said, *“When you owned that property, was it not yours? You did not have to sell it. You didn't have to bring the money here. What you have done is sold it, brought the money and lied about it in order to get praise and recognition.”*

Here is the thing; I'm not to tell you what to give; it is yours as God has provided it. You are to be led by the Holy Spirit and give as you purpose and determine in your own heart about this matter. *“Let everyone of you give as he purposes in his heart.”*

I will tell you this, a man's gifts will be determined by the amount of grace and love that he has in his heart. I'm talking about the love for the Lord and others, the grace, kindness and love that God has given him. He purposes in his heart and that purpose will be determined by that grace and that love which God has given to him.

Here is the last word: *"Let us give as unto the Lord."* Did not our Jesus Christ say this to the people at the judgment, *"I was hungry and you gave Me no meat; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was in prison and you didn't visit Me?"* They said, *"Lord; when have we ever seen You hungry, thirsty, weary and in prison?"* He said, *"In as much as you did it not to the least of these my brethren, you did it not to Me."*

To the believers, He said; *"I was in prison and you visited Me. I was hungry and you fed Me. I was naked and you clothed Me."* They said, *"When did we see you that way?"* He said, *"In as much as you did it unto the least of these My brethren; you did it to Me."*

This is a lesson to learn in all that we do. We do things for others but indirectly, we are doing it for Christ's sake. We are doing it because we love Him. We are doing it, *"As unto the Lord."* Our giving is for His glory and is, *"unto the Lord."*

Giving is not for the praise of men. It is like you men who are out there on the job. Work hard and give a full day's labor. Do your best, not to apple-polish or to please men but *"as unto the Lord,"* as though you work for God Himself. You really do! So, *"Whatever you do in word or deed, do all for the glory of God Almighty."* That is what the New Testament teaches about giving.